

through the school. How to interpret and voice accentuation marks and utilise the other aids now given in all reading-books, how to phrase, how to determine the emphatic word of a phrase group, how to use a dictionary—these are some of the things in which they must be soundly instructed to render them capable of helping themselves to the fullest extent. It is our opinion that the children of the standard classes should have an hour's reading a day; and, in schools with but one teacher, the hour might, in the middle and senior classes, be utilised approximately as follows: (a) Twenty-five minutes in the study of the language and content of the lesson to be afterwards read to the teacher; (b) fifteen minutes in preparing the phrasing and emphasis; (c) the rest of the hour in reading and explaining in class to the teacher. If an hour is considered too long for children to work continuously at the subject, work of another kind might be interposed between either (a) and (b) or (b) and (c).

Some such arrangement of study would put this important subject on a level with arithmetic, which now absorbs too much time—sometimes four or five times as much as reading and the study of the language and content of the reading-lessons. At bottom arithmetic involves but two operations—addition and subtraction, and the solution of a problem depends upon ability to determine which of these operations to apply to this or that step of the solution; and this ability is simply power to interpret the language in which the problem is stated. Outside the mechanical operations, arithmetic is only a question of interpretation of language; and hence a child's success in the study of it is largely conditioned by his knowledge of language. It is, we think, certain that a wider and deeper study of the language and content of the reading-lessons would greatly aid the child in his arithmetic, and also greatly increase his power of doing other kinds of intellectual work.

The children work up very thoroughly the spelling of the words of their reading-books, but above Class P they receive very little sympathetic teaching in it. Such rules as there are should be thoroughly taught; but, above all, we should see to it that the children know the meanings of the words the forms of which they are to learn. Words are but symbols, mere representatives of things and ideas; they are of value only because of what they represent, and, if we learn the symbol without the thing symbolised, we exalt the shadow above the substance, the husk above its content. The richest possession of a word is its meaning, and until we have possessed ourselves of this we have no use for the symbol, and find it difficult to learn and still more difficult to remember. Content and form should go together.

The mark for writing is lower than it ought to be. Examination of the copy and exercise books not infrequently reveals absence of care in the pupils and of correction by the teacher, the same errors in slope, in spacing, and in form of letter occurring page after page without any indication that they have been seen and criticized by the teacher. In a large proportion of schools, however, writing is well taught, and the results achieved are very creditable. Slovenly slatework is responsible for a good deal of inferior penmanship. We should be glad to see the slate banished from the senior classes.

We have little to add to what we have said in previous reports on the teaching of arithmetic. So far as blackboard demonstration is concerned, the proofs and setting of the work are generally excellent; but neither proof nor setting appeals to a mind unprovided, or inadequately provided, with accurate concepts based upon sense experience. We are sure that in the lower and middle classes there is too little concrete work done for the formation of accurate concepts of arithmetic; and hence the pupils pass on to the upper classes with minds inadequately equipped to follow intelligently the well-ordered reasoning of their teachers. We must again call attention to the following facts:—

1. That in the upper classes insufficient provision is made for exercise in long tots and cross tots, and in rapid multiplication and division of large numbers. Five minutes a day given to this class of work would be ample.

2. There is too little memorising of verbal statements of important principles: what the teacher teaches is not made articulate in his pupils.

3. The pupils are set to work exercises in weights and measures without having seen and handled the weights and measures themselves. It is obvious that actual weighing and measuring should precede abstract exercises in the tables.

4. The pupils are not trained to interpret and apply the explanations of their text-books. In other words, they are not trained so to use a text-book as to acquire power to help themselves when they leave school. No treatment of a subject is satisfactory that does not tend to develop in the pupils power to go alone.

The low mark gained in composition is due partly to the inherent difficulty of the subject, but much more, we think, to the following circumstances: (1.) Except when writing a formal composition exercise, the pupils of many schools pay little attention to the form of their answers. That, they seem to think, is a matter of indifference, for they are not composing when they are answering questions. Once or twice a week they have to brace themselves to the ordeal of composition, and then they do their best; but a best that is attempted so seldom is apt to be, and often is, a very poor affair. (2.) The teacher's ideal of composition is often too low. He is too often satisfied with the mere absence of errors in concord and government. Thought content, arrangement of the words, phrases, and clauses of the sentences, punctuation, coherent arrangement of the sentences of the paragraph, these, though the very things upon which both the disciplinary and the utilitarian value of the exercise depend, are the things we find least considered. (3.) In the senior classes the knowledge of grammar possessed by the pupils is generally inadequate to the requirements of clear connected discourse covering about a page of foolscap. By "knowledge of grammar" we mean not mere capacity to parse and analyse, though this has its value, but such knowledge of literary form as will enable the pupil to judge the right and the wrong in speech, to speak and write with due observance of the rules of concord and government, to place the parts of his