

appears to be given to the practice of reading aloud. The extensive programme of work in both language and literature makes large demands on the time at the disposal of the teachers, and the fact must not be overlooked that in after-life scholars will read mainly for information and enjoyment; but an earnest effort should be made to cultivate ability in reading aloud in a pleasing and intelligent manner. In a few schools really good reading of the play of Shakespeare studied is a feature of the English literature. Characters are allotted to the pupils; and the passages are either read or recited in a very creditable manner. In most schools choice extracts of literature, usually poetry, are memorized. Where English literature is well taught the pupils show an intelligent knowledge of the thought and keen appreciation of the beauties of the choicest passages.

In the best schools history is well taught, and is closely related to the rights and privileges of citizenship. In only a few cases did the lesson consist of taking notes at the teacher's dictation. Even where good methods of teaching were employed and the lesson was given in an interesting manner there was at times a lack of effectiveness because teachers failed to recognize that in history the selection of topics is a matter of the greatest importance. A wide outlook, a knowledge of historical perspective, and ability to differentiate between the accidental and the essential are all needed for really effective treatment. It cannot be too clearly recognized that facts which are to be taught should be grouped round some outstanding event or person, and the whole matter dealt with in strict relation thereto. If the usual aids to successful teaching are employed a lesson so conducted can scarcely fail in its effect. Moreover, present happenings in Europe have emphasized the necessity for giving systematic instruction in matters concerning the national welfare. Unfortunately, the subject is apt to be regarded as an easy one, not requiring the same careful study as mathematics or a foreign language. If this view is taken success in teaching this important branch of study can scarcely be expected.

In geography also considerable discrimination is needed in the selection of topics. Not infrequently too many place-names are given in teaching the topography of a country. It should be borne in mind that the text-books in use are in most instances written from a Home point of view and include details of British and European geography, while the information about New Zealand and Australia receives scant attention. In too many instances the geographical facts are not presented from the point of view of the district in which the school is situated. Intimate knowledge of local and colonial phenomena should be first acquired, and this will give a proper viewpoint for understanding the facts of remote countries. It was disappointing to find that pupils could give facts about the climate, the work of rivers, &c., in distant lands, and yet be unacquainted with the same facts in their own neighbourhood. The humanistic side of this subject was, in general, taught in an interesting fashion by means of good maps, the use of various aids, and the adoption of a graphic pictorial style. The historical facts associated with places were generally well set out. The action of man on his environment and the reaction of the environment on human activities were handled with a satisfactory degree of skill. Physical geography needs to be linked more intimately with the teaching of science and experimental work undertaken on the lines of the best text-books in geography. This is a matter of the greatest importance to schools in which geography is the only branch of science taught. In some schools observational work is undertaken and a praiseworthy attempt made to draw conclusions from the facts accumulated. Good weather-charts have been made in a few schools, and inferences deduced from the charts prepared by the pupils.

In most schools Latin is taught by the grammatical method, but an increasing number of schools are using a modification of the direct method. In one of the private schools conversation of a simple character was carried on in Latin between the teacher and the pupils. In many schools where the former method is followed an easy Latin reading-book is introduced as soon as the pupils have some acquaintance with declensions and conjugations, but in other cases pupils spend far too much time on uninteresting drill in accidence. In a few schools progress is hindered by insufficient revision of the book read in the junior divisions. No lesson should be left until the translation and such grammatical knowledge as is considered essential are properly known. In some instances a passage of Latin was translated, and before sufficient time was given to make it a permanent possession a new piece was taken. For this reason, the facts, not being very clearly apprehended, were of little value in subsequent efforts at translation. If these grammatical details were properly understood and thoroughly known, a body of knowledge would gradually become available for future use.

In almost every school the direct method is employed in teaching French. By rapid questioning on everyday topics or on the subject-matter of some easy French author recently read, the greatest interest is aroused in the lesson. The pupils apparently derive much enjoyment from the exercise, and this enjoyment is enhanced when the pupils question each other.

In the solution of problems in arithmetic the various steps are as a rule worked out on the blackboard by the teacher and methodically set down by the pupils, but mistakes in the working are far too common in the papers examined for senior free places. Some of the answers sent in were quite absurd; many of these mistakes would have been avoided if each of the earlier steps in the calculation had been checked before the next step was taken, and if the final result had been tested by a rough calculation. I wish to repeat what I wrote last year: "Many of the examples in arithmetic text-books are not sufficiently related to the pupils' experience. If the examples chosen appealed directly to the children's groups of ideas the answers would be viewed as reasonable or otherwise by them, and if considered unreasonable the method of solution would be immediately scrutinized with a view to using a fresh method. In a number of cases where pupils were finding the discount or the present worth they had the haziest ideas of the meaning of a bill of exchange or a promissory note. The leading features ought to be explained and a bill of exchange shown them."

In the teaching of mathematics good results are obtained when a free use is made of concrete illustrations in the earliest stages. In some instances the experimental work is regarded as