

the date of the teacher's annual examination was sometimes omitted, and even the year in some cases was not specified, while, worst of all, in some instances the new classification for the following year was omitted. As this register is now the only school record of the progress of individual pupils, it ought to be correct in form and complete in detail.

*Time-tables.*—The time-tables as a whole show a just apportionment of the available time among the various subjects of instruction, and a fair recognition of the principles on which a time-table ought to be constructed. It has been necessary, however, especially in sole-teacher schools, to recommend shorter periods and a more varied daily programme for the preparatory classes. Inexperienced teachers find it extremely difficult to break off in the middle of a lesson in the upper classes to scan the work of the juniors, bestowing praise or blame and suggesting improvements, and to resume the interrupted lesson without serious loss of time. Only the most careful preparation of the plan of work for the day will enable teachers to acquire facility in the art of keeping several classes constantly employed at useful and interesting work.

*Schemes of Work.*—A model scheme of work prepared in this office has been supplied to uncertificated teachers in sole charge of a school. While some of these teachers simply copied the scheme as it stood, a fair proportion expanded the notes more or less fully and used the scheme intelligently. Altogether the experiment has been a distinct success up to a certain stage. It will be necessary, however, to remodel the scheme in the light of experience. Teachers who have passed through the Training College are exercising a beneficial influence by lending schemes to inexperienced teachers. While the methods employed in the best of our schools are undoubtedly good, there are a good many schools where the teaching is on mechanical lines. Our young teachers, and a good many of our older teachers too, need to be reminded that teaching is not "setting" and "hearing" lessons; that preparation for teaching is most essential, and that if concrete illustration is not available much may be done with a blackboard and a supply of chalk.

*English.*—If the sole aim of teaching reading were to afford means of self-improvement and solitary recreation in after-life, it might safely be said that reading is being satisfactorily taught in our schools. If, however, pupils are to read for the benefit of others, much fuller tone, clearer articulation, and more sympathetic interpretation are necessary than obtain at present in most of our schools. In only comparatively few cases can one listen with understanding and pleasure to the reading of even the senior pupils in a school. If this state of affairs is to be remedied, tone, articulation, and inflection must have careful and systematic attention paid to them from the outset. It is useless to expect that essential qualities such as those named can be acquired in the closing years of school life. In the best of our schools, where the reading is of striking merit, that result is obtained only by sustained effort kept up in all the classes.

As regards recitation, we fear that in some cases ease of memorizing, rather than intrinsic excellence and suitability, has been the determining factor in the choice of pieces. In the majority of cases the meaning of the more difficult phrases and the content of the individual stanzas are well known; on the other hand, the total value of the poem is often poorly appreciated.

As compared with the previous year, while writing, especially rapid writing in the upper standards, shows a little improvement, and spelling is perhaps a little weaker, there is not sufficient variation in these subjects to call for special comment.

Both oral and written composition are frequently of outstanding merit in the lower classes. In S4 and S5 the quality does not improve as much as might reasonably be expected. In S6 the written composition is usually fluent and comparatively free from grammatical errors, but occasionally disjointed in structure. A more careful choice of subjects should be made; a fairly frequent error is wandering away from the subject, if this is at all unacknowledged, and introducing irrelevant matter from previously approved efforts. Exercises in oral composition should be better graded; the style of reproduction of passages read is frequently no better in S6 than in S3. A lively interest might be given to such exercises by the introduction occasionally of short debates on suitable topics. The analysis and synthesis of sentences are generally fairly well done, but certain portions of formal grammar, such as the use of the possessive case, and exercises designed to extend the vocabulary, appear to be neglected. Moreover, there is too frequently a tendency to regard the exercises on the test-cards as ends in themselves, and not as subsidiary to the art of composition. Business and other notes are generally neatly written but weak in form. The vocabulary of the pupils is still limited, and very little use is made of figures of speech. That most of these defects can be overcome is evident from the excellent work done by some of our best schools.

*Arithmetic.*—Arithmetic receives its full share of attention. Indeed, it may be confidently asserted that no other subject so thoroughly engrosses the earnest efforts of teachers and pupils. The results, although in a good many schools not by any means commensurate with the time devoted to arithmetic, are in most cases satisfactory. Where failure has been reported it has frequently been due to a want of correlation between the programmes of succeeding standards, the work of each standard not being carefully grafted on to that previously done. In other words, there is too little revision and too little overlapping. The main desideratum is a more solid grounding in the four simple and four compound rules. The examination tests have revealed inaccuracy in mechanical operations as the commonest form of weakness, while errors in working have very frequently been traced to careless figuring and untidy setting out. In the simple and compound rules errors are more frequent in subtraction and division than in addition and multiplication, indicating that more practice is required in the two former rules. Very great diversity of attainment is shown in mental arithmetic; in some schools the pupils are both quick and accurate, while in others they are so slow that we are forced to conclude that the daily practice in this exercise has been very perfunctory.