

often neglected. At many schools pupils asked the meaning of the word "paraphrase," and frequently we found attempts at keeping the passage in poetry, but with a few words changed. It was astonishing how many pupils failed to grasp the meaning of the verses, which were invariably taken from very well-known stock poems, to be found, as a rule, in the reading-books in use.

In the requirements in *Geography* the new syllabus has made considerable alterations. Political geography has been on the whole curtailed; but physical geography is now required in Standard IV., while in Standard VI. it is reduced to the one subject of "climate." This arrangement makes Standard IV. geography relatively much heavier than that of any other standard, but the leaving of it in its old place among the "class"-subjects somewhat lightens the burden. Other new and important matter (trade-routes, leading products and industries, interprovincial transit, places in New Zealand of interest to tourists, &c.) has been introduced into the work of this standard, and, although its value is manifest both on account of its everyday importance and on account of its particular importance to New-Zealanders, it has been frequently neglected, for in several schools the pupils displayed a total ignorance of this department of the work. Teachers sometimes stated that they did not know where to obtain the required information. Surely this is a very lame excuse, when the shipping advertisements of any of the papers of the larger towns of New Zealand show the principal trade-routes and ports of call, and a penny railway-guide contains a map showing all the railways. The "Zealandia" geographies, recently published, have been written to suit the new syllabus, and they may be used in future.

Physical and mathematical geography are still unsatisfactory. The phenomena resulting from the earth's rotation and revolution, combined with the inclination of its axis, were not at all understood, and good answering was very rare. We believe that this arises to a great extent from teachers trusting too much to diagrams for illustration, which are very well as far as they go, but are always less effective than models. In those schools where the explanation was shown strikingly and clearly by means of a lamp on a table to represent the sun, and a globe or a ball carried round it to represent the earth, the results were much more satisfactory.

On the whole, the questions in geography answered best are those requiring the names and the approximate position of places. We should like to see more attention paid to commercial, industrial, and physical geography, as appealing more to the imagination and less to mere memory, and as bringing into play the reasoning and observing powers rather than the mere operation of receptivity, for the names are merely the nails, as it were, to which the mental pictures are attached.

*Drawing* occupies a very prominent position in the new syllabus; and, owing to the importance attached to this subject, it was one which teachers generally viewed with fear and trembling, as they deemed it would, to be taught successfully, require too much of the school-time. We found that, as a rule, the work for the past year was covered in about two hours per week; but as in 1892 teachers were permitted, in compliance with the regulation requiring drawing to be examined more leniently, to omit part of the work in some of the standards, it still remains to be seen whether, when all the requirements are demanded in this and the following years, the subject will require more time, or whether the training and grounding in the lower branches will compensate for the small amount of extra work to be done. To our minds, no more time will be required.

Last year the method of examination was altered, the pupils being required to make drawings, in our presence, on leaves taken from the Colonial Drawing-books. Preparing the papers for examination gave us a great deal of extra work, but we were more than repaid by observing the satisfactory results, much of the work even in the lower standards being very creditable indeed.

The freehand drawing was generally good. The definitions and the manipulation of set squares and rulers had been quite overlooked in a few schools, but in the majority—especially in those examined towards the end of the year—the instruction in these respects was satisfactory. Pupils in Standard I. are not required to give "strict scientific definitions." As far as angles are concerned, however, more care is required in the wording of the explanations. "An acute angle is a sharp angle" is an answer frequently given; yet, if an angle of 80 degrees be shown, pupils at once call it "a blunt angle," for they use the term as applied to some cutting instrument, and not as relating to a right angle. Indeed, the words "sharp" and "blunt" are misleading (not so the word "square" for a right angle); and it is much easier for pupils to see that angles are "less than right angles" or "greater than right angles," than that they are sharp or blunt. It is much better, therefore, to start with the right angle as "square," and then to define the others as "less" or "greater."

In geometry in Standard IV. the pupils found considerable difficulty in drawing the problems to scale. We are inclined to think that this was partly due to the geometrical and the scale—two distinct subjects—being taken together. If pupils were first put through a short course of geometrical drawing pure and simple, and had the principles involved thoroughly explained to them, they would be better able thereafter to grasp the idea of drawing the figures to scale, or of merely making them a certain size. But to attempt to teach both simultaneously leads to confusion, and to a want of a thorough grasp of either. At the same time we must point out that several teachers did not notice that the books required some figures to be drawn to scale.

In scale drawing in Standard V. a valuable and important addition, requiring pupils to make sketches of common objects as preliminary to scale drawing, has been made. This is of great practical importance, and is a most commendable innovation.

In Standard VI. last year model drawing was omitted, and solid geometry on only two planes of projection was demanded in addition to freehand. This year the full requirements of the syllabus in all branches must be complied with.

In Standards I., II., and III., while the definitions and the study of geometrical figures make the work in these standards heavier than formerly, the new series of drawing-books does not require so much from the children. In Standard IV. the geometrical drawing is somewhat