

small mechanical calculations without the aid of pen or pencil. Oral teaching has a much wider scope in the introduction of new principles by a sufficient number of examples of the simplest cases, mentally worked, and the reasoning out of progressively more difficult examples till the pupils have gained facility and confidence enough to deal independently with new cases, and ultimately to correlate the several processes involved in more complex questions. As to the methods of working to be thus applied, we are convinced that the most satisfactory results may be got with the greatest intellectual benefit to the pupil and the least amount of labour to all concerned by the extended use of first principles in all kinds of questions, and more especially by the employment of the so-called "Unitary Rule" in preference to the old "Rule of Three." Owing to the advanced nature of the idea of proportion, the latter rule must be to almost all children an empirical one—a mere device for obtaining answers to sums. By the former, on the other hand, the pupil advances with the aid of his own common-sense, and understands the why and wherefore of what he is doing. He is less likely to be led astray, for he understands (or should understand) every stage of the process, and his reasoning faculty is constantly appealed to and enlarged. In a great many schools the tables of money, length, and weight, set down for the First and Second Standards, have been neglected altogether, and more often still they have been taught in a more or less parrot-like fashion. The requirements of the syllabus itself, or of ordinary intelligent instruction, can hardly be said to be fulfilled unless the children have concrete ideas of the values corresponding to the several terms, and a certain amount of practice in easy questions involving the aliquot parts of the quantities referred to.

GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION.—Composition has assumed greater prominence on the time-tables of many of our schools during the past two years. The resulting improvement, formerly noted, has been steadily maintained; and the modest ideal, in which every child who quits school after passing the Fourth Standard is able to write a few well-expressed and suitably-connected sentences in proper letter form, is much nearer realisation. For the grammar itself, clear ideas of the duties performed by words, phrases, and clauses in a sentence are, both in themselves and in the mental training received from the study, of sufficient value to the business of life to warrant a high position in an educative scheme. Yet the prospects of the subject do not wear a much more hopeful aspect. The simple word-functions of S3, and the analysis of S5 are better; but otherwise a school in which the grammar has been successfully treated remains a pleasant surprise, and the criticisms of our last report hold good to a much greater extent than is desirable. To the suggestions we have there made a hint may be added that upon this subject above all others the comprehension of the reading matter has a direct bearing.

TABLE C.—CLASS SUBJECTS.

Subject.	Percentages.	Number of Schools obtaining 60 per cent. and upwards.	Number of Schools obtaining from 40 to 59 per cent.	Number of Schools obtaining from 20 to 39 per cent.	Number of Schools obtaining less than 20 per cent.	Number of Schools included in Estimate.
Drawing	35·06	10	55	63	21	149
History	41·06	22	52	55	19	148
Geography	48·77	45	61	35	10	151
Science, object lessons, &c ...	39·96	24	65	43	20	152
All subjects	40·93	12	69	63	8	152

CLASS SUBJECTS.—Drawing.—The above table gives a rough analysis of the position occupied by class subjects. Except in drawing, the marking has as far as possible been maintained on the same basis as before, and the outcome of the figures corresponds with our impressions of the work. The object lessons have made a substantial advance; history and geography have on the whole gone backward; but the seeming deterioration in drawing is owing partly to the exclusion of S2, in which drawing has been no longer a class subject, and more especially to the application of a somewhat different standard of judgment, resting on the results of the special tests already referred to. Our ideas on the last matter were made widely known early in the year, so that teachers might be prepared. The change has met with general approval, and exercises a salutary influence over methods adopted in teaching. While care has been taken in the pass classes that no child should suffer for mere inability to do the exercises prescribed, the employment of the more correct basis of class estimates has given the figures a less favourable appearance. The subject has really improved, and is in general fairly established as a part of the ordinary course of instruction. We are anxious, however, to see it included wholly and permanently in the class group. We are prepared to admit that, under the existing control of schools, and in view of the still persistent popular habit of estimating success by the measure of standard passes alone, to make a subject necessary for a pass is a very good way of securing general attention to it, and, further, that actual or anticipated pass requirements have probably done more to give drawing a firm footing than anything else would have done in so short a time; but we cannot avoid regarding the subject as a very unsuitable one to form a necessary determining element in the classification of a school for general purposes. Freehand remains, with a few exceptions of slightly-increased number, the only branch of drawing yet taught.

History.—The teaching done has generally been sufficient to produce in the Sixth Standard a fair knowledge of the ordinary elementary facts of British history, and this class makes the best appearance. But indications are rarely met with of any attempt to deal with simple sociological facts a knowledge of which is necessary to fit a man for his duties as a citizen; and we are, indeed, under the impression that a systematic treatment has been pursued in only one important school.