

and other written work, and absolute correctness should be demanded from the first. The frequency of errors in transcription suggests that this exercise is not being used as it should be used to teach correct spelling.

*Composition.*—In most schools composition is satisfactorily taught. Practice in oral and written expression is begun at the earliest possible stage, and is continued through all the standards, with the result that comparatively few Standard VI pupils fail to produce a page of very tolerable original composition. In oral composition, however, there is not sufficient practice in connected narrative, description and exposition. The punctuation of the written composition is frequently very faulty; correct punctuation should be taught from the first as a necessary part of written composition. The instruction in formal grammar does not appear to be applied as it might be with a view to securing variety of expression in the composition exercises. Thus, while the conversion of the active into the passive voice is regularly taught, the latter form rarely appears in the pupils' composition exercises, and a wholly objectionable idiom is rapidly usurping its legitimate place—*i.e.*, the active voice with the pronoun "you" used in an indefinite sense as subject.

*Arithmetic.*—The most successful teachers of preparatory classes make a large use of loose counters in teaching arithmetic. Exactly at what point the counters may be discarded must be decided by the individual teacher. Certainly the concrete expression of an arithmetical fact by the arrangement and manipulation of counters should be accompanied from the first by its oral expression, and as early as possible by its written expression. What may be called the arithmetical "five-finger exercises"—*i.e.*, the tables, the weights and measures, and their use in simple and compound rules—must, if good results are to be permanent, be thoroughly learned in the first four standards. Failure in this respect is the main cause of the difficulty that some pupils find in the Standard V and Standard VI arithmetic. In Standard V we have occasionally found that the extension of the square-measure table in that standard to include the relations of the acre, rood, and square pole has been overlooked. In this connection it may be pointed out that it is advisable when calculating areas to express the result in these denominations, which are those used in survey maps, rather than in acres and square yards, or in acres and square chains.

*Drawing.*—Freehand drawing is on the whole satisfactorily taught. In most schools drawing from actual objects is gradually superseding the copying of printed drawings. The instrumental drawing, however, is not so successfully taught. In some instances Standard VI pupils have been quite unable to construct an easy scale or to draw the simplest plan to scale.

*Geography.*—In the study of geography the war has created a new interest, of which teachers have made effective use. While details of place-names and topography cannot be expected with any minuteness in regard to the world at large, a greater amount of detail in regard to our own Dominion than is usually professed might legitimately be demanded.

*Civics.*—A test-book in civics has been recommended to teachers. Although the difficulty of the style makes it unsuitable as a class-book, teachers will find in this book suitable material for a course of oral lessons extending over two years—*i.e.*, for Standard V and Standard VI. While the old history readers are retained, it is not intended that these should represent the only matters taught. There should be oral lessons as well, constituting, with the history readers, a four-years course to cover most of the ground indicated in Regulations 34 of the syllabus.

*Moral Training.*—In the moral training of the future citizens our schools are doing a great, if an unrecognized work for the State. To the honour of the teachers be it said, most of them recognize their responsibilities, and their constant effort is towards the securing of right conduct and the formation of good character. In the present crisis in the history of the world it is a matter of common observation that the schools are doing their part in fostering the national sentiment and in giving its due place to patriotism, the sum of all civic virtues. In regard to another aspect of moral duty, the duty of the individual towards his physical being, careful instruction in the laws of health is being regularly given. The physical exercises in the open air and, so far as they go, the organized games of the playground, are building up sturdy frames; while insistence on personal cleanliness and tidiness, care as to ventilation of schoolrooms, and other precautionary measures, are now matters of course in most schools. The attention of teachers is directed to the importance of exercising constant care in regard to the posture of pupils both in the playground exercises and during lessons.

*Order, Discipline, and Tone.*—In very few instances have we had to report upon the order, discipline, and tone of a school as being unsatisfactory. Teachers as a body are devoted to their work, and their earnestness is reflected in the general tone of the schools.

*Environment.*—Much requires to be done to improve the environment of the child during the long period of primary education. How much the school environment counts for good or ill as an influence on the child's future character and physical well-being can hardly be overestimated. The school-grounds are too often but ill-drained and muddy yards, the fences in a ruinous condition, the walls of the schoolroom bare and unlovely, if not dusty and grimy as well, producing a general effect that is depressing where it ought to be elevating.

*Accommodation.*—In a few schools accommodation is barely sufficient; but only in the most urgent cases have additions been recommended. The district is progressing steadily in population, and there will necessarily be regular applications for expenditure on increased accommodation.

*Class-books.*—To meet the requirements of the syllabus the authorized list of class-books has been revised. It has not been deemed advisable to change the general reader for the standard classes, the authorized series not having been in use very long and being still fairly well up to date. Neither have the history readers been changed, the series in use, although only fairly satisfactory, being the best available.

*Teachers' Examinations and Saturday Classes.*—The results of the teachers' examination in 1914 have been somewhat disappointing. While our younger teachers who had previously matriculated,