

great and unaccountable favour by the teachers of this district. The consideration of the functions of words as the only true guide to their classification under the parts of speech is not sufficiently emphasized in the text-books. Their exposition is not inductive, as the teaching ought to be, but dogmatic to the last degree. They almost ignore sentence-structure and the linking and subordination of clauses except as exercises in abstract analysis; and they do not show clearly that certain pronouns and adverbs, which pupils use every day with perfect correctness and ease, do connect clauses. In analysis they do not make it clear enough that "phrases" and "clauses" are to be classified by their functions just as single words are; nor do they use names for the phrases and clauses that make their use as elements of the sentence as clear as day. General terms, such as "enlargement," "adjunct," "extension," are constantly used where terms of a more explicit sense are indispensable for the clear guidance of the beginner. Such clear and decisive descriptions as "adjective phrase" or "adjective clause" to so-and-so, or "adverb phrase" or "adverb clause" to so-and-so, are for beginners infinitely preferable to such vague terms as "enlargement," "extension," &c., that usually convey little or no meaning to their minds, and tend to obscure the processes of thought necessarily involved. In view of these faults of the text-books considerable allowance must be made for unintelligent teaching and for the unwillingness of teachers to boldly embark on a better course of instruction that they have thought out for themselves. The syllabus of instruction in grammar is in considerable measure responsible for defects in the instruction, as it does not sufficiently indicate the aims the teaching should keep in view, and is not well arranged. The recognition of phrases and clauses as integral elements of easy sentences is introduced too late in the course—practically not till Standard VI. is reached. Their classification might with propriety be deferred to a late stage, but their recognition should be taken in hand much earlier; and this knowledge would tend to make the instruction in composition intelligent and educative, and not mere rule-of-thumb work, as it is now too apt to be. On the whole the difficulties in getting grammar intelligently taught are numerous and grave, and the progress that has been already made is creditable to the teachers and far from contemptible. Parsing, which even genius cannot suffuse with interest, must occupy too much attention under our present syllabus. It would be a great gain if the parsing of the verb could be simplified. Several of the details now deemed indispensable might be omitted without loss or disadvantage.

The work in science and object-lessons has been of much the same character as last year's. Where agricultural science is taken up, as it is in the great majority of the schools, the bulk of the knowledge gained is not living knowledge, but merely book-learning, largely unintelligible to school-children; and, from the nature of the subject and the age and general knowledge of the learners, I do not see how it can be otherwise. The chemical knowledge contained in the course, and forming but a small part of its contents, would alone suffice for a two years' course in science if it were treated in an experimental and educative fashion. A number of teachers have of late attempted to introduce some simple experiments in illustration of the lessons given, and these have added to the interest and value of the teaching, but at best they form but an insignificant oasis in a vast arid desert. In all village schools I would recommend the substitution of the general science course for that in agriculture. The former admits of a large amount of practical and experimental illustration, and is in general much more successfully taught. In rural schools a greatly simplified course of lessons in agricultural science would be more serviceable, and such a course I hope to be able to suggest for the Board's consideration by and by.

There has been noticeable improvement in the instruction in the laws of health, and the lessons are becoming more generally full enough to make the teaching clear and intelligible, as well as of service for the regulation of health. Teachers, however, are still to be found who think "Health in the House" a trustworthy and up-to-date guide in these matters. To these I would once more recommend a careful study of Foster and Shore's "Physiology for Beginners," and some brief modern book on hygiene. Lists of the experiments shown in illustration of the science lessons have been made out in most schools, and they have proved of material service in examining in the subject. As a rule, the experiments have been suitable, and the pupils have carefully observed and could satisfactorily describe the state of things at the beginning and the end of the experiments, and the changes that took place.

The chief fault in the treatment of object-lessons is the introduction of detailed descriptions of manufacturing and other processes that cannot be observed or illustrated. In a lesson on sugar, for example, the details of cultivation and of the processes of purification are nearly always given with considerably fulness. It is obvious that this does not bring observation into play, or afford scope for the simple inferences that link themselves to its action. The fault is, happily, becoming more rare, and object-lessons approximate in their aim more and more to what their name denotes. The practice of setting forth, at the head of the notes of lessons, a list of the objects and pictures shown in illustration of the lesson is also spreading, and should be adopted everywhere.

The other class-subjects and the additional subjects hardly call for special remark.

The primer classes continue to be well taught in a great number of schools, and especially in the larger establishments, in several of which simple kindergarten lessons have been introduced with great advantage. An example is thus set that should be widely followed, for in most schools in which two qualified teachers are employed time might profitably be found for such lessons. It is chiefly in the smaller schools that the instruction of the lower classes remains unsatisfactory. In a number of these the reading needs to be improved in ease and expression, and arithmetic must be more systematically and thoroughly taught. The learning of tables could be improved in grading, and the use of the ball-frame made more intelligent and illustrative in dealing with difficult points, and especially with the addition of numbers that involve an advance from a lower group of tens to a higher. In these schools too much time is still devoted to teaching counting at the ball-frame by two, three, fours, and fives.