

to get the best results, and, besides this, he succeeds in giving his pupils a fitting training for the coming duties and responsibilities of adult life. To the community the faithful labours of such a man are beyond price.

The only subjects to which we need refer in any detail are object-lessons, science, and singing. We do not see many object-lessons taught, but we examine on a great number every year, the teachers very often helping us to form a better judgment of the work by examining their own pupils on one or two of the lessons. From the evidence before us it is plain that object-lessons are little liked either by teachers or by pupils, and that the treatment of the subjects does comparatively little to train the pupils to observe and describe what is placed before them, and to reason in a simple way about the facts. The lack of interest in these lessons is very largely due to too learned treatment. Teachers, indeed, cannot know too much about the subject of the lessons, but they may very easily attempt to teach more than their pupils can understand or take any interest in. The treatment, both as regards extent and arrangement of matter, must be adapted to the knowledge and circumstances of the class, and the selection of topics should be determined more by the range of the pupils' experience than by the knowledge and tastes of the teacher. This is a condition that might well be more generally observed. Teachers would succeed in giving better lessons and interesting their pupils more if they would trust more to their own knowledge and judgment, and less to the crutches of the text books. Object-lessons handled in a simple and sensible way should and would be the most delightful part of the school work. They would give firmness and precision to a large mass of loose and undigested knowledge which the children already possess, and lead them to compare, distinguish, and describe what their attention is directed to in a way that would greatly further true education. Excess of detail, especially in dealing with manufacturing processes, is one of the chief things that make object-lessons so repulsive to scholars and teachers, and the current text books are generally deeply tainted with this fault. Take the subject "Tea" for example. Who can care anything about the exact number of gatherings of the leaves or about the months in which they are made? Why describe every step in the process of drying as minutely as if tomorrow we were going to put it all into practice? To Chinese boys these details may be important, but to English boys they are not. In like manner, in dealing with such technical processes as the manufacture of paper or leather the lessons are usually loaded with a mass of details that are devoid of interest and are of quite subordinate importance. The aim of such lessons is, we take it, to give an accurate but general idea of the important steps in the manufacture, and not to give such a technical lesson as would suit a tanner's or a paper-maker's apprentice. It seems to be chiefly owing to the circumstances here indicated that teachers regard object-lessons with apparent dislike, while pupils regard them with indifference.

The present regulations relating to instruction in science, which have been in force for a number of years, provide for the division of the whole programme into a three years' course of lessons. Under this arrangement one-third of the course is covered every year, and the whole of it in three years. In a large number of schools these provisions have been more or less ignored, and in only a few has a definite programme, divided into three courses, been drawn up and observed. It is unfortunate that the course is not more definitely mapped out in the regulations, and it is highly desirable that a detailed scheme of lessons covering the whole of the prescribed programme should be made out. This subject might very well engage the attention of the frequent conferences of teachers, though we are not aware that it has ever done so. We hope, however, that the matter will be taken up, and that teachers generally will soon have at their disposal a suitable arrangement of the whole subject in a three years' course of lessons. The possession of a good detailed scheme of science lessons would be of very great value for avoiding repetition and discontinuity in the lessons of the numerous schools in which changes of teachers take place in the course of the year. In many rural schools the principles of agriculture are substituted for the general programme of science lessons. No attempt is made to teach "Agricultural Chemistry" (as the subject is named in the syllabus) in any special sense, for even the most elementary instruction in chemistry cannot be given in such schools. On the whole, the teaching of science is not successful. It is very often regarded as an outside subject—an intruder into the domain of the school course, and, in fact, except in a few cases, receives but a small share of earnest attention. One short lesson a week is the time usually devoted to it. In these circumstances valuable results are not to be expected. Greater thoroughness in the teaching, so far as it goes, is much needed, for inaccurate science is worthless. We doubt if half the children taught about these objects know the difference between a thermometer and a barometer, or can tell distinctly the use of either. In saying this we have in view not only the answering to our own questions on the subject, but also that to those of the teachers themselves, who usually conduct half or more of the examination in this subject. To make the science-teaching effective more time must be allowed for it; but even with the present allowance of time an earnest application of adequate knowledge should lead to more satisfactory issues. Our syllabus is so heavy that teachers may well be excused for giving but a short time to this subject; but for the worthlessness of much of the current teaching we do not think any excuse possible.

Singing is taught in most schools—in a few with great fervour and success, and fairly in a large number. Ability to read easy music at sight, either in the tonic sol-fa or in the common notation, is, however, but rarely acquired, and, indeed, the course of training seems seldom directed to gain this end. To get adequate practice and readiness in reading at sight pupils need to have in their hands some song books such as those mentioned in a circular issued a year or two ago by the Board. Most of these books are very cheap, and if the pupils cannot buy them the teachers could do so out of the pen-money. In a number of schools in which singing is taught with fair success the practice of it is confined to special lessons. This arrangement ignores one of the chief uses of singing—to make a pleasant and cheerful break in the ordinary routine, and act as a tonic to the feelings and the will. In a few schools it is not taught at all.