

or the conquest of India. The practice of some teachers treating history in Standard III. merely by preparing a few disconnected stories is, to our minds, a poor one.

With regard to elementary science and object-lessons, our experience is so precisely similar to that of the Otago Inspectors that we have no hesitation in copying verbatim their remarks on these subjects in a back report: "The treatment of elementary science and object-lessons is, in a large number of schools, not in accordance with the *methods* of science. There is little exercise of eye, and less of hand; there is little learning about things from a study of things themselves; things are viewed, not from the standpoint of an observer, but from the standpoint of another's knowledge; object-lesson *books* take the place of *objects*, and the children are the passive recipients of the information extracted by their teachers from the books. It is true a good deal of useful information is imparted to the children during the course of every year, but we cannot affirm too emphatically that the value of science teaching lies, not in information, but in the habits of mind that are induced by the discipline of patient and accurate observation." We commend these remarks to our teachers. In object-lessons it is not sufficient that pupils should not be told what they can find out for themselves; they must be taught *how* to find out—how to test for certain properties. The object must be seen and handled, and compared with other objects; hence there always should be a supply of objects in the school. We are glad to note that several of the schools now have sets of scientific apparatus.

Upon the methods adopted by the teachers we were, as a rule, able to report in favourable terms at our inspection visits. Also, the majority of the teachers showed during these visits much eagerness in obtaining any hints and information that they thought might be of service to them in their work. Our habit of carrying round examination-papers worked at some of the schools, and showing good methods and fine arrangement, often proved of good service to inexperienced teachers, and was much appreciated by all desirous of picking up a hint.

The method of questioning a class has still to be found fault with at some schools. Teachers weak in this respect we cannot do better than refer to the very full remarks on the subject in the Inspectors' annual reports for 1889 and 1890, to Lecture VI. of Dr. J. G. Fitch's "Lectures on Teaching," and to Gladman's "School Work." One thing was often forcibly impressed upon us—that teachers are too ready to accept a correct answer and pass on without insuring that the information desired to be imparted is "driven home," by further questioning and other means, into the minds of all members of the class. No one but an experienced teacher would ever believe how many different questions have often to be put to a class before there can be any certainty that all the members have grasped the truth aimed at. And here we may say that frequent reiteration is seldom the way of reaching the desired point: far better is it to change the form of the question, still keeping the main object in view.

Before closing this report we desire to refer to the indifference displayed by some teachers as to the manner in which the pupils go through their daily class motions. With regard to this matter we cannot do better than quote Dr. Fitch, Her Majesty's Inspector of Training-colleges: "There are right and beautiful ways and there are clumsy and confused ways of sitting at a desk, of moving from one place to another, of handling and opening books, of cleaning slates, of giving out pens and paper, of entering and leaving school. Petty as each of these acts is separately, they are important collectively, and the best teachers habitually reduce all these movements to drill, and require them to be done simultaneously, and with finish and mechanical exactness. Much of this drill is conducted in some good schools by signs only, not merely because it is easy so to economise noise and voice-power, but also because it makes the habit of mechanical obedience easier. And children once accustomed to such a *régime* always like it—nay, even delight in it. I have seen many schools, both small and large, in which all the little movements from class to class were conducted with military precision—in which even so little a thing as the passing of books from hand to hand, the gathering-up of pens, or the taking of places at the dinner-table, of hats or bonnets from their numbered places in the hall was done with a rythmical beauty, sometimes to musical accompaniment, which not only added to the picturesqueness of the school-life and to the enjoyment of the scholars, but also contributed much to their moral training and to their sense of the beauty of obedience. And I have no doubt that it is a wise thing for a teacher to devise a short code of rules for the exact and simultaneous performance of all the minor acts and movements of school-life, and to drill his scholars into habitual attention to them." In this district Feilding School closely approaches Dr. Fitch's ideas. Another writer says, "It is most disastrous in anything belonging to discipline to overlook beginnings. No leak ever broke up a dyke more certainly than trifles passed over break up the order of a class." We hope we will not be misunderstood in this matter. We have no desire to turn children into machines—in some matters. But to quote Dr. Fitch again: "There is a sphere of our life in which it is desirable to cultivate independence and freedom, and there is another in which it is essential to part with that independence for the sake of attaining some end which is desirable for others as well as for ourselves. In the development of individual character and intelligence the more room we can leave for spontaneous action the better; but when we are members of a community the healthy corporate life of that community requires of us an abnegation of self. . . . A pupil is in an artificial community which has a life and needs of its own, and, in so far as he contributes to make up this school-life, he may be well content to suppress himself, and to become a machine. There are times in life for asserting our individuality, and there are times for effacing it. And a good school should provide means whereby it may be seen when and how we may do both."

In close connection with the foregoing is the "attitude" of the pupils. Considering, as we do, that lazy attitudes border on insolence, we confess that we are surprised at the number of schools in which they are prevalent. There cannot be solid work and lazy attitudes at the same time. Mr. Thring says, "Attitude makes false work, as well as betrays false work. A competent judge shall tell in a moment, by simply looking through the window where a class is at work, whether good work can be going on there. The attitude of the boys will show. For, though there can be true