

In many of our schools the classes up to S2 show very satisfactory progress from year to year both in reading and in recitation, but such progress is usually not so well maintained throughout the senior division. It is doubtful, however, whether the P classes are sufficiently drilled in enunciation, and whether sufficient use is made of the continuous readers in the senior division. Judged by the dictation tests the spelling is satisfactory; in S6 it is often good, but errors in common words are frequent in the composition-papers even where the dictation test is well done. The handwriting is on the whole of very fair quality; much of it in S6 is indeed good in respect both of speed and of style. In some schools, however, S3, S4, and S5 are allowed through lack of supervision to lapse into careless habits. In respect of arrangement, paragraphing, and punctuation the composition shows improvement, especially in the larger schools, but neglect of these points is still too common. The programme in formal grammar is generally too restricted.

In the arithmetic of the lower classes there is usually too little drill in tables, too little mental and oral work. In the higher classes there is often a want of practical concrete knowledge of the weights and measures, little appreciation of short methods (properly so called) except in S6, and some waste of time over complex fractions. These faults are in many cases perpetuated and aggravated by the promotion of pupils that are weak in arithmetic. In S6 long tots and mental arithmetic are improving.

The buildings throughout the district are, generally speaking, in good repair. The credit for this is mostly due to the Board's gang of workmen, seconded in some cases by local activity. The Board's policy is to keep the exteriors of buildings well painted with a view to their preservation. It may be strongly questioned whether, considering the stakes at issue (the health and physical well-being of the pupils), the painting of the interiors is not more important. Owing to the large number of female teachers in the service many of the residences in the district are either untenanted or occupied by tenants other than the teachers. This would seem to indicate the necessity for a cautious policy in regard to building residences; on the other hand, the total discontinuance of building would debar many married men from the profession, for in most country places it is next to impossible to obtain a house suitable for a teacher's use, or, indeed, any house at all.

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