

learned about them. Exercises of this kind should form an important part of class-teaching, and they will no doubt be better dealt with in future. In the lower classes an effort is being made to foster a fuller and more realistic study of the features of the district familiar to the children as a basis for map-interpretation; also to get the schools provided with an illustrated school geography as a work of reference, the instructive relief maps of which should greatly aid in realising the dominant physical features of the continents (Herbertson and Frye's "Illustrated School Geography").

Little, if any, improvement can be recorded in the teaching of grammar. The work of Standards III. and IV. is still better than that of Standards V. and VI., being both more thorough and more intelligent. The inflections prescribed for Standard IV. are, however, often poorly known. Mr. Goodwin speaks favourably of the work of Standard V., but in both Standard V. and Standard VI. the Inspectors generally are greatly disappointed with the state of the teaching. Many pupils—perhaps a fourth of the whole—blunder grossly in the parts of speech. In Standards VI. analysis is rarely well taught, and is often unsatisfactory. The functions of the clauses are frequently ignored, and when specified are too often incorrectly described. The work, however, is extraordinarily unequal, and good exercises are regularly received from a few pupils when the great majority of their class-fellows give in moderate or inferior ones. Too much dependence seems to be placed on oral teaching in this subject. Written exercises would be more serviceable; they are comparatively easy of correction by the pupils; and they would throw a much clearer light on the work of the pupils and teachers. No doubt the failure to teach this subject more efficiently is partly due to want of time, but I think the flaccid discipline, referred to in connection with writing, is largely accountable for the condition of the instruction. Only a small number of the pupils are got to apply themselves to the study. Most dislike it and neglect it. Government by coaxing is not strong enough to counterbalance the distaste for this very precise and valuable vehicle of mental discipline.

"The work done in history," says Mr. Goodwin, "continues to be much the same as I have found it in former years. In too many cases the pupils have a dim and unintelligent idea of the meaning and scope of the lessons they have received. There are exceptions to this, but I am convinced that history as it is now presented to the children is of little use to them." Mr. Purdie says, "In most of the schools (northern district) history is only fairly known, and gives evidence of having been very meagre in scope and wanting in comprehensiveness. Dates and bare facts were well known, but the dependence of one event upon another was not sufficiently recognised." Mr. Mulgan finds the teaching most efficient in Standard III., with a falling-off as you go higher. In the larger schools, however, history is more broadly and more successfully taught than would appear from these estimates, founded mainly on experience of rural and smaller schools. Most of our pupils are too immature to be able to derive much profit from the study of history. Purely oral teaching, too, is not a very effective way of dealing with it; it is difficult to impart a sufficiently thorough knowledge in this way. On the whole, I think the time devoted to the lessons on it is not badly spent, though of accurate knowledge little may be gained. We should remember, too, that Mr. Goodwin and Mr. Purdie expect more than teachers are required to give, for they are told in the regulations that "pupils will not be expected to trace the remote causes, or even to remember the proximate causes, of great events." Fortunately most teachers do more than is here laid down. A grave fault in the teaching is inaccuracy as to the chronological order of events, and even in dates. Half-learned dates are merely a mental encumbrance.

The teaching of elementary science shows very fair improvement. A large number of schools have now a sufficient provision of apparatus, and it is generally turned to satisfactory account in the teaching. In several of the larger schools good work is being done in this subject, the pupils being usually able to describe the more important experiments shown, often to sketch the apparatus on the blackboard, and to explain the changes observed. Where apparatus is wanting or deficient the value of the work is small. Recognising the unprofitable nature of dogmatic teaching of science, Mr. Mulgan wisely advises those who have no adequate provision of purchased apparatus to take up mainly topics that lend themselves to simple experiment or demonstration, and to teach these thoroughly. The educative result would in this way be enhanced. He adds that very few schools now take the course of agricultural science. This is to be regretted. In the larger centres and villages the general science course seems more suitable, but in the most rural schools the agricultural course is to be preferred.

Several of the Inspectors consider that object-lessons are still treated too much as information lessons. To remedy this old-standing failing I have asked all teachers to provide themselves with Murche's "Object-lessons in Elementary Science," one of the best existing text-books on object-lessons. As regards both aims and methods, these books mark a decided advance, and their influence may be expected to check the temptation "to stray along the alluring path of lecturing on the wonderful," to which, Mr. Mulgan finds, many teachers succumb.

Recitation is seldom well taught, though it is generally satisfactory. I do not consider the teaching of sewing very efficient; the pupils are too often unprovided with thimbles and with needles of suitable sizes, and are allowed to work in improper ways. I have found many older girls, who have been taught sewing for years, pushing the needle into the cloth without any use of the thimble. The finished samples submitted at examination are usually well worked, in spite of these faults of method, which have sprung up through lack of proper supervision by the teachers in charge. Owing to the large size of the classes they find it difficult to move round regularly among the workers, and allow themselves to be too closely occupied with fixing work at isolated tables. Most of this fixing should be done by the pupils themselves, as the regulations direct.

Class singing is good in a number of the larger schools, and fair in most of those where it is taught. But ability to read simple passages, even in the tonic sol-fa notation, is rare, and is too