

Inspection and Examination.

- (b) Special Inspectors for training colleges, and
- (c) In all cases their important functions.
- (2.) The regulations relative to presentation of pupils for examinations.
- (3.) The percentage, greater than in the Colony, of pupils presented for examination.
- (4.) The examination of evening scholars; and
- (5.) The instructions to Inspectors, especially those relative to home lessons and punishments.

INFANT SCHOOLS.

One of the main features of the English school system is infant schools;¹ which under late codes have received increased encouragement.² The opinion of Professor Huxley is that "a very great feature in our English schools is our infant schools. The value of these cannot be overrated. I strongly recommend the establishment of infant schools entirely distinct—although, of course, there is no objection to their being under the same roof—from the ordinary schools; and the Kindergärten system, or something analogous to it, should there be pursued." Mr. Arnold informed me that he considered Kindergärten schools to be admirable institutions; which should be established as promoting discipline, and as a pleasant medium of imparting seeds of knowledge when the mind is most impressible.³ Indeed, the opinion of all educationalists with whom I conversed was that infant schools are indispensable for laying educational base-work, at the most impressible and, therefore, for the educationalist, the most valuable period of life.⁴ The English infant schools, however, are not separate schools—recognised by Statute as such—but merely distinct departments,⁵ or classes, of the ordinary schools,⁶ having, however—when the scholars number twenty or more—separate teachers⁷—in the great majority of cases, females—and such methods of instructions⁸ as cannot be conveniently carried on in the same rooms as ordinary school work.⁹ Not being recognised by Statute, they are controlled entirely by such regulations of the department made in that behalf as have "lain for not less than one month on the table of both Houses of Parliament."¹⁰

Provided a teacher be over eighteen years of age, and be approved by an Inspector, such teacher need not be certificated in order to have an infant class of sixty or less; which provision, of course, does not accord with the opinion that such teachers should hold a special certificate from a training college.¹¹ The Secretary's view is "that junior classes should have the best and most experienced teachers." Canon Cromwell concurs, and Inspector Faber informed me that he "would put the best teachers to teach children of from two and a half to three and a half years of age."¹²

There is no limitation of age,¹³ but the youngest age at which children are generally admitted is three years,¹⁴ and they generally continue there till seven,¹⁵ the rule being that the infant *class* is to "be exclusively composed of scholars who are not sufficiently advanced for the First Standard."

In an infant *school*, however, "there may be children of the First" and even, "under special conditions," of the "Second Standard,"^{15, 16} but out of 1,417,798 scholars on the registers of infant schools and classes, there were, according to the last return, but 165,892¹⁷ over seven.

¹ For details see I.E.C., vol. 13, papers and discussions on "Infant Training and Teaching." For statistics see Return published March, 1885, pp. 13 and 14. For Scotland see G.R., Scot., 1885-86, pp. xii. and xiv.

² See—
(a) G.R., 1885-86, p. x., 1883-84, pp. xiv., 256, 290, 291, 303, 341, 353, 411, and 438;
(b) Code, Arts. 106-108 and 126; and
(c) Revised Instructions, 1884 and 1886, clauses 5-12.

³ See also an address before Nat. Soc. Sc. Assoc., Dublin, 1881, by Prof. Mir Aulad Ali, Trans. p. 364. But *contra*, Inspector Stewart, R.E.C., 2422-2424 and 3091, and *seq.*

⁴ See also G.R. 1883-84, pp. 290 and 291, and R.E.C., Inspector Sharpe, 4301, and Inspector Arnold, 5459. But note *contra* evidence of Rev. J. Stewart, M.A., a senior Inspector, R.E.C., 2267 and *seq.*, and 2374 and *seq.*

⁵ See G.R., 1883-84, p. xiv., and G.R., 1885-86, p. x.

⁶ See Code, Art. 106 (a).

⁷ See (a) Code, Arts. 106 (a), 108, and 126;

(b) G.R., 1883-84, p. xiv.

⁸ See, for instance, G.R., 1883-84, p. 353, and 1885-86, p. x.

⁹ See (a) G.R., 1882-83 and 1883-84, p. 14, and 1885-86, p. x.
(b) Code, Arts. 106 (b) and (c), and third schedule.

¹⁰ E. Act, 1870, s. 97.

¹¹ See (a) Code, Arts. 84, 108, and 126.

(b) G.R., 1883-84, p. 256; but note Art. 126.

¹² See also G.R., 1883-84, pp. 290 and 291, and R.E.C., Inspector Stewart, 4090.

¹³ See (a) Revised Instructions, Art. 6, and compare N.Z., 1877, Act, s. 83; but note form attendance return p. 5 of reg. *Gazette* 49, 1878. Note espec. Mr. Cumin's evidence before R.E.C., *supra*, n. 7, p. 7.

¹⁴ But see—

(a) Code, Art. 13.

(b) G.R., 1882-83, pp. 439-40, and compare with N.Z., 1886, rep., p. v., and note Inspector Stewart's evidence, R.E.C., espec. answer 2267 and *seq.*

¹⁵ See G.R., 1885-86, p. xii.

¹⁶ See Revised Instructions, Art. 6. For distinction between school and class, see—

(a) Code, Art. 106 (a), and

(b) G.R., 1883-84, p. 411, and 1885-86, p. xii.

¹⁷ G.R., 1885-86, pp. xii. and ix.