

to the memory of Captain Cargill opposite the Customhouse; while the scenes of the military activities of the latter were pointed out on the map. All this occupied about ten minutes, with the result that the pupils felt that the lesson had several messages for them, and they set to work with eagerness to find them. They saw that the founding of Otago and Canterbury was a fact in close relation to their own lives both in and out of school. Here were history, literature, geography, and morals all treated in correlation in the best sense of the word. In school A the teacher spent more energy in trying to keep his pupils at attention than the teacher of school B did in his preparation and presentation together. It pays in more ways than one to come thoroughly prepared for the day's work.

*Oral Expression.*—Though much is being done to secure purity of speech, we have frequently reported that closer attention to this matter is requisite. As elocution has recently received its merited recognition in our Training College, and as more attention is being given to phonics, we confidently expect that, aided by the co-operation of parents, teachers will effect an improvement in articulation, inflexion, and pronunciation, and so counteract the tendencies that threaten to impair the beauty and effectiveness of our speech.

*Reading.*—We seldom have to complain of the fluency or accuracy of the reading in our schools, but there is much room for improvement in inflexion and modulation, especially in the rural schools. The reading-lesson is frequently treated too formally, and there appears to be a dread that if pupils are not actually reading aloud they are not making progress. If silent reading were properly treated as a basis for oral expression, the natural beauty of the children's voices would be much more in evidence, and would be retained for a much longer time than is now the case. Much of the poor reading is due to the fact that teachers do not realize that good reading is only good speaking.

*Composition.*—A marked improvement in the teaching of composition has resulted in a much higher standard of written work in all classes. Thoughts and impressions are carefully expressed with due regard to methodical arrangement; but we have frequently to call attention to the fact that the literary vocabulary is not sufficiently used, and that there is a tendency towards colloquialism and conversational exaggeration that should have no place in the written compositions of those who are heirs to such an estimable literature as ours. Formal grammar receives close attention; classification of parts of speech and of parts of sentences is accurate; the correction of sentences is generally well done, although the reasons for the corrections are not always so satisfactory as we could wish to see them. We regret being unable to report material improvement of punctuation, and this is the more remarkable when one considers the good work done in analysis.

*Spelling.*—In most of the schools spelling is very well done, and the pupils have little difficulty in making use of the isolated words in well-rounded sentences of their own build.

*Writing.*—Writing is on the whole good, but in the senior classes we fear this quality is sometimes gained at the cost of rapidity. Now that systematic instruction in writing must be given in the upper classes, we hope to find adopted a system of arm-movement that will lead to greater rapidity without loss of form.

*Arithmetic.*—On the whole arithmetic has been efficiently taught, but the results and the disciplinary value of the subject would be enhanced if, by the encouragement of short rational methods, the native wit and originality of the pupils were exercised to a greater degree. The child's difficulties in arithmetic are primarily due to two causes—imperfect knowledge of tables and inability to interpret the language of the questions. The remedy for the first is obvious; the second difficulty is easily removed by a few well-directed questions. If the tables are well memorized in the junior classes the Department's requirements in arithmetic can be readily met if an hour daily is assigned to the subject. Any excess of this is not only an unprofitable expenditure of time; it is an undue encroachment on the time that should be devoted to other subjects, and is a reflection on the teacher's method of treating the subject.

*Geography.*—The days of learning long lists of geographical names which meant nothing and illustrated nothing to the children have passed away, and in their place we have a treatment of earth-knowledge in which experience and environment are used as a basis from which the pupils are led to discover general laws and principles, places being memorized only in so far as they illustrate or are associated with important facts. Marked success has attended the teaching of this subject, which teachers have invested with such interest and reality that it now ranks amongst the more educative subjects of the curriculum. Mapping is too often treated as a copying exercise, rather than as a concise expression of the individual's topographical notions. The map showing the position of familiar places has a value that the old-time laboriously constructed product lacked; we have attached great importance to the rapid sketching of plans showing the relative positions of places that have come within the observation of the children in their daily lives or in their school excursions. We regret to note that well-directed school excursions have not been so frequent during the year as we could wish.

*History.*—In connexion with history we have noted with pleasure that more teachers are realizing the necessity for intensive treatment of the subject and are becoming dissatisfied with the bare reading of a text-book. The treatment of this subject required under the new regulations will do much to place this important subject in its proper position in the schools.

*School Gardening.*—[See E.-5, Report on Manual and Technical Instruction.]

*School Decoration.*—The æsthetic part of education receives much attention in some of our schools. By suitable pictures on the walls, by floral decorations, and by tasteful arrangement of flowers and shrubs in the grounds, quite a number of our schools are striving towards the cultivation of a taste for the beautiful. But it is not enough to expose pictures to the view without directing the attention to the suggestions and the means employed by the artist to produce the effect. With graphic representation, as with literary composition, a little elementary knowledge