

dupois weight, working all the rules (addition, subtraction, &c.), and all the examples in each rule. In the same way they work through the other tables, one after another. Now, the principle of addition is the same whatever table be used, and as the pupils know the addition of money they should be taught addition of avoirdupois, troy, &c., together, and led to recognise the principle underlying the differences of denomination. Subtraction, multiplication, and division should be taught in the same way. Again, practice comes at the end of the book, and is therefore taught last, instead of being taken as another means of working multiplication and taught early in the year. Reasoning from what I have pointed out, teachers will readily see for themselves other ways in which the present use of the text-books can be improved upon; but, as I cannot enter fully into the subject in such a report as this, I propose to take an early opportunity for sending out a circular dealing with arithmetic. To all those who have anything to do with the instruction of children it will be a day of rejoicing when a decimal system of computing is introduced, and the unreasonable complexity in the subdivision of denominations swept away.

Composition has on the whole shown satisfactory progress, though in many of our schools much still remains to be done. It is, I think, the most important, yet the most difficult, subject in the syllabus, difficult to examine and difficult to teach: difficult to examine because there are so many points to be considered in estimating its value, and it is by no means easy to say how much incorrect spelling or punctuation, how much poor matter or bad arrangement, should cause failure; and difficult to teach owing to the pupils' limited vocabulary, limited experience and observation, limited training of the imagination, and to habits of loosely expressing their thoughts that children acquire in early years. In the best of the schools where systematic instruction and thorough correction are found the work is very satisfactory. The best work as regards matter is met with where teachers appeal to the imagination in the subjects they choose for essays and letters. Such subjects as "Thoughts of a School Pen," "What a Horse thinks of his Master," "Experiences of an old Hat," &c., do this, and bring into play the higher faculties and give scope for originality or a sense of humour. Indeed, I have often been struck by the originality and keen sense of humour even younger pupils display in writing such essays, which they enjoy much more than the dry subjects often set. The mere filling-in of outlines such as are found in some of the text-books in use results in stiff, stilted, and inelegant sentences, tiresome for a pupil to compose, tiresome for a reader to peruse, and, for training in sentence forming, quite valueless.

In only a few schools is grammatical inaccuracy a very serious defect, the practice of requiring the pupils to answer fully in oral work having proved a most efficient remedy. In a large percentage of the schools the arrangement of the clauses and phrases is often faulty, and loose ambiguous sentences take the place of well-constructed periods.

Political geography is on the whole well known, and the memory maps are often very good, accurate in detail, drawn in proportion, and neatly executed. Physical geography, on the other hand, still continues unsatisfactory.

Of the class-subjects I can only repeat what I have previously reported. They are seldom well taught as a whole, and grammar in Standards V. and VI. is often very unsatisfactory.

The additional subjects show somewhat better results than do the class-subjects.

The discipline and manners are very satisfactory. For the former not fewer than fifty-one out of the sixty-three schools received from "good" to "excellent," and as a rule bad manners are found only where the discipline and control are bad. Of the teachers I have little to add to what I have previously written. There are in the service earnest, skilful, and enthusiastic teachers, whose work is beyond praise, for such teachers do more good educationally than can appear in examination-papers or can be indicated by words in a report. Though shown in some measure by the tone of the work, it is intangible and subtle; and yet an examiner feels strongly and appreciates keenly its presence. Such teachers teach a great deal more than the syllabus (while bad teachers teach a great deal less), and they endeavour to keep pace with the educational progress of the day, and their pupils get the advantage of every advance that intelligence and experience can suggest. There are some, however, who, from lack of ability, and sometimes, I am afraid, from lack of interest, perform their duties but very indifferently.

Of the pupil-teachers and ex-pupil-teachers I can speak very highly. Nor is it only their teaching which occupies their attention. They are assiduous in their studies beyond what is required by the pupil-teachers' regulations, as is shown by the fact that eight have exemptions from examination under the pupil-teachers' regulations, owing to their having passed the matriculation examination or the teachers' certificate examination. All our ex-pupil-teachers have full certificates—either D or E.

Before concluding I should like to refer to one or two points to which I think attention should be directed. School libraries are seldom established, but if the Board could see its way to grant a small sum annually to supplement what teachers or Committees might locally collect, a stimulus might be given. £1 to £3 would, I think, be sufficient inducement for the local authorities to stir themselves to give the children better facilities for reading than at present. Supplementary Readers and drawing models I have referred to. Science is taught under very great disadvantages owing to the lack of apparatus, and I should very much like to see the larger schools, at any rate, supplied with the simple appliances necessary to illustrate the lessons which are required by the syllabus. At present the book and the blackboard are used, but a great deal of the knowledge must of necessity be empirical until suitable demonstrations can be given.

I have, &c.,

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