

was in former times, the artificial reproduction of another person's thoughts and expressions. Probably this is due in some measure to the higher value attached to English as a subject of instruction, and to the conviction that any education that leaves the pupil comparatively ignorant of his mother-tongue has failed in its purpose. Among the causes of the improvement noted may also be mentioned the generally more efficient employment of oral composition as an essential feature and the wider course of reading now followed, together with the correlation of English with the other subjects of the syllabus.

In a good school, too, a no less important factor is operative. A comprehensive and carefully graduated scheme of instruction providing for continuity of study, teaching, recapitulation, and periodic revision is formulated for the whole school. In the infants' or lower department the child is encouraged to reproduce orally some of the simpler facts he has gleaned from short conversation lessons in nature-study, story-telling, or fairy-tales, in the telling of which he is incidentally taught "how to speak nicely." In the upper classes practice is given in expansion of outline essays, letters of various kinds, and the reproduction of passages of poetry and prose, while the direct instruction is of a more advanced character. Under such a scheme of study the teaching, if mentally stimulating, must be generally effective.

Though much has been accomplished, much remains to be done to place the teaching of this important subject on an entirely satisfactory plane. In few of our schools is there given the systematic instruction necessary to understand the "how" and the "why" of common grammatical constructions, and the presentation of the full programme of English outlined in the syllabus is the exception rather than the rule. Too often the teachers, whether through lack of experience or otherwise, appear to be working very much in the dark, with but hazy ideas of what to do and confused notions of how to do it. They submit full programmes of work in history, geography, nature-study, or science, but fail to systematize a scheme in English teaching such as would serve to carefully plan out its gradual and progressive development from the infants' classes to Standard VI. And yet no subject is of so vital importance; no subject lends itself to so wide and extended a correlation. Every lesson in the school, every occasion of intercourse between teacher and pupils, can be made a means to the understanding and use of speech.

ARITHMETIC.—The results in arithmetic were substantially in agreement with those of the previous year, Standard V showing considerable weakness, and suggesting that some adjustment of requirements would be welcomed. While giving credit for the very fine work presented in many schools, there is reason for feeling that the benefits and possibilities of shorter methods have not yet been fully realized. This is especially evident in schools where the results of mental tests showed that pupils recognized no "short cuts," but endeavoured by laboured calculations to arrive at solutions. A plea would be entered here for neat work, and the setting-forth of the various steps in orderly and logical sequence when working examples. Several of our schools present arithmetic papers that are models of neatness and orderly arrangement. But a tangled mass of figures is very puzzling to interpret, and too frequently leads to the undoing of the pupil and the disappointment of the teacher. More attention might be paid in lower classes to the correlation of paper-folding with arithmetic and elementary geometrical notions. Further, there is no reason why the agricultural plot should not be drawn upon for concrete examples in mensuration, associated with a new interest in areas and dimension.

GEOGRAPHY.—It is very pleasing to be able to report that a rational treatment of this subject is becoming more general. Wider recognition has been given to the humanistic aspect of the teaching of geography, and a more equitable adjustment has been arranged of the claims of Course A and Course B, with due regard to the relative importance of each. However, there are some schools in which the geography syllabus fails to provide the knowledge that should be possessed by every pupil passing through the primary curriculum. Too much time is devoted to the physical features and too little to the consideration of the earth as the abode of man. Unfortunately, some geography lessons are mere lectures, and fail to give lasting results. Sparing use is made of comparative methods and diagrammatic aids, and meagre demands are made upon the individual efforts of the children. In some schools a greater amount of correlation between the two courses might be attempted, with resulting conservation of time and energy.

DRAWING AND HANDWORK.—The importance of drawing in its various forms not only as a subject of æsthetic and practical value as the "shorthand of expression," but also as a means of mental development and a useful adjunct to the teaching of other subjects in the school curriculum, is gradually receiving greater recognition by our teachers. The method of treatment has undergone considerable change. The exclusive use of the old freehand and geometrical models is being gradually superseded by more modern methods, and pupils are now set to study objects at first hand, with a view to enable them to see correctly and to represent accurately what they see.

Without a doubt, drawing in conjunction with brushwork and plasticine modelling is doing much to provide effective hand-and-eye training in our best schools. But there are others less satisfactory. In not a few this freer and wider treatment of the subject has led to desultory teaching. Too often the exercises suggest that they have been selected without serious attempt to insure continuity of study or graduation or variety of treatment. To make our instruction in drawing effective the teaching should have a definite aim in view. After taking into account the circumstances of the school, its staff and equipment, there should be formulated a definite method of presentment of this subject for all classes, from the highest to the lowest, by means of a varied and graduated scheme of exercises involving the use of chalk, pencil, brush, or instruments. The course of drawing outlined in sections 44 to 46 of the syllabus is definite and clear enough to enable teachers to construct such a scheme which, in our opinion, will go far to insure in the teaching of drawing and handwork in our schools unity of purpose and efficiency of treatment.