

have seen. In some schools the results of this test were simply surprising in point of merit; this, too in some of the remote country schools where timidity and natural aversion to talking to strangers are supposed to reign supreme. The development of this power will lead to many very important results, among which we may mention: (a) greater reciprocity between teachers and taught; (b) better pronunciation and enunciation—results much to be desired; (c) elimination of common errors in speech; (d) ability to talk about subjects which possess some interest; (e) opportunity for ascertaining the amount of knowledge pupils possess on any given subject. One of the outstanding defects of our school-work has always been this: that it has found little place for the exercise of that power of expression which in their natural surroundings children use freely and abundantly, and a great gain will be made if the power so freely used at home can be let loose as school.

2. *Power to read at Sight Passages dealing with the Scope of the Comprehension of Pupils.*—Rarely during the examination was any other than unseen reading given. Even the primer classes were asked to read and to interpret matter which they had not previously seen. Pupils were first asked to read silently the paragraph given them; next to tell to the class in their own words the substance of what was read, and lastly to read the piece aloud. This may seem a somewhat severe test to apply all round, but we are fully persuaded that it is the only fair and right one; and, moreover, experience has shown that wherever the pupils have been well taught they not only readily undertake it, but they enter into it with much more zest than into the oft-read and doubly stale lessons from the book. We believe that it really gives the pupils a better chance to show how far they have benefited by their teaching. Besides all this it will, we trust, be one factor in dealing a death-blow at the pernicious and foolish practice of reading and re-reading lessons until all interest has gone out of them. We are aware that there is another difficulty underlying the practice—viz., that of obtaining suitable reading material. This is not so great as it would appear. Many schools overcome it by using one or other of the school papers published, others by encouraging the formation of a school library; and others by appealing to their Committees for funds to purchase a supply of supplementary Readers. The question of school Readers is one of paramount importance in the working of the school, and from the teacher's point of view, as well as from the point of view of many of the parents, there is very much to be said in favour of the proposal that they should be provided free to all schools.

3. *Much more Practical and Mental Work in Arithmetic.*—In almost all the schools a practical test was given. Here is an example from Standard IV: (1.) Measure your desk, draw a plan of it, and show its area in square inches. (2.) Count the money given on the table, and find out how much more you would require to give 1s. 3d. to each of the boys in your class. (3.) How much milk will the given vessel hold, and find its cost at 3d. per quart. (4.) A man begins work at 8.15 a.m. and works till 6.30 p.m. with a break of an hour at 12 o'clock; find his wages at 1s. 6d. an hour. As far as possible we tried to find out whether the measures and tables had been practically taught, and whether the problems submitted to the pupils had some relation to actual things and actual needs. Such tests as the above were given in all classes, and where they were well done displaced the usual test cards. Mental tests were given in some of the classes, and the results of these were sufficiently striking to bring home to the minds of all the need of giving this important branch a very prominent place in the teaching of the subject. When it is considered that most of the arithmetic we are called upon to do in actual life is of the order of rapid mental calculation, it will be recognised that we are right in seeking for a revival in this class of work. Much that we teach in the way of theoretical arithmetic might well be thrown to the winds; while much that we exclude in the way of real practical tests and rapid mental calculations should be prominently and diligently included.

4. *In Written Composition, the Expression of Knowledge gained in other Departments of School-work: Geography, History, Science, Nature-study.*—Every child should be able to express itself intelligently about what has been learned in any of the other lessons. Thus composition is co-ordinated with the other subjects. Every lesson, we say, should be, more or less, a lesson in language; and nearly every lesson in science or geography or history may profitably be completed by a short written exercise in which the child is required to express as accurately as possible his knowledge of some portion of the subject about which he has been learning. Thus to a certain extent we have discarded special themes in composition; but not altogether, for letter-writing naturally turns itself into such channels as holidays, public functions, railway excursions, &c., and it is when handling such topics as these that the imagination is let loose and fuller opportunities given for the use of figurative language in which so many children delight. What we have wished to insist upon is that the ability to compose correctly should not be confined to such efforts, and that the ability to write correctly should be judged just as much from the efforts made to convey information regarding the facts of geography, history, or science as from the efforts made when the child is deliberately seeking to work out some theme. Expression should always be as accurate and correct as possible, even if it is given only in regard to the position, direction, and importance of a river.

5. *Ability to spell correctly the Common Words of Everyday Use and the Words with which the Pupil is brought into Contact in its Study of the Facts of History or Geography, especially where these are Words of Ordinary Usage.*—The habit of habitually gauging ability in spelling by tests from prepared books should largely be abolished. It is a notable fact that good spelling of words and paragraphs from the reading-books may coexist with poor spelling in composition and in exercises where ordinary words of ordinary speech have to be employed. The remedy for this is apparent. Teaching must be systematically directed to the correct spelling of the words which form the pupil's vocabulary. We have drawn emphatic attention to this need by including in our tests for spelling words of common speech, and by counting it of the first importance when forming our judgment on the work in this important subject that the words used by the pupils in expressing their answers to questions in geography, and especially in their written compositions, shall be correctly spelt.