

years instead of four as heretofore, and will leave for the Training-college just when they are beginning to be useful as effective members of the teaching-staff. In our opinion the order should be reversed : these young people should first go to the Training-college and then such of them as prove worthy should be employed for two years as junior teachers in the large schools. This would, we consider, be an immense gain both to them and to the teaching-power of the schools. Moreover, it would cost the country very little more than the present unsatisfactory system, which is entirely indefensible except on the score of economy ; and, since economy here is highly detrimental to efficiency, it is indefensible even on that score.

We return to the size of the classes. The following table gives for each grade of school from Grade 6 to Grade 21 the average number of pupils per teacher, two pupil-teachers being reckoned as equal to one adult teacher, which is, of course, a greatly exaggerated estimate of pupil-teacher efficiency :—

Grade.							Number of Pupils in Average Attend- ance per Teacher.	Number of Pupils on Roll per Teacher.
6	..	..	..	..	..	..	39	46
7	..	..	..	..	..	..	41	48
8	..	..	..	..	..	..	44	51
9	..	..	..	..	..	..	42	49
10	..	..	..	..	..	..	45	53
11	..	..	..	..	..	..	47	56
12	..	..	..	..	..	..	47	56
13	..	..	..	..	..	..	47	56
14	..	..	..	..	..	..	50	59
15	..	..	..	..	..	..	49	58
16	..	..	..	..	..	..	52	61
17	..	..	..	..	..	..	50	59
18	..	..	..	..	..	..	53	62
19	..	..	..	..	..	..	52	61
20	..	..	..	..	..	..	53	62
21	..	..	..	..	..	..	53	62

In every grade the head teacher is here reckoned as a class teacher. In the higher grades he is not and cannot be a class teacher. In the lower grades the pupils taught by one teacher comprise two or more classes.

Of course, it seldom happens that all the pupils of a class are present ; but, in the large schools with which we are here dealing, the excess of the attendance over the mean is frequently very considerable. It is in them that the average is most affected by bad weather ; for, the majority of the pupils living at no great distance from the school, the attendance, though greatly reduced on wet days, seldom falls low enough to come within the scope of the regulation that makes a *non-dies* of every school-day on which the attendance is less than half the roll-number. It is obvious therefore that, within the grades here enumerated, the classes are too large for efficient work of the kind planned in present-day courses of instruction and study. If the research method is to be adopted in every branch of study, and it ought to be, the sooner we realise the conditions under which it can be profitably used the better for education ; and one of the conditions is that every teacher shall have a class of such size as will enable him so to individualise as to be able to train his pupils to study on their own account and thus to acquire habits of self-help and self-reliance, so that when they leave school they shall be possessed by the feeling that given a good book they can dig the heart out of it for themselves. Children taught *en masse* leave without the power and even without the desire to help themselves ; they therefore leave without what it is the chief function of their school life to give, preparation for self-education. The teacher has so much to do that he has not time to train them to think.

As we are shortly to have four training-colleges at work, the necessity for employing unclassified teachers ought soon to disappear.

Irregularity of attendance is, if we may judge from experience, likely to remain. If the absentees were always the same individuals, teachers could order their teaching for the pupils who are habitually present, and treat the rest as a tail of laggards that must spend a second year in the class ; but unfortunately it is now Tom, Harry, and Jane, and now Jack, Jim, and Maggie, and so on through a large proportion of the class, who are absent from this or that day's teaching ; and, to the great retardation and detriment of the work, the unfortunate teacher has, through the cycle of the year and with much vexation of spirit, to repeat to-day and to-morrow what he taught yesterday and the day before. When will parents realise how much the success and sunniness of their children's school life lie with them, and what their hearty co-operation and sympathy mean to the life of an earnest teacher ?

Premature promotion must be laid partly at the doors of parents and partly at the doors of teachers, many of whom are not strong enough to resist the importunate demands of unreasonable parents, who, no matter what the character of the attendance, expect to see their children advanced a class every year ; and what they expect they too often get.

For some years the Department has issued for the middle and higher standards test-cards in arithmetic, and to these it has, since the advent of the new syllabus, added test-cards in composition. The former are generally well drawn as far as they go, but the latter are, in our opinion, very faulty in what they suggest as right lines of study and deficient as tests of rational teaching of sentence-forms—that is, teaching that connects accurate observation of appropriately selected forms with accurate reasoning about the forms, and that trains the pupils to discover for themselves those idioms of sentence-structure which are to expression almost what the multiplication table is to arithmetic, to express them accurately, to use them in their own composition, and to see them or the breach of them in that of others. They