

teachers who appeared reluctant to give more than twenty out of twenty-five. In classes S2 to S6, where writing is on single lines, the investigation shows that there is a steady improvement as the child passes up the school. The speed tests show that our children cannot write nearly as fast as American children of the corresponding classes. Representative American norms on the Gettysburg scale are—Standard I, 44 letters per minute; Standard II, 55 letters per minute; Standard III, 64 letters per minute; Standard IV, 71 letters per minute; Standard V, 76 letters per minute; Standard VI, 79 letters per minute. In Standard VI our median was 55 letters per minute.—(*Wellington*.)

*Arithmetic*.—Arithmetic causes us little or no anxiety with regard to the measurable result achieved, though we have grave doubts as to the educational value of some of the methods adopted. If the aim of the subject is merely to enable the boys and girls to do the sums with which they (or a few of them) may expect to be confronted in the practical affairs of adult life, the work of the schools must be regarded as successful. If, however, arithmetic is to be regarded as a means of giving the mind something of that mode of training which is supposed to be the peculiar outcome of mathematical study, then we must confess that the end attained represents a very small achievement. If both aims are to be attained in the primary school, we believe that it would be wise to restrict the arithmetic of the upper standards to strictly utilitarian bounds, and to give the pupil some training in, say, elementary algebra.—(*Otago*.)

The results of the Proficiency Examination indicate that in the past our pupils have been allowed to saunter through their arithmetic. Though the number of sums was doubled and the time reduced 20 per cent., many pupils completed their work in faultless style in from forty to forty-five minutes. It is interesting to note that a symposium of local commercial men's opinions as to the essentials in arithmetic revealed that high among the qualities they demanded was neatness of setting forth.—(*Hawke's Bay*.)

*Geography*.—The improvements in the indoor treatment of this subject have most frequently taken the form of the construction of posters, albums, and the like. The fresh interest and the new orientation of the work consequent on the collection and arrangement of material are much to the good, but we still fail to find in most cases evidence of regular outdoor work and a systematic study of local conditions, which lead to the broader understanding of the subject. As noted in last year's report, the pupils as a whole do not yet show much ability in the discussion of topics arising out of the instruction, though signs are not wanting that there is some improvement in this respect.—(*Otago*.)

*History*.—Forward movements in this subject are the study of local history (especially where the pupils find out the facts for themselves) and the more general adoption of pictorial time-charts and other visual aids. As in geography, pupils as a whole have not yet arrived at the point where they are able to give free, connected, and accurate accounts of what they have learned. In both geography and history the oral lesson appears to be in many schools a thing of the past. We have been at some pains to impress upon the teachers the instructional value of the well-prepared lesson, vividly and interestingly delivered, well illustrated, carefully summarized, and fully discussed. We hope that our recommendations may bear fruit in the near future.—(*Otago*.)

This subject is not a popular one with either teachers or pupils. In the survey of last year a plebiscite of pupils' likes and dislikes indicated that history was the most disliked subject in Standard VI, and in no class was it a popular subject. We are of opinion that the teachers' programmes for the year have been in most cases too ambitious, and that the pupils themselves have too often been mere passive recipients. History is not a story only of kings, queens, and battles. There are victories in peace as well as in war, and much of the best of our Empire story is so closely interwoven with the story of great men and women as to suggest that biography should form a special feature of history teaching. In one portion of the district local history has featured largely. In this respect we find the pupils intensely interested. They have in many cases pieced together a story that would be well worth preserving for future generations. We are in agreement with those teachers—practically all in the district—that a more suitable text-book should be authorized.—(*Taranaki*.)

*Health and Temperance*.—Health and temperance are now very satisfactorily treated. In the latter subject we have given the teachers a short scheme of minimal requirements.—(*Nelson*.)

In general we found that provision for temperance instruction was made in all schemes of work. We should be pleased to see a little more enthusiasm displayed in approaching this subject.—(*Otago*.)

Temperance is taught in connection with health, temperance in food, drink, and other matters. The heading is regularly looked for in the schemes and in the work-books. It forms a subject of inquiry at visits of inspection, and essays deal with various aspects. There appears no doubt that teachers realize and impress its importance. Frequently it deals with matters that come within the experience of the children; and at times they show that they have already decided opinions drawn from that experience. The instruction given by the teachers is reinforced by that of members of extra-mural bodies and clubs.—(*Wellington*.)

*Vocal Music*.—We are pleased to note improvement in school singing, especially with respect to voice-training. Specialization in singing is being practised in some of the larger schools. In some of the infant-rooms we found attention being given to eurhythmics—due, no doubt, to the influence of an English "exchange" teacher who spent some weeks in the district. Now that many schools are equipped with gramophones we should like to see these instruments more fully used for the purposes of appreciation of music.—(*Otago*.)

While in most schools singing is given a set time on the time-table, we feel that in many cases better results should be obtained. In too many cases a number of songs are learned by ear, and little instruction is given in voice-production or in reading simple music by sight.—(*Southland*.)

*Nature-study*.—The methods of instruction in this subject still leave much to be desired, the lesson being too formal in character and often a mere recital of dry facts by the teacher. Frequently the programmes submitted are not planned to harmonize with the school environment and outdoor