The formidable-looking body of instruction in the form and relations of lines and simple geometrical figures now added to the drawing course of Standards I., II., and III. has proved less burdensome than teachers at first expected it to be. Where the figures, &c., have been taught with constant reference to drawings and concrete examples, as the syllabus manifestly contemplates, the work has proved easy and not uninteresting. Young children readily notice differences in the sizes of angles, in the positions of lines, and in the forms of simple rectilineal figures, and when they are made quite familiar with these by the study of drawings and concrete examples, they have no difficulty in remembering their technical names, which, indeed, are found convenient labels for facts which they perfectly apprehend. In a good many schools there has been far too little study of concrete examples and conspicuous drawings; and formal definitions have been committed to memory before the figures they describe have been sufficiently illustrated to make their forms and obvious properties readily understood. In nearly all the larger schools this error has been avoided, and we there found abundant concrete examples of the figures studied, the handiwork for the most part of the pupils themselves, to enable us to readily test their knowledge of them. In most of the smaller schools such concrete examples were conspicuous by their absence. In a few schools the figures to be studied by each standard were conspicuously drawn in chalk on a large sheet of brown paper affixed to the wall of the class-room. This is an excellent arrangement, and it might be adopted with advantage in all schools. These charts allow comparison of the figures to be made without loss of time, and should be so placed as to be readily accessible for measurement of the lines and angles by the teachers or pupils, a large pair of compasses being used for this purpose. Compasses should be provided for every class-room, as they are necessary for the construction of many of the figures, and for comparing the length of lines are much more convenient than a ruler. Teachers, without exception, are of opinion that the drawing course is now very heavy, and they find that the geometrical drawing in the Standard IV. class takes up so much time as to render it extremely difficult to give sufficient practice in the more important freehand drawing. In this opinion we entirely concur.

Grammar is now ranked as a "class"-subject in all the standards except Standard IV., an arrangement that meets with unqualified approval. Few would regret if that of Standard IV. were placed in the same position. We have found it much easier to examine grammar orally than any of the "class"-subjects, and have been well satisfied with the efficiency of the teaching in a large number of schools. In the smaller schools, however, a considerable proportion of the rather numerous failures in Standard IV. is due to weakness in this subject. There is a tendency once more to allow the children of this class to give the parts of speech off-hand without first clearly working out the use and relation of the words to be dealt with. This is to substitute guessing for observation and reasoning; it is making a deliberate sacrifice of the educative value of simple parsing.

Composition, formerly bracketed with grammar, is now a separate "pass"-subject in all the standards. Throughout the year the composition subjects were taken from a list of topics on which the scholars had already written exercises or essays for their teachers, an arrangement of which notice was given by circular more than a year ago. By taking only subjects with which the children were familiar we hoped that the difficulty in finding matter to make up an exercise of reasonable length would cease. This expectation has been largely realised, but in a number of the smaller schools there has been little improvement in this respect. In the majority of schools, including nearly all the larger ones, very fair work is done in this subject. The selection of topics for exercises has usually been made with good judgment; but there are cases in which all are taken from the reading-books, and not a single exercise deals with topics connected with the daily life and experience of the children. Such subjects are of great value, as they stimulate really original work—the work of original observation and original construction; and we think such familiar topics should form at least a third of the composition exercises of the year. In a few cases we were surprised to find the composition exercises of classes of considerable size almost word for word the same. This is a mark of cramming rather than of teaching, and is chiefly due to mistaking drill in the construction of sentences of the simplest type for the whole art of composition, a mistake fostered by one of the text-books most commonly used in this district. Variety in the treatment of the topics written about should be specially encouraged, original handling should be commended, and exercises showing this quality might with advantage be read out for the improvement of all. It is quite evident that in many cases the virtue of variety of handling is little considered. For the future the required number of subjects will be more strictly insisted on.

Geography is now a "class"-subject in Standards II. and IV., and a "pass"-subject in the other standards. In the two higher standards the scope of the teaching has been very much curtailed, but we have seldom found a corresponding improvement in thoroughness and intelligence of study. Physical geography has on the whole been poorly taught. The oral examination of the work of Standard IV. has left on our minds a less favourable impression of the skill with which the subject is taught than the partly-written and partly-oral examination of the higher classes. The work for the class is, however, wide and multifarious, and during most of the year useful aids to its study have not been available. We fully expect that our experience in the coming year will be more satisfactory. The mathematical geography prescribed for Standard IV. requires a good deal of practical illustration which has not been attempted in many of the smaller schools. A small revolving globe is for this purpose indispensable, but many schools have nothing of the sort. Pictorial plans and illustrations of the cause of the seasons should also be found in every school. In former years numbers of terrestrial globes were distributed among the larger schools. It is now quite unusual to find one of these fit to be used, and we regret to say that they have been very badly cared for. Considering how these somewhat costly globes have been abused, we would not advise the Board to incur much expense in supplying globes; still, a revolving globe of some kind is now a necessity for even the smallest school.