

evidence of this feeling. As a class the teachers are conscientious and hardworking. In the notes below, which apply chiefly to the less efficiently conducted schools, special topics are dealt with and the more prominent faulty methods summarised.

METHODS.—The chief shortcomings here are due to insufficient preparation for lessons on the part of teachers. Some trust to the happy inspiration of the moment, and some few quietly ignore the fact that their peculiar function is to teach, not to hear lessons. Without forethought and travail of spirit no lesson can be intelligently given.

DISCIPLINE AND MANNERS.—In nearly all schools discipline is good. One would like to see the children of some schools more frank and polite. Lack of these qualities is doubtless in a great measure due to natural shyness. This might be to some extent overcome by the teacher's precept and example. Specific attention should be called to the somewhat prevalent habit of coming late to school. One now and again sees late-comers take their places in class without rebuke, as if it were quite as seemly to be late as to be in time. This habit is against the best interests at once of children and of school.

TIME TABLES.—In most schools carefully-prepared time tables are displayed. In some, however, a mere scrap of paper, only partly indicating the subjects of instruction for the day, is accounted sufficient. Little wonder in such cases that the teacher gets befogged as to the sequence of lessons.

BUILDINGS, FURNITURE, AND APPARATUS.—During the year no case of gross neglect was observed. On the contrary, many teachers, and also scholars, take an active interest in conserving and improving the Board's property.

READING AND RECITATION.—Want of expression is sometimes very noticeable in the upper classes. The main factor in teaching this art—viz., enabling the pupils to mentally grasp the images symbolised by words, which images would react on the feelings—is generally overlooked. The intelligent handling of phrases is another factor that is often neglected in teaching reading. It might here be pointed out that by enabling pupils to appreciate the function of phrases the teacher has ready to hand a lever of vast power for teaching not merely reading, but also grammar, analysis, and composition.

SPELLING.—The onus of preparation is often thrown entirely on the children. Were preparation in every instance clinched by a thorough test, no serious exception could be taken. In the bustle of work teachers are oftentimes apt to overlook the innumerable little devices for fixing the form of words in the juvenile memory. If such devices were more generally employed, much time would in the long run be saved.

WRITING.—This subject would be more successfully treated were children taught in an interesting manner the elements of letters. Thus the writing and the drawing lessons would shade into each other. This method should be adopted in imparting to children their first lesson, and all future progress should be guided by the same principle. Mere tithes of pencils are sometimes used, with baneful results, in infant classes.

GRAMMAR.—In the two upper standards parsing is often very incomplete. It is apparently assumed that when a word is denoted a preposition or a conjunction it is straightway parsed. An impoverished account of the verb, too, is frequently offered. Grammar being for the child an analytic exercise, its worth is reckoned by the fullness and exactness with which the analysis is made.

COMPOSITION.—This is one of the few constructive school exercises, and form is not its least important character; but one sometimes sees a succession of words, intended no doubt for statements, without form, and void. Capitals are abused, common words are misspelt, and to the various sentences there is neither beginning nor end.

GEOGRAPHY.—Topography is well known in most schools. More might be done in making this subject a vehicle for interesting children in the varied aspects of society, and in the natural phenomena by which they are encompassed.

ARITHMETIC.—One notices with pleasure that most teachers strive to teach this subject in an intelligent manner, thus rendering it of true educational value. But to this statement there is also an obverse. Mechanical accuracy alone is sometimes accepted as full proof of knowledge, and pupils miss the opportunity of having their incipient faculty for logic brightened and stimulated at the blackboard.

DRAWING.—This subject has been satisfactorily treated in the three first standards in almost all schools. In some the syllabus requirements *re* drawing for the higher standards have not been complied with—owing, no doubt, to the inability of teachers to do so. The more easy programme recognised by the department will afford considerable relief to schools of all grades.

HISTORY.—This is one of our least-successfully taught subjects. No doubt in many schools time is too scant to treat it with any degree of fullness. Improved methods of instruction would in great measure surmount the difficulty. Children cannot be blamed if they turn away in despair from the study of a skeleton with dislocated bones. On the other hand, a living organism does not fail to interest them. It is in the teacher's power to choose under which guise he will present history to his pupils.

SCIENCE AND OBJECT LESSONS.—These subjects are taught with more or less success in all schools. The chief obstacle to effective work is dearth of apparatus. It is painful to see object-lessons given where the object, or even a picture of it, exists in the mind of the instructor alone. A still more unfortunate feature is the attempt to give such lessons without putting any summary on the blackboard.

DRILL.—In several schools the boys are very successfully drilled. The new regulations of the Board on this subject will awaken fresh interest in the minds of teachers regarding its importance. For fitting boys to succeed in the struggle for existence few subjects are more effective.

SINGING.—In very few schools has this subject been taught with pre-eminent success. In others it is either not taught at all, or taught in such a way as to be of little educational or emotional value. In this particular subject our children are far behind their fellows in the Old Country.