The teaching of arithmetic has, we think, improved both in accuracy and intelligence. In this subject, Standard V. is distinctly weaker than the other classes. It is in dealing with fractions that the pupils are most liable to break down, and the treatment of the questions set frequently shows ignorance of simple principles as well as confusion in setting out the work. It is very seldom indeed that we get answers worth anything to such questions as the following: How do you know that $\frac{3}{5}$ is equal to $\frac{9}{15}$? How can you compare the value of two fractions having different denominators? How can you tell which of two fractions having different denominators is the greater?

Not a single operation can be performed with fractions without an implicit knowledge of the elementary principles to which these questions relate, but the knowledge, somehow, hardly ever becomes explicit. The routine is gone through thousands of times, we suppose, by every pupil, but it is not explained or shown to depend on principles almost as simple and obvious as those of decimal notation. The results in the Sixth Standard, excellent though they are in a fair number of schools, might easily be better.

We are glad to find that in most schools some of the pupils in every class make a good appearance in arithmetic. This appears to show that the teaching is, perhaps, not so much lacking in skill as in thoroughness and accuracy. It is very desirable that more time should be devoted to blackboard teaching, and that this time should be better utilised than it generally is. Here, just as in English, there is a noticeable want of training to answer quickly and fully, and the questioning is often diffuse and badly directed. Dozens of questions are sometimes put to elicit points which well-trained pupils would state as a matter of course in the working of the questions. A great deal of time is sometimes wasted by teachers and pupils in setting down on board or slate the full working of great numbers of simple operations in reduction which they should be trained to do mentally and without a moment's hesitation. The time set aside for arithmetic is in many schools longer than it need be. An hour and a half daily should be the maximum aggregate time devoted to it. At present this is not unfrequently exceeded. Mental arithmetic was tested in several of the classes in every school, and in all or most of the classes of the larger ones. We are glad to be able to report that it is, on the whole, well taught, and often contributes materially to the marks that entitle a pupil to pass.

Standards V. and VI. still show considerable weakness in parsing, and even greater weakness in dealing with questions in grammar. Such questions, for example, as "What does the inflection for person denote?" or "When is the passive voice of a verb used?" are seldom answered with any approach to accuracy. As the inflections are carefully taught, and their forms pretty well known, there should be no difficulty in getting pupils to understand their meaning and use. The fact is, parsing is commonly taken in a way that is much too mechanical, and the interpretation of the technical terms used in the exercise receives very little attention. Ask a boy why he says that "which" is a relative pronoun, or that "has written" is of the active voice, or that "he went" is third person, and you see at once that he says so because he has been told to say so—because he thinks it the correct thing, and not because he understands the meaning of the technical term, and uses it in a descriptive sense. If questions of this kind were more freely asked in connection with parsing the intelligence and accuracy of the work would be greatly improved. Elementary analysis is generally well done, but its bearing on composition is not as highly appreciated as it should be.

From Standard III. upwards every pupil does an exercise in composition. The exercises received are of unequal merit, but almost uniform brevity. The division of the matter into sentences is now much better managed, and, on the whole, the matter itself, both in quality and in arrangement, gives evidence of progress in the teaching of this difficult subject. Specific teaching of composition is becoming more general, though we do not see much increase of power in handling the lessons. Except in matters relating to syntax, arrangement, and division into sentences, direct teaching cannot here accomplish very much. The teacher has to depend rather on the training in giving full and connected oral answers to comprehensive questions on the matter of the lessons in reading, history, and object lessons. This training should be continuous from the first year of school life, and by the time the Fourth Standard is reached ought to prove a most important introduction and aid to formal composition. Unfortunately, it is only in a minority of schools that a progressive training of this character is given, and this is no doubt one of the chief causes of the moderate success with which composition is taught in this district.

Geography is in general answered with very fair accuracy, but the teaching is much more formal and uninteresting than it might be made. Few succeed in making the subject anything more than a dry grind, and those who aim at anything higher would not be hard to count. The spacious and lofty ideal of geographical teaching which Sir Archibald Geikie has brought before the present generation of teachers finds, we fear, but little sympathy among us. The limited time which can be devoted to it, indeed, makes handling on such a scale as he contemplates quite impossible, but it need not prevent the spirit of his method from pervading the brief treatment which we can afford. We sometimes find reason to think that the barrenness and formality of current geographical teaching are due to want of knowledge of the subject. To those who feel that this notion is not ill-founded, we would recommend a perusal of such works as Keith Johnston's School Geography, published by E. Stanford and Co., and the excellent School Geography of Mr. Chisholm, published by Longmans and Co. It is not too much to say that every teacher should possess a few works of this class, with the contents of which he should be familiar, and upon which he could draw to make his teaching stimulating and attractive. In recent years the aims of geographical teaching have been distinctly raised, and the means of carrying out these aims are becoming every year more perfect. With such helps ready to his hand, the intelligent teacher should have little difficulty in avoiding meagreness and dryness of treatment. The complaints that may be justly made about the teaching of geography are in part traceable to the language in which the scope of geographical teaching is defined in the official syllabus. Besides some physical geography, the position of places