

put on the slate before the figures. And even in schools officered by only one teacher no difficulty need be found in giving this oral teaching if only the method recommended at inspection visits be followed; but I have frequently seen teachers giving only general supervision, and not always that, while all the classes were working arithmetic in desks.

Inaccuracy, due more to a bad tone in a class than anything else, was a frequent cause of failure in the upper standards, and it was found most frequently in division and subtraction.

The frequent use of examination cards is a mistake. These would be all very well at stated periods, when pupils have mastered all the rules for the year, but they appear to be used constantly, and even before some of the rules treated on them have been taught. Cards with five sums in *one* rule, as practice or interest, could be used with advantage. Revisal of back rules should be regularly kept up.

At many schools the figuring and arrangement on papers was exceedingly nice—indeed, at some the figuring and the double underscoring of answers would have done credit to a book-keeper.

*Grammar, with Composition*, showed an improvement in Standard III. In Standard IV. there was still a great deal of guesswork in judging the parts of speech, and inflections were not well known. In Standard V. and Standard VI. some fine work was sent in at several large schools, but at the small schools the subject was seldom well treated. In the latter it is difficult to give grammar as much oral teaching as its importance demands. Analysis improves steadily every year.

There is a tendency to sneer at grammar, and to propose that it should be struck out of the pass subjects, generally on the ground that many who know nothing of the grammar of any language can speak and write grammatically. Admitting this statement to be true (which I do not) people talking like this completely ignore the value of grammar as an educative subject. Hear Matthew Arnold. In his report for the year 1861 he says, "But I confess that I should be very sorry if this subject (grammar) should be discontinued, or allowed to decline. With the tendency to verbiage and to general and inexact answering to which all persons of imperfect knowledge are, when examined, so prone, it is a great thing to find for their examinations a subject-matter which is *exact*; every answer on which must be right or wrong, and no answer on which can have any value if it keeps to vague generalities. Arithmetic as well as grammar has the merit of being an examination subject of this kind. But grammar has an advantage even over arithmetic, in that it is not only exact—it not only compels the pupil examined in it to show himself clearly right or wrong, as knowing the rule or as ignorant of it—but it also compels him, even more than arithmetic, to give the measure of his common sense by his mode of selecting and applying, in particular instances, the rule when he knows it." Again, in his report for 1878 I find, "Lastly, the teacher should use grammar as a very simple logic, affording the means of opening a child's understanding a little, and of planting the beginnings of clear and accurate thinking." Once again, in his report for 1880 he says, "I attach great importance to grammar as leading the children to reflect and reason, as a very simple sort of logic, more effective than arithmetic as a logical training, because it operates with concretes, or words, instead of with abstracts, or figures." It will thus be seen that we have the greatest educationist of the century placing grammar before arithmetic as a means for cultivating the intellectual powers of children, and that his opinion is unaltered through twenty years.

In *Geography* the positions of places of importance were generally readily known, but there was a great deal of inaccurate statement with regard to rivers and the commercial towns on their banks. Mathematical and physical geography were very poor. I am loth to say that it is due to lack of proper teaching that at school after school pupils could not, for instance, state what latitude is (often would not attempt an answer), or what are the principal causes affecting climate (latitude and altitude almost invariably omitted), but that they could not do so is a fact. I am inclined to the opinion that sheer laziness to think is responsible in a large measure for poor papers in geography. Mapping was very variable—excellent in some schools, very poor in others. In almost all schools where this branch of geography was good the maps were drawn with guiding lines, so that the various parts were fairly in proportion. Teachers might even go still further, and, now that in drawing scale-drawing is compulsory, teach their pupils to draw maps accurately to scale. It appears to me of the highest importance that a pupil should have some idea of the size of the country which he is drawing, and that, when a map is placed before him and a scale in his hand, he should be able to find the distance from one place to another.

Pronunciation of names in the colony should receive more attention from several teachers. For instance, that "-ang" in Wanganui, Tauranga, &c., is pronounced by them like -ang in "hang," seems very curious.

*Drawing* in the lower three standards was generally good. At some schools I was sorry to see that the teachers had absolutely ruled lines in the *freehand* copies, and got their pupils to draw over these lines. In the style of keeping the books I found considerable improvement this year. It is to be regretted that in the new Order in Council with respect to drawing the work in the lower standards is limited to freehand. It appears to me that children also should get practice in the use of the ruler, as a preparatory introduction to future practical geometry, and with a view to obtain mechanical accuracy. All drawing-books at Home recently issued to meet the requirements of the new code require the pupils in the lower standards to draw the copies first freehand and then with pencil and ruler.

At the schools examined in the earlier half of the year I found that several teachers seemed unaware that model and geometrical drawing are compulsory in Standard IV., though the syllabus was issued in 1885; later on, however, I received some very nice work in geometry, but model drawing was generally weak. At some schools the spelling of words in the enunciations of problems was shocking, such clearly showing an utter lack of supervision. One might forgive such a word as "parallel" being occasionally misspelled, but what can be said in excuse for the spelling