

ARITHMETIC.—The appended table shows the results in the various classes of the schools in which this subject was examined. The work in general is not by any means so strong as could be wished, Standard V again showing to least advantage.

	Number of Schools.						
	Standard VI.	Standard V.	Standard IV.	Standard III.	Standard II.	Standard I.	Preparatory.
Excellent ..	2	5	10	4	7	2	2
Good to excellent ..	2	2	3	2	5	3	2
Good ..	8	7	13	14	6	7	10
Satisfactory to good ..	9	2	6	11	9	5	18
Satisfactory ..	7	7	9	9	16	11	31
Efficient ..	28	23	41	40	43	28	63
Fair to satisfactory	11	10	9	14	5	10	16
Fair ..	12	10	8	10	13	16	11
Moderate to fair ..	3	7	1	..	4	5	3
Moderate ..	9	10	6	6	4	6	3
Inferior to moderate	3	4	3	2	5	6	..
Inferior ..	15	20	12	16	11	20	..
Non-efficient ..	53	61	39	48	42	63	33

We have this year made a more prominent feature of mental arithmetic by demanding set tests up to Standard IV. The results obtained have been fairly satisfactory, and we hope to extend the practice by setting definite questions in all classes. We look upon it as superfluous to enlarge here upon the advantages to be derived from a sound training in mental arithmetic, but certainly regard the absence of definite teaching in this direction as an outstanding defect in the method adopted. Reviewing the subject generally, it appears to us that in many cases the teacher, striving after an intelligent prèsentment of the work, does too much for the pupil. The major portion of the working period should be devoted to work by the pupils, who might themselves fittingly carry out much of the blackboard illustration.

Another point that has come under our notice is the tendency, as soon as promotion takes place, to regard the work of the lower standard as done with, and to separate the requirements of one standard from the demands of the next. We think that after every stage of advancement the work of the previous class might well be kept up, especially in the first three standards.

DRAWING.—We have little to add to former criticisms on the teaching of drawing. In eighty-nine schools the general work of all classes was efficiently carried out, and nineteen of these were commended for especially good treatment of the subject. We reiterate our condemnation of the use of the ruler in model-drawing, or freehand, either from copy or from nature, and would again urge the necessity for system in the combination of the different branches of freehand. Mr. Stewart, of the Auckland Inspectorate, is very emphatic on one of these faults: "Many teachers make the mistake of using too many crutches; the centre-line is either ruled or the paper is creased instead; children are allowed to measure with rulers or folded paper; in some cases I have found actual tracing. Eye-judgment is almost entirely neglected in country schools, and pupils are often allowed to draw in a series of very short strokes, instead of being trained to develop the art of drawing with a sweeping light line. In some of the model-drawing at the proficiency examination I was surprised to find all the straight-line work done with rulers. All these practices should be banished from the schoolroom." In our larger infant schools excellent free-arm drawings in chalk are occasionally shown us, and in popularity this form of handwork is gaining ground, but it is by no means so common as it should be, the proper use of the hyloplate, which has been placed on the walls of our recently erected schoolrooms, being too often neglected. A comparison of the school drawing of to-day with that of, say, fifteen years ago shows a very marked contrast in the general character of the work. Drawing from flat copies has been largely replaced by drawing from nature or from objects, which again are redrawn from memory. The resourcefulness, skill, and taste of the teacher are taxed to secure or adapt suitable patterns or designs for reproduction, and to select suitable elements with which the children are to construct their original designs, when the underlying principles have been illustrated and appreciated. Improvement is just as strikingly indicated in the work of candidates for teachers' certificates as in that of school pupils. Yet the teacher's use of the chalk in pictorial illustration of important features of school lessons is not yet sufficiently practised, and for infant classes the depicting of scenes in the reading or story book is seldom attempted. Drawing either in pencil or chalk might easily be made a more general and more powerful teaching medium. In the last Wellington report we notice: "Drawing in all its branches has, no doubt, an important bearing on the æsthetic training of the young, but in the drawing scheme of the primary school the chief aim should not be the training of every child as a potential artist, but the cultivation in him of drawing as a means of every-day expression." To accomplish such an aim our teachers must set the example, and, while teaching, seize every opportunity to make drawing a common mode of expression.