

Geography and history, as now taught with the aid of geographical and historical readers, are subjects of greater interest to pupils; and the education derived is more realistic. Also, experimental teaching in science and object-lesson work, although still capable of extension, is making good progress. It will, we think, soon be quite easy to distinguish a really painstaking teacher from a more perfunctory one by the care shown in experimental-lesson work. Indifferent teachers are full of excuses for not doing their work as thoroughly as is desired, and in a few of the poorest schools the object-lesson work is still taught on lines twenty years old.

The officers sent by the military authorities continue to give instruction in squad and physical drill in the city schools, which is much appreciated. Exercises in clubs and poles for girls is now taken by the class-teachers. It remains to be seen, in the absence of a special instructor, whether the school staffs can efficiently maintain the drill, and the result will largely depend on the efforts of the head-teachers.

This year special attention has been called to the teaching of arithmetic; and, in our "Suggestions to Teachers" last year, Mr. Lee formulated a syllabus of mental work for each standard, which we are pleased to find has been accepted and acted upon by almost every head-teacher. The effect of this has been to greatly extend a knowledge of ready methods and of the treatment of decimals on the metric system. In our last report we expressed the opinion that it was quite possible to reconstruct our arithmetical course with greater gain to the development of the reasoning faculties, and with a great saving of time and labour to the teacher and scholar. Apart from these considerations the tests as at present issued are open to the following objections: There is more than ever a disparity in the calibre of the sets; weights and measures occur which are not in actual use; there is less scope for taking methods of working into consideration; the questions are occasionally set outside requirements; three problems out of five questions are excessive; and the questions are not sufficiently in touch with practical life. We think the whole arithmetic syllabus can be much simplified. Mr. Lee has devoted much thought for several years past to the subject. He has this year examined all the large schools *viva voce* in arithmetic, and he has now formulated a suggested amended syllabus, a copy of which is appended to this report. Time will show how far these suggestions will prove of practical value; but the effort marks a further step in the direction indicated in our last report, and we still hope to see it further demonstrated before long that more mathematical and more practically useful work in arithmetic can be taught in all public schools with less expenditure of time. To bring this about it will be necessary to amend the departmental syllabus, and to set the test-questions exactly on lines which indicate the right kind of work, for arithmetic is taught so as to meet the requirements of the tests. As are the tests, so is the style and amount of work. Nor can teachers be blamed for this, for how otherwise can they see their way to meet requirements? Hence it is most desirable that the requirements be rational, suitable to the actual business of life, and so formulated that they encourage the use of the best methods of working.

We have, &c.,

ROBERT LEE,
T. R. FLEMING, } Inspectors.

The Chairman, Education Board, Wellington.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR THE WHOLE DISTRICT.

Standard Classes.				Presented.	Present.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.
							Yrs. mos.
Above Standard VI.	...	...	...	344	...	...	...
Standard VI.	...	...	...	814	799	607	13 9
" V.	...	...	...	1,199	1,174	873	12 11
" IV.	...	...	...	1,633	1,594	1,220	11 11
" III.	...	...	...	1,843	1,795	1,470	10 11
" II.	...	...	...	1,748	1,705	1,552	9 10
" I.	...	...	...	1,548	1,525	1,463	8 9
Preparatory	...	...	...	4,107	...	...	...
Totals	...	...	...	13,236	8,592	7,185	11 4*

SUGGESTED AMENDED SCHEDULE OF STANDARD REQUIREMENTS IN ARITHMETIC.

Standard I.

1. Write hundreds.
2. Addition of hundreds (five numbers).
3. Multiplication by one digit.

Class Mental Work for Standard I.—Components and factors of numbers up to 100. Easy exercises in four rules of such numbers. Add up or down at sight a column of five digits on blackboard. Multiplication table to 9 times 9. Parts of a shilling.

Standard II.

1. Write thousands.
2. Subtraction.
3. Long multiplication.

* Mean of average age.