that but a few days or weeks ago," they did not receive and assimilate it, and therefore, when called upon to reproduce it, naturally fail. Then follow heartburnings and disappointment at results so incommensurate with the immense amount of energy spent in producing them. One cannot but sympathize with an earnest man in his disappointments, and to all such I would say "Do not be sparing of your energy, but be sure to direct it wisely Consider every lesson well before giving it. Always have ready at hand an abundance of simple and apt illustrations. Never explain what you can lead your pupils to find out for themselves but, when forced to give a direct explanation, be sure you question well upon it. Remember that if the matter is worth explaining the explanation is worth fixing, and that the chief condition of this fixing process is repetition. Avoid much talking on your own part, but make your pupils talk as much as possible. Work out your points separately, and don't omit to fix them by repetition. Pause now and again, and cause your pupils to gather up the points mastered. Proceed in this way to the end of the lesson, and finally cause them to gather up all the points of the lesson. If they are unable to do this without your assistance, the lesson is a failure, and you had better go over the ground again."

When it is considered how largely imitative the art of reading is, and what admirable mimics children are, it seems surprising that the reading of our schools should be so deficient in natural modulation and expression as it very commonly is. The number of schools in which the art of reading is successfully taught is very small. The fact, however, that success is achieved in some schools is proof that the kind of reading we think it is reasonable to expect is not unachievable. The quality of the reading in the middle and senior standards depends in a great measure upon the character of the instruction imparted in the junior classes, and that is in a very large number of schools very unscientific. Hardly anything shows more strikingly the difficulty of overcoming the inertia of use-and-wont than the tenacity with which the majority of infant-school teachers cling to the old time-honoured method of teaching the alphabet and the earlier stages of reading. It is an old tale that the names of the letters afford no clue to the pronunciation, whereas the powers of the letters do nevertheless, the former are taught with great skill and thoroughness, whilst the latter hardly ever receive even a passing notice. The effect of this is that children have to be told almost every new word they encounter There is the same absence of natural principle in the teaching of sounds and their visual representatives. Children are not trained to associate certain combinations of letters, to assign the sound when the letters are given, or *vice versâ*. Let me illustrate what I mean by a single example. In the great bulk of English words in which the sound *ite* occurs, that sound is represented by *ite* or *ight*. Now, if those signs and their sounds are so fixed in the child's mind that when one is seen or heard the other is suggested, and the powers of the consonants are well known, the child will be able readily to read at sight—bite, cite, dite, kite, mite, nite, pite, spite, quite, rite, write, sprite, site, bight, dight, fight, light, flight, plight, slight, might, night, right, bright, fright, tight, and others, and, moreover, will experience but little difficulty in dealing with such words at upright, sprightly, brightness, mighty indite, incite, ignite, recite, &c. Taught in this way, children soon acquire ability to say at sight an immense number of words, and, which is of vastly greater value, such a thorough familiarity with the powers of letters and groups of letters that the only real difficulty they experience at the end of a year or two is that of correct accentuation. In the Royal Reader series of books all the difficult words are correctly accentuated at the beginning or end of every lesson, so that, if children are trained to interpret the accentuation marks, this difficulty readily vanishes. Irregularities must of course be dealt with separately, and on the look-and-say method. This foundation work belongs in the main to the teachers of the junior classes, upon whose shoulders must be laid a very large share of the responsibility for the poor reading of the higher classes, for it is manifestly impossible for the teacher of a senior class to do justice to the higher phases of the art of reading whose time is largely occupied in clearing away mechanical difficulties that ought to have been cleared away in the junior classes. It is surely a sad reflection on our methods that it should take a child of average ability seven or eight years to read his own language but tolerably The meanings of words were better known this year than last, but there was not much, if any, improvement in the explanation of expressions and questions on the matter of the lessons. The art of questioning on the language and matter of the reading-lesson, and the kind of answers that ought to be received from the pupils, are very poorly understood by a large number of teachers. Again I would urge them to study and apply Fitch's splendid lecture on questioning and answering.

Great credit is due both to teachers and pupils for the thoroughness with which the spelling of the reading-books is got up, and the neatness and care with which most of the written exercises are executed. Spelling and writing are the strong subjects of the Otago schools.

The mechanical operations of arithmetic are generally well taught, though the percentage gained by Standard III. does not seem to bear out this observation. The failures of this standard were, however, in the main traceable to one or more of three causes—defective notation, inability to interpret the common arithmetical signs, and carelessness in transcribing figures. Not much success is achieved in applying the mechanical operations to the solution of easy problems. There is nothing mysterious in the sums we give. They are common-sense questions, such as one is liable to encounter every day of one's life, and certainly not nearly so difficult as a large proportion of those done by the pupils during the course of the year In my judgment the children do (guess out) altogether too many sums, and are far too seldom engaged in studying the *rationale* of the work. I really do not see why girls and boys of the senior standards should not be made to show the full demonstration of every problem they work. Arithmetic is the Euclid of the primary school, and it is not too much to expect that advanced boys and girls should be trained to reason out their solutions in the same way in which a student of Euclid reasons out the several steps of a geometrical problem. If unable to do so they do not understand the sums, and the teacher is at once made aware that the principles underlying them need further elucidation. I regret to say that the unitary method, the only one that can be made really intelligible to children, is hardly anywhere adopted.