

whilst two teachers each had to have their returns sent back for correction four times, another two had to make a second try on three separate occasions. If teachers fully recognized the inconvenience and additional work caused by their sending in inaccurate returns, no doubt they would exercise more care in their compilation. A return has little value unless it is absolutely correct, and the teacher who averred that the Inspector who had sent back a return for adjustment 'seemed to have a passion for accuracy' indicated, in a crude way, an attitude of mind which one hopes is not very general."

CARELESS CORRECTION.—Closely related to the above is the lack of careful correction of the exercises worked by the pupils. As we consider it absolutely essential to good work that all exercises should be carefully supervised and corrected, we have made it a practice at our inspection visit to examine the pupils' exercise-books in order to see how the corrections have been made, and it is not altogether strange that we almost invariably find that those teachers who are inaccurate in compiling their returns are the most careless in the supervision and correction of the pupils' exercises. Moreover, we could go a step further, and state that much of the indifferent teaching is due to this want of care and thoroughness, and we fail to see how it is possible to secure good results where this laxity exists.

ARITHMETIC.—As before reported, the chief weakness noticeable in this subject is due to mechanical inaccuracy arising partly from inadequate memorizing of the tables and partly from lack of training in the mental processes underlying the work. In addition to mental arithmetic being used as a means to explain the principles of every type of question worked, a special time should be set apart on the time-table for this subject. The neglect of mental calculations is especially noticeable in the working of the bill in Standard IV and Standard V. We have made it a rule when drawing up our examination-papers to set questions to test whether the pupils of these standards have a ready knowledge of the rules for calculating mentally scores, dozens, aliquot parts, &c.

DRAWING.—In many of our schools too little attention is paid to drawing. Very often no attempt is made to meet the requirements of the syllabus. Instrumental drawing should be treated more fully and systematically. The problems, as a rule, are neatly entered in the drawing-books, but when the pupil is asked to construct the figure on the blackboard he not infrequently shows that he has failed to intelligently grasp the process. The knowledge of geometry gained by the pupils of the upper standards might well be extended to the teaching of design. Solid geometry and model-drawing require more intelligent treatment. In teaching model-drawing exercises should be carefully graduated, and the principles of vanishment should be fully explained and demonstrated. We would recommend teachers to procure a copy of "A Manual of Drawing," Parts I and II, by W. W. Rawson.

NEEDLEWORK.—It is our experience that the neatness and accuracy which is demanded in other subjects is very often absent in the samples of needlework presented to us. We seldom or never see the blackboard used as a means of illustrating the more common errors. Nor in many schools is the prescribed course fully covered. The examining of the sewing is frequently rendered unnecessarily difficult on account of the indifferent manner in which the samples are arranged for our inspection, the samples in many cases being neither labelled nor set out in standards.

PHONICS.—We have repeatedly pointed out that in a number of our schools the reading and recitation are often marred by faulty enunciation and impurity of vowel sounds. This is a matter that might be given more attention to in the training of our teachers. They have otherwise a very great difficulty in applying a remedy. It is only by constant watching on the part of the teacher that much improvement may be looked for. It is admitted that a large proportion of the children when they enter our schools has already acquired habits of slovenly speech and defective methods of breathing in connection with the organs of speech. Many teachers seem to overlook the fact that the speaking mechanism itself has got a defective bias which can, as a rule, be best remedied by a course of phonic drill. The vocal organs must be exercised or drilled in such a way that they acquire the power of producing pure vowel or consonant sounds. Intelligent and systematic practice in correct speaking will gradually overcome such common defects—the result largely of the child's surroundings outside of the school—as distorted vowel sounds, the clipping of words, and the smothering of certain endings; but such practice must be based on a knowledge of the elements of phonics. We can recommend as a suitable guide on this subject "The Science of Speech" (Dumville).

RESULTS.—The following table shows the State schools that gained the highest results in 1911. [The table, being mainly of local interest, is not reprinted.]

It is gratifying to note that this year there are eighteen schools that have received "good" or a higher mark for efficiency, and "very good" or a higher mark for order, discipline, and tone, as against ten for last year.

We are, &c.,

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The Chairman, Taranaki Education Board.