

*Infant Schools.*

Object teaching special feature in infant schools. The special feature of the organization is object teaching;<sup>1</sup> and the modes of instruction mainly consist of—

- (a) Kindergärten exercises, which seem to be now contemplated by the code;<sup>2</sup>
- (b) Reading by sound, on the principle explained in Dr. McCullough's Readers, Nos. 1 and 2,<sup>3</sup> used for the purpose; and
- (c) Mulhhausen's system of writing.

General arrangements of infant schools. "Home lessons" for infant scholars are very plainly discouraged by the department; as indeed they are for all school children except to the extent of short exercises in the upper classes of good schools.<sup>4</sup>

From what I heard from Sub-Inspector McKenzie (who obligingly conducted me through a representative infant school in Gray's Inn Road, London), and from other officials, I conclude that 200 to 300 is considered to be the model number of an infant school, and that in any event it should, where practicable, consist of at least four classes—namely, a babies' class for children of four years and under; and three other kinds of classes for children of from five to seven; but that if the latter could be arranged with four (as at Gray's Inn Road) or five, the graduation would be much better. The school consists of boys and girls mixed,<sup>5</sup> but alternately arranged and divided into classes, each in a separate room of, say, forty<sup>6</sup> in a class. Boys as well as girls are generally taught sewing and knitting.<sup>7</sup> Grants are computed entirely on average attendance;<sup>8</sup> but scholars over seven must, as a rule, be examined,<sup>9</sup> and the custom is to examine individually all those over six.<sup>10</sup>

Thus the main features seem to be—

- (a) Distinct departments or classes for
- (b) Boys and girls mixed (alternately arranged), from three years of age, or in some cases under, until sufficiently advanced for First Standard, but generally under seven years of age;
- (c) Separate teachers (when scholars number at least twenty), although not necessarily certificated unless the annual average attendance be more than sixty; but a teacher to have charge of an infant class must always be over eighteen years of age, and approved by the Inspector;
- (d) Object teaching the speciality;
- (e) No "home lessons;"
- (f) No individual examination till six years of age, and nominally till seven; and
- (g) Grants computed only on the basis of average attendance.

EVENING SCHOOLS<sup>11</sup> AND HALF-TIME SCHOLARS.

Arrangements re evening schools and their results. The establishment and maintenance, in England, of evening primary schools, are left to the discretion of the local school authorities, subject to the approval of the department; which possesses all real power in the approval of by-laws, grants, appointment of teachers,<sup>12</sup> &c. The fees charged are very low; and prizes are given for punctual attendance and successful examination.<sup>13</sup>

The amount of grant to a school is dependent<sup>14</sup> upon the (a) number of times it has met since the last examination, and (b) the individual proficiency of the scholars. Any, not necessarily a lay, person over eighteen years of age, approved by an Inspector, may be

<sup>1</sup> See—

(a) R.C., vol. 1, p. 517;  
 (b) I.E.C., as above;  
 (c) G.R., 1882-83, p. 440;  
 (d) "N.C.," Nov., 1884, Art. by Mr. Buxton;  
 (e) Revised Instructions, 1884, Art. 10, and 1886, Art. 7.  
<sup>2</sup> Art. 106 (b). See also Offic. Cat. Health Exhibition, 1884, 2nd ed., p. xlvii.  
<sup>3</sup> And in Nelson's and Sonnenchein's books, &c.  
<sup>4</sup> See Revised Instructions, Art. 57, and compare with N.Z. 6th annual rep., p. xvii.  
<sup>5</sup> On "Mixed Schools," see Art. in "Victorian Review," Feb., 1884, by J. G. Stewart and R. E. C., Inspector Stewart, 3487 and seq.  
<sup>6</sup> But note Senior Inspector Sharpe's evidence, R.E.C. 4229, "for the lowest class of the infants you ought not to have more than twenty-five children to one teacher."  
<sup>7</sup> See Revised Instructions, 1884 and 1886, Art. 11.  
<sup>8</sup> See—

(a) Notwithstanding code, Arts. 106 and 104, Revised Instructions, 1886, Art. 5; note, however, Art. 12;

(b) G.R., 1885-86, p. xii.;

(c) Revised Instructions, 1884, Art. 5, and 1886, Arts. 5 and 12.

<sup>9</sup> See G.R., 1885-86, p. xii.

<sup>10</sup> See G.R., 1883-84, p. 353. Note former practice, Mr. Fitch's mem., p. 62.

<sup>11</sup> On night schools generally, see paper read before Nat. Soc. Sc. Assoc., Dublin, 1881, by R. Hamilton, Trans., p. 489; and R.E.C., Inspector Stewart, 3951 and seq.

<sup>12</sup> See—

(a) E. Act, 1870, s. 74;

(b) G.R., 1883-84, p. viii., and 1885-86, p. iv., and Scot., pp. viii. and 145 and 146;

(c) Revised Instructions, 1884 and 1886, Art. 71, and compare with N.Z. 1877 Act, s. 86.

<sup>13</sup> Code, Arts. 25-29, 31, 79, and 113.

See G.R., 1883-84, pp. 465 and 466.

<sup>14</sup> See Code, Arts. 25-29 and 113, and compare with secs. 97, 98, and 86, and 4, N.Z. 1877 Act, and Gazette 92, 1878.