

It should be said at once that the recent emphasis upon approach to Infant Number through the concrete is universally appreciated and practised; but some teachers have not yet an understanding of the need for logical progression in their work. Our experience tends to show that unless pupils by the age of eleven acquire a quick, accurate, automatic response in addition and subtraction facts and in "times" tables, as a general rule they are past the stage when they have any interest in learning these things.

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Boys' and Girls' Agricultural Clubs.—That the work of the boys' and girls' agricultural clubs continues to flourish is indicated by the creation of a new record for the number of completed projects in the 1947-48 season. Undiminished interest is displayed by farmers, committeemen, parents, and teachers.

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Testing and Recording.—What is expected now is a record of progress throughout the year. As much as possible should be found out about the child so that teaching can be adjusted accordingly and complete but confidential information should be handed on from class to class and school to school.

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Visiting Teachers.—On all sides we hear favourable and well merited comment upon the work being done by our visiting teachers.

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Libraries.—During the period a worthy advance has been made in providing more and better books. The chief sources have been (a) liberal grants made through the Department, and (b) funds raised locally and carrying subsidy. The schools are becoming library conscious, and great satisfaction with the improved stocks has been expressed by the teachers.

The placing of books in our schools creates a problem of suitable storage and display. In our larger schools we believe that nothing short of large and suitably-equipped library rooms will meet the need.

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Social Studies.—The memorization by rote and meaningless recitation of facts in history and geography, though met with on occasions, is disappearing from the school, and the emphasis is shifting to the awakening of curiosity, to the learning through experience, and to the development of understanding. This by no means implies that the factual aspect of social studies can be neglected, but rather insists that facts gained through vital experience have significance to the child, develop right attitudes and sound understanding, and provide growing points for further knowledge and deeper realization.

Much valuable work is being done along project lines, the most successful where there is full encouragement and adequate guidance on the part of the teacher. It should be realized that projects are not confined to book work. Projects of the activity type, often linked with the work in art and crafts—e.g., setting up in the sand-tray the farm with its fields and its animals, or the making of models to illustrate the development of transport—are exercises of paramount import in all classes, and particularly to the non-verbal type of pupil.

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Health and Physical Education.—The provision in some schools of some form of school meal or refreshment, often with primitive equipment and at great personal inconvenience to teachers and other helpers, is but one instance of a solicitude for the pupils' welfare. Parent-teacher associations have done valuable service in linking the work of the school and the Health Department with the home, which can do so much more than the school to ensure that favourable conditions exist for maximum physical development. Good health habits are practised, and every effort has been made to establish that sense of security and group well-being that is of vital importance to the child's educational development.

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Music.—Very creditable, happy festivals have been held. The interest engendered in music through them will do much to foster a love for music that will carry over into adult life.

In many schools, both country and city, the Department's radio lesson fills a real need. When the lesson is intelligently prepared for and followed the results are generally good. The training colleges and the schools in the main centres were privileged to have a visit from Miss Louie de Rusette, an English teacher who has done much in percussion-band work.

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Group Teaching and Class-room Recognition of Individual Differences in Capacity of Pupils.—In co-operation with the Psychological Division of the Education Department, a full-scale experiment in stream or ability-attainment grouping was well begun in 1948 at Oxford District High School, where Standard I to Form II were reorganized into A, B, and C streams. This plan has been taken up enthusiastically by the headmaster and his standard class assistants, each of whom teaches a composite class of as nearly equal ability as relative attainments and numbers permit. This experiment is being persisted with very painstakingly, and a worthwhile result is anticipated.