

years: in no case does our experience show such revision to be unnecessary. In the other subjects the practice is to divide the course into two or four sections and to take every grouped class over the sections in rotation. Where the programme is not so definitely prescribed but has to be drawn up by the teacher from a given list of topics, as in history and geography, it is not always clear that the programme presented for the S5-S6 class-group is fully complementary to that presented for the S3-S4 class-group; and not a few schemes of work are, in that way, defective. A scheme of work in political geography, for instance, that ignores a whole continent, or a history scheme that passes over a whole age, cannot be accepted as satisfactory. Although in drawing up the course of instruction in the subjects other than arithmetic and the English subjects a wide freedom of selection is permitted, the obligation lies with the head or sole teacher to see to it that when a pupil has passed the Sixth Standard he shall have finished a fairly complete course in these subjects.

*Classification.*—In a considerable number of schools we have had to report upon the classification as unsatisfactory, the pupils having been promoted before they had mastered the previous year's work in English and arithmetic. In some instances, doubtless, such over-classification is due to error of judgment; but there is unmistakable evidence in other instances that pressure has been exerted to induce teachers, against their own better judgment, to grant promotion. The results where the teachers have yielded have been disastrous to the real progress of the over-classified pupils and to the general efficiency of the school. We can assure parents that teachers are anxious that all their pupils shall make uninterrupted progress through the standards, and that, if they make errors of judgment in classification, they err in overestimating, not in underestimating, the capacity of their pupils. In justice to uncertificated teachers in charge of schools we have usually relieved them of the responsibility of making the classification. Some parents and a few teachers have to be reminded that promotion from standard to standard is to be made not on the occasion, nor as a consequence, of the Inspector's visit, but in general, simultaneously throughout the Dominion, on the 1st day of January.

*Time-tables.*—A number of schools have found it possible, with advantage to all concerned, to adopt the suggestion that the dinner recess should be lengthened to an hour and a quarter. The possibility of dividing the day so as to make the afternoon session shorter than the morning session might also be taken into consideration. In some districts this is secured either by dismissing later in the morning—i.e., at 12.15 or 12.30 instead of 12—or (in summer) by assembling earlier—i.e., at 9 instead of 9.30. We are well aware that local conditions may make the change impracticable in some districts, but teachers will admit that there is a decided advantage in disposing of all the more difficult studies during the morning period.

*Schemes of Work.*—In so far as the English subjects and arithmetic are concerned, the schemes of work have on the whole been satisfactory. The syllabus, indeed, is so definite here that there is little room for error or even for variety. Evidence is not wanting, however, that the revised syllabus is not read as carefully as it deserves to be. Some teachers, for instance, have failed to take full advantage of the lightening of the arithmetic programme in Standard VI. A sufficient course, both for practical purposes and for intellectual training, is provided in the revised syllabus; to add anything means, in general, less thorough training in the essentials. Moreover, the text-book conception of the scope of the standards must be corrected by constant reference to the syllabus; and in using text-books the teacher must devise supplementary exercises to supply the place of the omissions, or, in the alternative, omit the unnecessary exercises. In drafting their schemes of work, the most experienced teachers make careful provisions for revising their instruction both in English and arithmetic, at the end of each term as well as at the end of the year. The tendency to present fragmentary schemes in history and geography has already been animadverted upon. The least satisfactory portions of the annual schemes are the programmes in handwriting and in nature-study and elementary science. In a number of schools the somewhat disappointing results in nature-study and elementary science are due, not so much to faults of method, as to the nebulous and indefinite character of the schemes of work.

*Manual Instruction.*—[See E.-5, Report on Manual and Technical Instruction.]

*Reading.*—Reading is, on the whole, successfully taught. In the preparatory classes the daily practice might with advantage include the reading of lessons in script from the blackboard. Learning to read script is not more difficult than learning to read print, and the former is quite as important as the latter; besides which the teacher's time is in most cases economized if he writes lessons on the blackboard instead of printing them. In the recitation of poetry it is essential that the pupils should be taught to express the emotional content, and to this end time must be given to the study of the import and intention of the passage that is being learned. High marks cannot be given for recitation that is wanting in feeling and intelligence.

*Writing.*—In teaching writing it is absolutely essential that a good foundation be laid in the preparatory classes and junior divisions. The teaching of this subject would be improved if a larger and bolder style were generally adopted. The size that is best for Standard IV is also best for Standard VI. The subject is not difficult either to the pupil or the teacher, and so far as the average pupil is concerned, all the difficulties should be overcome by the time he has passed out of the Fourth Standard. In the remaining two years he should be free to devote himself to acquiring speed without sacrificing neatness and legibility. The special writing exercises prescribed for the upper divisions—i.e., the transcription of verse in proper form, tabulated matter, and commercial forms—appear to have received little attention in some schools. The instruction should enable pupils to present concisely in tabular form a series of facts in such subjects as geography. Very definite and repeated instruction should be given in the formation of capital letters.

*Spelling.*—In spelling the essential point is that pupils should spell correctly all the words that they ordinarily use. Vigilance should therefore be employed in regard to the spelling in composition