

sentences in effective setting, and to connect his sentences in orderly sequence. If made to bear on the whole mechanism of sentence building and sentence connection, grammar is a fine exercise in observation and sound thinking; and we may add that no other subject affords a finer test of a man's capacity to teach. It is necessary to say that punctuation is a department not of elocution, but of grammar.

We are not satisfied with the results achieved in geography and history. In these subjects too little is done by the teachers to establish points of contact between what their pupils see around them and what they read about in their books, between what lies within their experience and what lies beyond it and is brought before them through the medium of another's mind. In and around the children lie their own samples of nature and experience. The samples of nature and experience that lie beyond their own horizon are very like those that lie within it; but unless they know their own well they cannot imagine those of the rest of the world. It is here that our teaching often fails; it does not find in the seen and known points of contact for the unseen and unknown.

Drawing is good of its kind, but much of it is of the wrong kind—work from the flat, not from objects. With the introduction of handwork we expect to see great improvement in this respect.

It has been said that Englishmen see with their ears, and we are frequently reminded of the force of the observation. It is, of course, obvious to every one that we ought, when it is possible, to gain our knowledge of things from a study of the things themselves; nevertheless, we not infrequently act as if the ears, not the eyes, were the doorways of the mind. We are glad, however, to be able to record improvement in object-lessons and experimental science teaching. In the former the object is generally present in the teacher's hand if not in the pupils, and in the latter there is a fair amount of experimentation. The object ought, if possible, to be in every child's hand, and it is important that in every experiment the following stages should be observed: (1) An accurate description of what is done; (2) an accurate statement of what results from what is done; (3) an accurate statement of what is inferred from the result. And here we would caution young teachers against a too common fault, the fault of allowing their pupils to regard as valid an inference drawn from one or two experiments. Besides the habit of exact observation and statement, the children ought to learn from their science-lessons something of the nature of valid induction. Instead of elementary experimental science, the teachers of country schools naturally take up the subject of greatest interest to rural children—namely, the "elements of agricultural knowledge." Elementary botany (classification omitted) is the basis of the instruction prescribed by the Department of Education, and this is precisely the science for the teaching of which we have not made adequate provision in the training-college. The result is that young teachers go to the country with little practical knowledge of the subject that is of special interest and value to their pupils. Than botany of the kind prescribed no other science furnishes finer material for training in observation and inference, and no other science is capable of being made so interesting to children. Its materials are clean, they are beautiful, they lie at hand everywhere; but, unfortunately, few teachers have sufficient first-hand knowledge of them to be able to make their teaching alive and inspiring, and therefore they fail to awake in their pupils that interest in their surroundings which it is one of the aims of science teaching to awake.

Physical culture is, we are glad to say, receiving more and more attention in our schools, especially in those of large centres. The aim of education is the formation of good habits; and habits are the product not of occasional but of frequent practice in this or in that physical or mental exercise. Physical culture should, therefore, be an affair of daily, not of weekly, concern. No day should pass without some practice in well-directed physical exercises, nor should any pass without some singing. We do not regard as satisfactory any arrangement of work that does not provide for physical exercises and singing several times a day in the changes from subject to subject. A few exercises or a verse or two of a song taken in the changes of lessons would add immensely to the working capacity of the children. We must again call attention to the ungraceful attitudes in which pupils are allowed to sit while working in the desks. Many teachers seem not to realise the importance of training their pupils to hold pen and reading-book in accordance with the directions of the experts.

In the large schools military drill continues to be very creditable to the boys and their teachers. We now have in the district a large number of cadet corps, and we think the time has come for affiliating them to a battalion and furnishing them with rifles suited to the strength of the boys. We object to the dummy rifle, which only fools the boys and does not provide them with the means for learning to shoot. It is a national duty to have our boys trained not only to handle a rifle, but also to shoot with it. If they were provided with suitable weapons they might proceed to the butts for practice in shooting while the girls are at cookery work.

The needlework of our schools continues to reflect great credit upon both teachers and pupils. Under the new scheme of salaries the Department has not, we regret to say, made provision for the teaching of this important branch of handwork in schools of thirty to forty taught by a male teacher.

The singing of a large number of schools is wanting in sweetness, and the recitation in expression.

Some teachers and Committees are less careful of the Board's property than they should be. There is one thing that ought, we think, to be forbidden—namely, the use of the school-rooms for dancing, except in connection with the annual entertainment given for the purpose of raising funds for the school. In some of them weekly or fortnightly dancing parties are held during the winter months, greatly to the detriment of the rooms and their furniture, and to the inconvenience of the teachers.

Many of the schools and out-offices are not kept so clean as they should be. We have frequently to complain of the insanitary condition of the latter. The Board attends well to the