

simple sentences of his own the ideas which he himself has formed on the subject concerning which he is writing. No value can be attached to any composition which is merely a more or less correct repetition of the teacher's words, and rightly so, for the child is in such cases merely a phonographic machine, able to reproduce only given records. As an instance, we have seen an unfortunate boy, asked to write on "The Uses of Railways" (and there is a railway in his district), attempt to work in paragraphs which appeared to be connected with "The Benefits of Education" or something of that sort, with painful though ludicrous results. Lessons on pictures, imaginative stories, reproductions of his own experiences, of stories he has read in prose or verse, the life-histories of animals with which he has first-hand acquaintance—these should provide ample material for written composition. Nor is there anything to prevent the pupils of the lower classes from attempting written work on such topics; indeed, in the best schools this is done in a very satisfactory manner.

We feel that we cannot impress too thoroughly upon all teachers the importance to their pupils of a good training in this subject. As a matter of fact the standard of education attained in every Native school depends solely upon its proficiency in English, which is, moreover, the only subject of the curriculum that offers to the public a criterion upon which the merits of a school may be judged.

It may be interesting to teachers to know that in other countries where the problem of teaching English to pupils that do not speak that language on entering school presents itself, the methods employed are practically identical with those adopted in our Native schools. As an illustration, it may be worth while to set forth in this report the following scheme outlined by Norman F. Black, M.A., of the Collegiate Institute, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, and submitted for our opinion during the year:—

"Stages or Types of Lessons."

"*First:* The names of common subjects of interest in and around the schoolroom are taught.

"*Second:* Employing names previously learned, and making free use of gestures to make clearer the meaning and to show its comprehension; sentences are then introduced based on such forms as the following: 'This is —'; 'That is —'; 'I have —'; 'You have —'; 'He has —'; 'I see —'; &c.

"*Third:* Definite drill follows on use of common prepositions. Special emphasis is thrown on the preposition till its meaning is clearly grasped, and where possible systematic use is made of contrast—e.g., 'The table is *on* the floor'; 'The book is *on* the table'; 'The bell is *on* the book'; 'The hat is *on* the bell'; &c. 'The bell is *under* the hat,' &c.

"*Fourth:* As early as possible systematic drill is introduced in the performance of actions in response to commands. These include all ordinary class tactics. Such drills are often transformed into amusing games by introducing humorous commands. Actions are described by teacher and pupils.

"*Fifth:* Oral composition based on pictures forms staple from now on. The pictures are used first to suggest names of common objects previously overlooked or omitted, and then to develop the 'story.' Illustrated catalogues and other advertisements provide material of special value, the 'stories' then generally taking the form of telling what the things represented are for, or 'do.' Lessons are frequently based on pictures drawn by pupils.

"*Sixth:* Free conversation. Reproduction of interesting tales, nursery rhymes, and other humorous and standard verse or prose. Reports of experiences and observation at home, &c. Written composition. Letter-writing is introduced earlier than for children from English-speaking homes.

"*General Observations.*—Language lessons are made as informal and merry as possible. The teacher frequently laughs with her pupils, but never at them (in their presence). Very free use is made of chorus answering, especially at first. Pupils are encouraged to assist and correct each other. Praise is used freely. Every lesson (arithmetic, drawing, writing, &c.) is made a language lesson. Singing is used to cultivate correct articulation. Teacher frequently accompanies pupils on walks to answer questions and encourage free expression."

2. ARITHMETIC.—The teaching of arithmetic to the children of the preparatory classes is very successful—indeed, it is one of the strongest points in our schools. We find, as a rule, that the pupils are able to work examples orally with considerable accuracy, and, in the best schools, with such rapidity that we occasionally find ourselves at a loss to contrive new questions to keep time with them. The effect of the oral work—and from classes P to S1, inclusive, only oral work is taken—on the English is very marked, and the result is that the higher classes show increasing ability to deal with "problems." At the same time we should prefer to see in these classes more time devoted to oral and mental work, for, as we have stated in former reports, that is the arithmetic of every-day life, and we intend if possible to take the necessary steps during the current year to secure this, as we feel that the infant divisions may now be left safely to the assistant teachers.

3. GEOGRAPHY and NATURE-STUDY may be regarded as only fairly well treated. They do not give us the satisfaction that we could wish, nor are the schemes of work well designed. We would again refer teachers who find difficulty in drawing up schemes in this subject to the "Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers," page 102, *et seq.*, where a wide range of subjects that would be very suited to our needs is presented.

4. HANDWORK.—Of the handwork subjects the *sewing* is undoubtedly the best, and in many schools the work reaches a high degree of efficiency. Dressmaking and cutting-out are taught successfully in many of the largest schools, in which the girls are also taught the use of the sewing-machine. Formerly sewing was taught in most Native schools to boys as well as girls, but this