

most inefficient. The pupils are allowed liberty of talk and movement to an extraordinary degree. The school is fast becoming a Babel in consequence." Such indulgent treatment of children is mistaken kindness, for which they will give their teacher the reverse of thanks when increasing years and sense enable them to value it at its true worth. The government in a few instances, instead of being lax, is too stringent, and, though not so easy of detection, manifests itself by the general diffidence and timidity of the pupils, who seem to have the life pressed out of them, and are afraid to express themselves with freedom. Both kinds of government are objectionable. The natural vivacity of children must be prevented from becoming an annoyance, but ought not to be extinguished completely. It is only where efficient control is maintained that the higher results of satisfactory discipline, such as respect for authority, devotion to study, and a hearty desire for improvement, can exist and manifest themselves.

READING.—The standard regulations require that the reading-books shall be read "intelligently" in Standards I. and II., and "fluently and intelligently" in the others. There might be room for some difference of opinion among teachers and Inspectors as to what the expression, "to be read intelligently," exactly means, were it not explained in the annotated edition of these regulations. It is clear that it does not mean mere ability to explain the words and phrases in the passages read, for that comes under the term "definition," but must mean that a pupil shall so read as to show to the listener by his very tone and manner that he understands what he reads. Intelligent reading should possess at least the following characteristics—viz., distinct enunciation, suitable grouping of words into the clauses of a sentence, emphasis, and natural expression. The schools in which the reading is found to possess these marks are not numerous. In many it is fluent—too fluent—and fairly accurate; but the other characteristics are often wanting. Were the passes in reading made to depend more upon its being intelligent, and less upon its being merely fluent and accurate, the percentages in this subject would not be so high as they are. That kind of reading so frequently heard, in which the voice is made to have the falling inflexion at every pause, no matter what the pause may be, is particularly objectionable, and is scarcely an improvement on the monotonous style which formerly prevailed. Connected with reading in the syllabus is "definition," meaning the explanation of words and phrases. Formerly definition was tested by oral questioning on the scope and meaning of the lesson read. More time was consumed in this exercise than could be well given to it, and nothing was recorded as to the results of it except a general statement in the school report. To save time, and to insure the giving of greater attention in the every day work of the school, to explanation of and examination on the subject-matter of the lessons, it was deemed advisable to withhold a pass in reading unless the pupil could satisfactorily explain in writing the meaning of two out of four words and phrases. Nothing new was introduced, except what was considered a more effective way of testing certain work and of securing certain ends. Those schools in which the all-important work was attended to of training the minds and increasing the intelligence of the pupils by carefully and skilfully teaching them to understand what they read, suffered little or nothing by the change, the loss mainly falling where it was deserved.

SPELLING.—Spelling is, next to writing, the best taught subject of the school course. Its general accuracy is to be attributed in a great measure to carefully supervised exercises in transcription and dictation, to the use made of the blackboard in pointing out and rectifying mistakes, and to the frequent revision of the difficult and unusual words met with in the daily lessons.

WRITING.—Writing shows the highest percentage of passes of all the subjects of examination. It has certainly improved very much of late years. In most of the schools the very youngest classes produce excellent writing on slates, and continue as they advance to produce writing similar in character on paper. Occasionally the writing in the exercise-books does not correspond with that in the copybooks, but is much inferior. Little benefit will result if the one is allowed to neutralize the other. Too lengthy exercises are responsible for most of the scribbling in the exercise-books. There are several schools in which the young children are allowed to write in any way, without sufficient direction and supervision; but their number is annually becoming less.

ARITHMETIC.—The results gained in this subject were considerably lower than in the other subjects of the programme, the shortcoming being most perceptible in Standards III., IV., and V. Standard III. sums were printed with their appropriate signs on cards, and a number of failures were owing either to ignorance of what the signs meant or inattention to them. In several cases failures arose from the fact that the pupils had been drilled in doing sums set in a particular form, and consequently did not interpret correctly the signs and expressions when arranged differently, but proceeded to work the sums according to the routine they had been accustomed to. The low percentage of passes in Standard IV. is owing to the high step that has to be taken in passing from Standard III. to Standard IV., and to the fact that this step is a transitional one from mechanical work to that requiring considerable concentration of thought and ability to reason. The number of passes is never likely to be high in this standard unless considerable preparation can be made for it before the pupils pass from Standard III. The stricter account taken of mental arithmetic during the past year reduced the number of passes in all the standards; but the loss in this respect is likely to be more than counterbalanced by the gain sure to accrue to arithmetic generally in the future, from exercising to a greater degree than formerly the ingenuity and intelligence of the pupils in solving mental problems. If mental arithmetic receives not a large share of attention the slate arithmetic is sure to be defective, and the former ought always to precede the latter.

GRAMMAR.—Parsing was generally very fairly done, except in Standard III., where the pupils frequently failed to distinguish accurately the few parts of speech required of them, and in Standards IV. and V., where the relations existing between words in a sentence were not known so fully as they might have been. Analysis of sentences, both simple and complex, was done with considerable skill. Composition showed very fair improvement, although sometimes letters and essays were handed in without punctuation of any kind.

GEOGRAPHY.—This subject shows satisfactory results; yet I do not think that sufficient care is taken, especially in the younger classes, to illustrate it by examples near at hand, by rough sketches on the blackboard, or by reference to a map. The answers given often betrayed a slavish adherence