

introduced by importation from the Home-land. When we notice how rapidly these barbarisms are softened or disappear under the refining influence of our schools we can congratulate the latter upon possessing and maintaining to some degree the purity of the English tongue.

A review of the marks assigned for writing shows that, in our judgment, the work presented to us was highly appreciated, and the number of schools in which the subject is well taught is larger than before. Where the execution is faulty strict supervision of both copy and exercise—in fact, of all written work—is required, and the insistence upon a hygienic position and a correct and facile hold of the pen. The best results are attainable only under careful supervision and strict discipline.

As in previous years, the dictation and spelling tests were all, except the dictation of Standard VI, taken from the prepared readers, and though, on account of additional length, they were rather more difficult than usual, much greater accuracy was attained than in the two previous years, this branch of English making a more distinct advance than any other. In those few schools 16 per cent., which still find great difficulty with the subject, one or other of the following causes is operating: The teacher, through inability to spell, or from careless reading, fails to correct mistakes; spelling is learned from lists of words instead of from the sentence; systematic word-building is neglected or not continued through the higher classes by a study of roots, prefixes, and suffixes.

Though in composition improvement is also to be noted, in most classes we cannot bestow very warm commendation upon the highest products of the Sixth Standard children, none of our larger schools attaining the "good" limit for that class, although the great majority were thoroughly efficient. We would again emphasize the need for a thorough knowledge of the use of punctuation-marks, especially of the period; for the constant employment of oral composition; and for further practice in essay-writing upon themes that are attractive to the pupils, and upon which the teacher is fully satisfied that the children have abundance of material at command. We have been especially pleased with the way in which the requirements of the syllabus have of recent years been met in Standards I and II, and with a view to strengthening the work of the higher classes, which does not seem to develop in proportion to early promise, more difficult tests in composition were given in Standard III, so that the work, though good, does not show to such advantage as in Standard IV. The chief defect again was the meagreness of matter in essays. A choice of three themes was given from subjects of common observation, all of which might certainly have been treated in the ordinary school course. Some children, through lack of practice, still confine themselves to making up disjointed sentences, instead of writing a connected description. In the Fifth and Sixth a better knowledge of the functions of phrases and clauses was shown, but rarely was a correct use made of familiar homonyms, or of words of somewhat similar meaning but of different application. The meaning of prefixes and suffixes was almost unknown, and in the Sixth scarcely any attempts were made to give the Latin root of a word. In the Sixth Standard test cards the meanings of certain poetic terms and phrases were beyond the capacity of the candidates, and their knowledge of the way in which greater force or emphasis may be attached to words or phrases by a rearrangement of the order was also vague in the extreme.

The Sixth Standard children have found some of the cards set by the Department, especially those for 1911, extremely difficult, and we question whether for a pass examination too much is not demanded from children of fourteen years of age. The connected compositions—essays, letters, or reproduced anecdotes—were usually well rendered, and occasionally in well-chosen English. The vocabulary and diction are gradually improving, and should further improve under the wider course of reading now in vogue.

ARITHMETIC.—As usual, we show in the following table the results obtained throughout the district in this subject:—

|                         | Number of Schools. |             |              |               |              |             |              |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
|                         | Standard VI.       | Standard V. | Standard IV. | Standard III. | Standard II. | Standard I. | Preparatory. |
| Excellent ..            | 6                  | 7           | 13           | 9             | 16           | 9           | 4            |
| Good to excellent ..    | 4                  | 4           | 7            | 9             | 9            | 10          | 4            |
| Good ..                 | 5                  | 8           | 7            | 4             | 14           | 10          | 18           |
| Satisfactory to good .. | 4                  | 4           | 8            | 12            | 5            | 9           | 25           |
| Satisfactory ..         | 10                 | 15          | 12           | 20            | 19           | 7           | 29           |
| Efficient ..            | 29                 | 38          | 47           | 54            | 63           | 45          | 80           |
| Fair to satisfactory .. | 5                  | 12          | 10           | 7             | 4            | 8           | 11           |
| Fair ..                 | 15                 | 9           | 17           | 13            | 15           | 14          | 8            |
| Moderate to fair ..     | 3                  | 2           | 3            | 7             | 4            | 4           | 3            |
| Moderate ..             | 17                 | 12          | 6            | 5             | 4            | 6           | 3            |
| Inferior to moderate .. | 1                  | 1           | 1            | 3             | ..           | 1           | ..           |
| Inferior ..             | 14                 | 13          | 11           | 2             | 12           | 6           | ..           |
| Non-efficient ..        | 55                 | 49          | 48           | 37            | 39           | 39          | 25           |