

eight were present; seventeen gained certificates of proficiency and four gained certificates of competency. The average age of candidates from the public schools was thirteen years and eleven months, and from the Roman Catholic schools fourteen years and seven months. Our experience has been that the proficiency certificates were more easily obtained under the new regulations than under the old, the percentage of passes rising from 58.7 last year to 75.5 this year. With proficiency and competency results combined the percentage of passes this year is 87.6, as against 87.4 last year. In very few cases was it necessary to add merit marks for extra subjects to make up a pupil's aggregate marks in English and arithmetic to the required 60 per cent. In sole-teacher schools we found it expedient to take a somewhat lenient view of the requirements in elementary science and handwork. In the larger schools the pupils had the advantage of lessons in handwork by special teachers, the boys taking woodwork and the girls cookery.

*Teachers' Work.*—On the whole we have to express ourselves satisfied with the care bestowed by the teachers on the preparation of their schemes of work and on the classification of their pupils. From lack of experience and opportunity of comparison the teachers of the smaller schools are prone to enter higher marks than we should feel justified in awarding to indicate the merit of the pupils in their several subjects, this being most noticeable in reading and composition. This is, however, a matter of minor importance so long as we are satisfied that only such pupils are promoted as are really fit to take up the work of the next higher class. During the visits of inspection one cannot fail to be struck with the great difference there is between one school and another in the attitude of the scholars towards the Inspector. In one school the children seem frankly pleased to see him; they speak up clearly and confidently during oral examination, and Inspector, teacher, and children after some hours of solid work part very good friends at the end of the day. In another school the Inspector, try as he may to be sympathetic and encouraging, feels himself up against a dead wall of reserve; his questioning brings little or no response, and the teacher's efforts in this direction meet with no better success; and everybody has a wretched time. Excuses are forthcoming: the children are shy and timid because they so seldom see any one in the school except their teacher. Yet in the former school the conditions in that respect were not more advantageous; but there was a different kind of teacher—and therein lies the explanation.

*Reading and Voice-training.*—There is little to be said regarding reading that has not been dealt with in former reports. In accuracy, fluency, and clearness of enunciation the upper classes of the larger schools generally reach a higher degree of merit than is common in the smaller schools. Knowledge of the meaning of what is read and the ability to express the meaning in fitting language are not always found to correspond with the fluency which has been attained, and lack of expression is in consequence a somewhat general fault. While in many schools a great deal of attention is paid to the proper development of the child's vocal organs, there are some teachers who too easily allow themselves to take shelter behind the excuse that this child and that one simply cannot speak properly. It is part of a teacher's duty to train children to say each letter of the alphabet, or its sound-value at all events, clearly and accurately. This training will tend to produce clearly spoken words, and these again will be used in properly enunciated sentences. It would be well for every teacher who feels his own weakness in this part of his work to obtain and carefully study such a book as Hulbert's "Voice Training" (Tutorial Press), or Rice's "Voice Production" (Cambridge Press). In several of the educational journals published in Britain, Canada, and the United States valuable articles on this subject have appeared from time to time. Our most progressive teachers find much stimulus for their daily work in the perusal of such publications. Another matter that calls for attention is the harsh and strident tones that mark and mar the children's speech while they are engaged in games or romping in the playground. While we do not wish to restrict the natural exuberance of youngsters let loose from school, we think that some kindly and judicious restraint might be exercised by the teachers to prevent this thoughtless abuse of the divine gift of speech.

*Spelling.*—In general sufficient attention is given to the preparation of spelling; and whether it is judged by special tests or from the exercises in composition and the written answers to questions in other subjects the results in the majority of our schools are good. Now and then we come across a pupil that spells badly in spite of real effort to do well on his own part and of much instruction from the teacher; but the rarity of such abnormal cases warrants our contention that, when a school as a whole or a class in a large school shows general weakness in spelling, the fault lies in the teaching.

*Writing.*—In writing there is a wide range of attainment from school to school. Whereas good writing in a school or a class does not of itself imply that the teaching is of a high order, the fact that good writing is general is a safe indication that supervision from day to day is careful and denotes in the teacher the possession of some qualities that must have an influence for good in the training of the children. We have been pleased to note signs of a friendly rivalry existing in some of our large schools in this matter of writing, and the spirit of emulation thus engendered is proving of very great value.

*Composition.*—In our reports presented during recent years we have been pleased to comment on the improvement in the children's written compositions. This has been very striking in the case of the lower standard classes, but it is not so marked in the Fifth and Sixth Standards. As the children pass into the higher classes they appear to lose some of the fullness and freedom of expression that marked their earlier efforts; they become oppressed by a subtle form of self-consciousness that keeps them from letting themselves go. When once the children have acquired the habit of writing freely the teacher has to his hand the material for correction; and by his skill and kindly encouragement he should lead them to arrange their matter in proper sequence, and by directing their attention to good models of sentence-structure help them to acquire clearness and precision in setting forth their ideas. Some teachers still fail to see the right relationship that exists between grammar and com-