Teachers appear to have neglected the syllabus requirements for Standard V. especially, for at school after school the pupils would not attempt to write anything about the distribution of land and water, and they failed to define mountain systems and river systems. It should be remembered that not only is physical geography more attractive to a child than political, but also it is far more useful as a means of intellectual discipline.

Drawing showed a high percentage in each standard, that in Standard VI.—95·5—being the highest, and that in Standard IV.—85·5—the lowest. In the lower standards the pupils should know, without being given any assistance, exactly in what position to sketch the freehand copies in their books. Several teachers made the mistake of having the preliminary sketches copied, whereas these are meant only for guides, to show how the drawing is built up. (This is fully explained in the instructions on the cover of the drawing-book, with which teachers would do well to make themselves thoroughly acquainted.) In the upper standards more accuracy in scale drawing would be desirable, and all measurements should be neatly marked in. Teachers will please notice that in future their pupils will be required at the annual examination to make a drawing in a given time in the presence of the Inspector. The examples and problems for examination will be those that are to be found in "Blair's Colonial Drawing-books."

CLASS-SUBJECTS.—The class-subjects for the year were history in Standard III. to Standard VI., geography in Standard II. and Standard IV., and science and object-lessons in all standards. Drawing dropped out, it having become a "pass"-subject in one or more standards year by year since 1885, and 1890 was the last year in which it was a "class"-subject in any standard.

History.—The number of schools in which history is well taught in Standard III. slowly increases year by year, but it is still very poorly handled by several teachers, whose attention we desire to draw to the Inspector's report for 1886 on this subject. A few good pictures for purposes of illustration would be found very useful in teaching history to this standard. In Standards V. and VI. the subject seldom was well known. Some pupils were examined on paper, and some orally. The written papers often showed very confused ideas, and bad spelling, composition, and arrangement. Teachers might notice that at very few schools could pupils make out a genealogical table, and that at fewer still was anything about the government and constitution under which we live really understood. If the teacher is to make history interesting it is absolutely necessary that he should possess the power of "picturing out,"—*i.e.*, of describing that which is distant in time or space so vividly and naturally that the hearer seems to see it. "Lessons in history are too often only a string of bare, meaningless, isolated, chronological facts, which appeal to no sympathy and awaken no interest; the persons referred to are names and nothing more; the description of events referred to calls up no image of what really happened. Such lessons as these leave no definite impressions upon the mind of what the teacher has been talking about, and the pictures which they call up, from lack of a judicious selection of details, and the harmonizing influence of some dominant and unifying idea, are blurred, confused, and ineffective. The imaginative teacher, who is seeking to cultivate the imaginative faculty in his class, and to utilise it in his teaching, will clothe the characters of history with flesh and blood; he will, as far as it is possible, make them live and move before our eyes; he will convert us, as it were, into actual spectators and auditors in the scenes which he describes."

Geography obtained the highest percentage of marks of the three "class"-subjects. In Standard II. work, teachers should try to educe their definitions by the use of actual models, and by reference to local examples. It should be remembered that a definition is often as difficult as the thing it is used to explain—sometimes more difficult. Definitions are convenient, because they contain in a few words the pith or substance of what it takes a good many words to explain; and so they help the pupil to remember and the teacher to recapitulate and examine. But their place is at the end, not at the beginning, of the lesson or section of a lesson. Let things be taught first, and then let formal words be used to impress the lesson on the memory. "Get your plank exactly into its place before you nail it, and then hammer away at the nail as hard as you please. If you drive the nail without careful fixing beforehand, the harder you hit the farther wrong you go." A certain amount of rote work undoubtedly is necessary, as, for instance, in the various tables, and in definitions in grammar, arithmetic, and other subjects; but one teacher will rely on bare repetition, while another will see that each step is understood before being committed to memory. In the former case the tabulated facts are merely mechanically suspended in the mind, in the latter they are mentally assimilated.

Science is one of the most unsatisfactory subjects of the school course. To call the matter taught in the schools science is a misuse and a degradation of the term. Moreover, the name is apt to frighten teachers who have not undergone a course of study in the "ologies" and the "ics." Much better results might be looked for if teachers regarded it as "useful knowledge"—science it is not, and never can be—and, bringing into play the natural curiosity and inquisitiveness of children, sought to arouse and sustain their interest by explaining many of the every-day phenomena which are to them inexplicable. But we are afraid that too often a lack of interest and enthusiasm on the part of the teacher checks the ardour of the young inquirer, and creates in him a positive distaste for the work. In endeavouring to place this subject on a more satisfactory footing, there are two serious difficulties to contend with—(1) Want of sufficient knowledge on the part of the teacher, (2) want of appliances and apparatus. With regard to the former, it must be admitted that teachers who have had some scientific training have a considerable advantage over those who have not; but there is no reason why a zealous, earnest, and conscientious teacher should not read up and obtain a sufficient mastery over his subject to be able to teach intelligently the elementary work required in the schools. With regard to appliances, teachers often complain of the want of these for illustrating the lessons. This, no doubt; is a serious drawback, but much can be done by the teacher in the way of procuring simple and inexpensive means for demonstrating experimentally the facts brought out in the lesson. For instance, in many schools