

schools only. In schools with two teachers the results are decidedly inferior, and in those with one teacher much more so. Of course the smaller schools labour under other disadvantages besides the exacting nature of the programme—such, for example, as greater irregularity of attendance, greater disorganization from more frequent changes of teachers, and, on the whole, inferior skill in teaching. But all the other causes of the comparative inefficiency of the smaller schools are cast in the shade as well as intensified by the elaborate complexity of the programme of instruction.

With respect to the teaching and management of the schools which I have examined and visited, I can record considerable improvement during the year. It would have been more satisfactory had the results of the year's work borne out this opinion more fully, but in spite of the slight decline I believe it is well founded. Most of the teachers have been striving to improve their methods, and a good few have succeeded in making their teaching more attractive, impressive, thorough, and intelligent. There is far less mere hearing of lessons than there used to be, more especially in large schools. More pains is taken to encourage and test intelligent preparation of English lessons. Corrections and explanations are also made more carefully and in a more lucid and impressive manner, though the black-board is by no means so generally used for this purpose as is desirable. Notwithstanding all this, not a few class-teachers and teachers of small schools fall short of the measure of success that might be expected from their zealous and painstaking work. To this failure several causes contribute. Perhaps the most important of these is the teacher's habit of doing too much for his pupils. He works hard, talks, explains, lectures, and thinks he is doing excellent work all the time. Much of this is necessary, but it is only part of the true teacher's work, and that the smaller part. 'It is not what the teacher does, but what the child does, that educates him, and is of permanent value. Abundant talking, and even earnest hard work, are no guarantee of sound teaching. Always test your work by what you get the children to do; measure your success by the amount and quality of what you get out of them. You must impart knowledge, and tell, and instruct, but, as Stow puts it, 'a lesson is never given till it is received,' we can never be sure that our instructions have been received until we cause the learners to reproduce them in varied ways and of themselves."—I would recommend to the thoughtful consideration of all teachers who fail of success these wise maxims of Mr J F Gladman.* If they could only lay hold of and act upon this principle, that it is the continued exercise of the pupils' powers and faculties under the teacher's guidance and direction that constitutes educative training, we should have something of the nature of a revolution in teaching. Another general cause of failure is want of thoroughness of work. This results in part from the practice of mistaking talking for teaching, in part from trusting to the memory more than to the understanding, and in part from a deficient sense of the need of a thorough working-in of the matter taught. In many schools the lessons set are much too long to be done with any thoroughness. This is especially true of the English lessons in the smaller schools. In others there is little thoroughness because there is insufficient comprehension of the matter here the rule, "Make work intelligent, and then thorough," is ignored. In the smaller schools the teacher's time is so cut up that it is not easy to secure the thoroughness that is needful to sound progress, especially where the attendance is irregular. But if a good foundation is laid in the lower stages, if the lessons are kept of such length as can be properly taught, and if the control is satisfactory, the great majority of the smaller schools might show as thorough teaching as a small minority of them already do. A third important cause of failure is lax control, and the want of attention and interest that is characteristic of the badly-governed school. A few of the class-teachers in some of the larger schools, and a more considerable number of head-teachers in the smaller ones, are by reason of this weakness unable to do any satisfactory work. I could point to a few cases where the control is such as to put steady progress out of the question; while the pupils are getting demoralized by habits of inattention, trifling, copying, and contempt for authority. It is matter of regret that teachers of this class cannot be removed more readily from their positions, and indeed sifted out of the service.

The teaching of reading continues to improve, and in a large number of schools the lessons are taught with increased intelligence and thoroughness. In nearly all the large schools the reading is satisfactory and often good. Except in Standard I., most of the failures in this subject were caused by defective comprehension of the words, phrases, and matter of the lessons. In the lower classes the reading is generally weak, a state of things that may usually be traced either to unsuitable methods or to superficiality of work. Spelling continues to be well taught, and there has been some improvement in writing, although the general slate-work and the exercises in books are too frequently untidy and even careless.

In the teaching of arithmetic there has not been so much progress as I had looked for. In Standard II. alone have the results improved, while in Standard V there has been a considerable falling-off. The results continue to be unsatisfactory in Standards III. and IV also. During the year the same degree of proficiency has been expected, and even the same test-cards have been used as during last year. Standard IV is the only one of these standards in which low results might be expected. In Standard III. the test applied requires nothing more than mechanical accuracy; there is no appeal to the intellect. That in these circumstances no more than sixty-one out of every hundred should reach the required degree of accuracy is to me inexplicable. I believe, however, that very many failures in the arithmetic of Standard III. are due less to ignorance than to carelessness and over-confidence. As regards the wretched results in the arithmetic of Standard V., they are mainly due to bad teaching. Too little practice in black-board work is given in some cases; in many more the examples as worked out are not sufficiently explained and reasoned out by the pupils, the teachers habitually doing the lion's share of the work, while in others the principles underlying the rules and processes are not sufficiently illustrated or made clear and plain. In many schools also I fear that, notwithstanding precautions, copying and prompting

* Victoria Education Report for 1881.