

for lessons which are too long, or in which there is insufficient variety, prove uninteresting and irksome to the pupils. Action songs and musical drill might be used to greater advantage, as they serve as a pleasant relief to the ordinary routine.

In practically all schools, even where not required by regulation, a definite course of nature-study is undertaken, and often taught exceedingly well, inducing in the child a spirit of inquiry and in an elementary way fostering a mental attitude of scientific method in dealing with objects and phenomena. Where elementary agriculture is taught in the upper classes the nature-study of the lower classes, while including lessons from Course A geography and other matter, in the main lead up to the elementary agriculture, and the pupils make use of the school gardens though they do not actually work there. The abolition of the term "object lessons" has done much to remove misconceptions with regard to this class of work, but in a few cases the courses are not well chosen, arouse little interest, and, though supplying a certain amount of information, have little, if any, educational value. Though it is only turning a phrase, we have found that, by saying that "nature-study" is "the study of nature," we have been enabled to give teachers a better insight into the educational aims of the work. If teachers understood that what is now called scientific method is merely the oftmentioned method of teaching by the three steps of (1) observation or experiment, (2) result, (3) inference by which all lessons should be taught, the subject would present less difficulty than it seems to do in some cases.

[The supplementary literary reader has been supplanted by geographical readers and historical readers, which, in addition to providing a wider range of reading that will undoubtedly be beneficial, cover the Course B geography and the compulsory history. Owing to the difficulty in selecting suitable historical readers the books have only recently been authorised, but the geographical readers—an excellent series ("The World and its People")—are now in general use. The lessons are, as a rule, well handled by the teachers, and prove attractive to the pupils. The majority of teachers give efficient instruction in reading but some would benefit from the remarks in the report for the year 1900, in which it was pointed out that correct pronunciation is far from the chief essential. Pronunciation is in a sense mechanical, for it can be found from a dictionary after pupils leave school, whereas correct phrasing, modulation, inflexion, &c., being not readily acquired after school-life must be taught and must become in some measure matters of habit. We consider that the terms "phrasing," "inflexion," &c., should be understood by the pupils, that the teacher should indicate the character of the error made, and that, without further assistance, the pupil should endeavour to make the correction. This method is in accord with one of the first principles of teaching—i.e., "the pupil should be told only so much as will enable him to discover the truth for himself." It leads to a more intelligent comprehension of the passage, for to correct the error the pupil must discover the writer's meaning, and in some measure must enter into his feelings. Instead of the pupils pointing out only errors of pronunciation, we much prefer to find them pointing out errors in phrasing, and so on, thus bringing into play a higher degree of intelligence.

Spelling in the special tests is satisfactory and the general spelling in the geography, composition, &c., as a rule receives attention. Where the latter is unsatisfactory, in almost every case it is traceable to lack of thoroughness in the correction of the general exercises of pupils. Writing is very satisfactory, and in setting out all work with neatness, method, and tidy arrangement, the pupils acquire habits that have a most important bearing. We find that the redistribution of the arithmetic over the several standards meets with general approval and that the work of no standard now presents conspicuous difficulty as was formerly the case in Standard IV. Mental arithmetic continues to be very unsatisfactory. Composition up to Standard IV continues to be very satisfactory indeed, but in Standard V and VI does not show the advance that the promise of the lower work would lead one to expect. This has frequently been referred to. We are aware that teachers have strenuously endeavoured to improve the work of the higher standards, but in only a few cases have their efforts resulted in marked success.

The progress made in handwork deserves more than a passing notice. The number of schools in which it is undertaken is increasing; but a far more pleasing feature is the teachers' recognition of its value as a method of teaching, and the decreasing number who look upon it as introducing new subjects. The difficulties and misconceptions inseparable from the introduction of new ideas are being overcome, and some of those who displayed at least no sympathy are now its strongest advocates. In the lower classes it has produced a very marked beneficial effect upon the development of the intelligence, and in all classes concrete teaching through handwork enables some of the work to be taught, and taught with ease, a standard or two before it is required by the syllabus. In drawing and arithmetic this is particularly noticeable, and the general intelligence developed reacts more or less on the school-work. The schemes of work formulated by teachers show greater coherence and more systematic treatment from Preparatory to Standard VI, are better graduated, and dovetail better into the ordinary school subjects. Brushwork is not so generally taught as formerly, and we believe that as good, if not better, educational results can be obtained by means of blackboard drawing co-ordinated with freehand. Carton and cardboard work are now undertaken more extensively than formerly, and are being well used as improved methods of teaching much of the drawing, especially scale drawing with instruments, object-drawing, plane and solid geometrical drawing, and model-drawing. Though these subjects were prescribed before handwork in its present form was so well recognised, it was very evident to any one who had to deal with pupils after they left school that the results could not be called satisfactory; and we are satisfied that the new methods will produce much better training during school life, and in after life will be found of practical benefit to many of those taking up a trade or profession. In some cases we find that teachers make many models, but do not use them to the best advantage. As far as is possible carton or cardboard work should proceed side by side with the geometrical drawing; and, when finished, the objects should be used for object-drawing, elementary solid geometry, model-drawing, and so on. It will be found that a comparatively small number of models judiciously used