

a weak spot. Much might be done by correlating letter-writing with handwriting. Good models, using familiar names and embodying the needs of the district, should be drawn up by the teachers for transcription; one model of a type would not be satisfactory, as it would tend to stereotype one form; but it would not be too great a tax on the teacher to draw up several of a kind, and these being transcribed during the writing lesson would be of great assistance to the child, when similar exercises were set for composition. The lesson might take this course—*e.g.*, an excuse from a parent for a child's absence; the children from Standard IV to Standard VI taken collectively might be required orally to form such a letter; after this had been done satisfactorily by several, with the help and criticism of the teacher, the classes could be encouraged to make further individual effort in writing."

In too few schools do children show any willingness to state with freedom and fullness what they know. To give evidence of their knowledge—of what they have been taught and may be expected to have assimilated—should not be so unwelcome a task. This is no doubt in considerable measure due to the teacher's predominant use of "teaching questioning," and his neglect of "examination questioning." Every teacher who is to educate must be constantly filling the role of examiner, and using the style of questioning that is appropriate to that process, avoiding unnecessary help and suggestion, and calling for coherent and detailed statements and explanations. Most of the recapitulatory work should be of this type.

Arithmetic is on the whole satisfactorily taught. Mr. Garrard finds it well done in nearly all his schools, and Mr. Purdie gives a similar estimate. Mr. Crowe and Mr. Burnside consider it satisfactory. The chief weakness appears in the Standard V class, though, owing to the heavy syllabus requirements, the subject is not a strong one in the Standard II class. Mr. Grierson fears that the weakness in the subject is due to want of skill in the teaching. Mr. Stewart is distinctly pessimistic. He says, "This is a weak subject, especially in Standard V. The mathematics of the primary school certainly demand more adequate treatment. I attribute the weakness to (a) poor blackboard demonstration; (b) the fact that most teachers do not recognise that the examples given in mental arithmetic should be of the same type as the slate-work, and that in all cases new rules should be taught from examples capable of mental solution; (c) to the neglect of the simple theory and the working of simple cases given in the text-books. I have found hardly a teacher who makes a practice, when a new rule has to be dealt with, of making his class attempt to get up for themselves the printed matter given in explanation of the rule. A large number of children are quite capable of doing this; it affords a mental stimulus, cultivates independent effort, and the results are consequently more permanent and have a greater educational value."

More of the work in arithmetic could be done on paper, or written up in exercise-books. In general the steps in the working of examples are clearly set out, but brief indications of the meaning or the value of each step are too often omitted. In every example of the nature of a problem such explanations of the steps should be considered indispensable. Long tots should be used at the periodical examinations of all classes above Standard III. It is a great defect in the arithmetic cards issued by the Department that no work of this kind is included in the exercises.

On the whole, drawing is very satisfactorily dealt with, and a great deal of good and not a little admirable work is produced, both in freehand drawing and in brush drawing, in a number of the larger schools. It is desirable that the smaller schools should be supplied with small boards, fitted for placing in the desks, for the teaching of free-arm drawing—an exercise that is producing good results in many of the larger schools. Referring to this subject, Mr. Stewart writes, "Most teachers employ too many crutches; it is no uncommon thing to find children in the upper classes drawing from copies almost covered with ruled guide-lines, the ruler in turn being employed by the child in its reproduction. Now, whilst a moderate use of instruments is quite legitimate in pattern-drawing, they should have no place in freehand—such a practice destroys the value of drawing on a large scale, and hinders the child in obtaining a natural and rapid style. Drawing from objects is very desirable, but teachers should remember that a drawing of a spray of leaves or flowers may involve, and frequently does involve, considerable difficulties in foreshortening. Geometrical drawing receives but scant attention. Plane geometry, to be well taught, needs frequent blackboard demonstration, and may be made the means by an intelligent teacher of considerable mental training. Solid geometry is rarely taken, model-drawing of a sort being generally chosen. When we remember how unsuitable are our desk arrangements for teaching model-drawing, and what great technical advantage accrues from a knowledge of solid geometry, we may well express surprise at its neglect."

Drawing from memory is readily done in many schools, but original designs are seldom found in the pupils' drawing-books. In many instances the amount of work done in a permanent form in the course of the year is small, much less than one might expect from the time allowed for the subject. Evidence of random strokes and of much trouble in amending them is often to be seen in the liberal rubbing-out to which the pages testify.

The geography of Course A is intelligently handled in many schools, and is seldom unsatisfactory. As it is intended to be founded on a basis of observation and to be treated as nature-study, the topics selected for teaching should be mainly such as their local surroundings bring under the personal notice of pupils and teachers. Matters that lie outside the range of the pupils' experience and observation, unless they can be illustrated by suitable pictures and models, are not worth taking up. In connection with the work prescribed for Standard VI, helpful diagrams need to be more freely prepared and used. The action of land and sea breezes, and the way the wind blows inwards towards the low-pressure central area in a cyclonic storm, are examples of what is meant. The cyclonic storms, of frequent occurrence in this province, in which the wind blows from the east or the north-east, backs to the north, and then works round through north-west to west, can be readily explained by such a diagram, which, moreover, throws a flood of light on the way in which the distribution of air-pressure influences the direction and force of the wind. The reason for the