

a week should be criticized and corrected as a class-lesson at the blackboard. When errors are marked, pupils should be made to see why the expressions objected to are wrong. The weekly class-lesson might with advantage be afterwards written out as a home lesson in an exercise-book, so that the whole series would be available for examination by an Inspector or an interested visitor. In many schools only about a dozen subjects were submitted for the year's work, this would represent less than one exercise in three weeks. The experiment of testing the composition of Standard IV by the reproduction of a short pointed story has not as yet met with much success. The pupils not rarely failed to see any point in the stories, and set down a few confused fragments without sense or point. This kind of test will be continued during the present year, I hope, with more success. It is known to answer well at this stage in the Mother-country. I should perhaps add that the stories were read out twice by the usual teacher of the class, whose voice and manner would not disconcert as a stranger's might. Probably nothing will help to improve the power of composing more than the wider reading that can be overtaken, and seems so desirable, in the classes below Standard V.

Grammar is now everywhere a class-subject, and has not gained in importance by the change. In my judgment, it has been handled in a very mechanical and unintelligent spirit in Standards III. and IV. In the two higher classes it has usually been taught with greater intelligence, though not always very thoroughly. In Standard IV the distinguishing of all the parts of speech is all the parsing prescribed in the syllabus, and all that will for the future be expected of this class. Full reasons for the classifications given will in every case be expected as part of the simple parsing. The knowledge of the inflections to be taught in this class will be tested apart from the simple parsing, with which there is no need to combine it. In the upper classes too much stress is apt to be laid on a ready knowledge of the minutiae of complete parsing. A knowledge of the nature of the distinctions which grammatical terms denote is of at least equal importance. But more valuable than all this is the ready recognition of the clauses or statements that compose sentences, and of the connecting words that link them together, and a clear understanding of the positions in which words, phrases, and clauses can be best placed to express the writer's meaning with clearness and force. This knowledge, which is of the greatest value for composition, does not receive anything like the attention it deserves, nor is the training in it taken in hand as early as is desirable.

A large number of failures has to be recorded in geography. These seem due to the inadequate answers which are commonly accepted in this subject, and to a lack of variety and testing power in the ordinary run of questions that are set by teachers for their pupils to answer in writing. Physical geography in particular was poorly known. Outline maps were almost the only point one can commend in this subject. Standards II. and III. were distinctly better taught than the higher classes.

The effective teaching of history needs more time than can be allowed for it in most schools. It is seldom well taught, and, as a rule, is hardly fair. Its being a class-subject makes pupils and teachers somewhat indifferent about it. The great fault of the teaching is its meagreness. To rouse interest in, and give any real knowledge of, great historical events and personages some fulness of treatment is indispensable. Without this the whole remains unintelligible, and, at most, a few isolated facts are barrenly remembered. If we may judge from the small proportion of pupils who are ready to answer when teachers examine their own classes there seems to be but small success in interesting the children in the subject. I am afraid that the selection of topics is not always made with very good judgment, especially in the Standard III. class. Even in the highest classes most important events are frequently overlooked. The vast and far-reaching consequences of the genius and inventions of James Watt and George Stephenson, for example, are seldom touched on, and their names are often not even mentioned. On the other hand, second-rate events and episodes, such as the trial of Dr. Sacheverell and the Crimean war, are accorded a prominence which they do not deserve. The best thing teachers can do in teaching history is to give their pupils a lasting interest in the subject. Such text-books as "Nelson's Brief History" or "Creighton's Shilling History" will hardly help to do this. A dry condensed record of the most prominent facts repels rather than attracts. The recent school-books rightly give more and more prominence to the biographies of great men, and it is a public misfortune that the subdivisions of the subject prescribed for the various standard classes here and in the Mother-country are so discordant that none of the recent English series of class-books of history can be advantageously used in our schools.

The teaching of science also suffers from the small amount of time that is available for it. One lesson a week is what is commonly given, but this is insufficient for any serious study of the subject. In some of the larger schools more time is devoted to these lessons, but, so far as I can judge, with inconsiderable success, except in a few cases. The answers to the science papers set at the last Junior Scholarship examination fully bear out this opinion. A good deal of what is taught under the name of science is inaccurate and unsound, especially in physiology and laws of health. School class-books are far from being free from faults of this kind, and I suspect that teachers frequently draw their knowledge from books that are antiquated and behind the age. Even the laws of health in the London Science Series contains a number of views that are now completely discredited. In connection with physiology, numbers of technical terms are learned that only doctors need to know, these properly belong to anatomy and not to physiology. In agricultural science a fair amount of useful knowledge is gained in a good many rural schools. In my opinion a great deal of unimportant and unintelligible chemical detail is introduced into the lessons on this subject. Dr. Fream's excellent and cheap "Elements of Agriculture"—a book that should be in every teacher's hands—shows sound judgment in dealing with this part of the subject, and teachers would do well not to enter into the mazes of agricultural chemistry more deeply than this high authority. If the farmer does his part in honest culture, he may rest assured that Nature will not forget her chemical lore, whether he understands it or not, or fail to render him her wonted service. The introduction of a better text-book than the very indifferent one now used in the