

striking pictures of sufficient size, will be very helpful in the same direction. Elementary science (the schemes for which as given in Schedule II. of the Code prescribed object-lessons solely for the First and Second Standards) is obviously an excellent class-subject from this point of view.

But, whatever may be the method followed, some system of lessons should be arranged in every school by which an intelligent habit of observation and simple reasoning may be fostered, while it cannot be too clearly pointed out that all the subjects simultaneously dealt with in a curriculum should be kept as closely interconnected and made as mutually helpful as possible, and not be unduly isolated and specialised.

So also as regards hand and eye training, it is much to be regretted that the ingenious and progressive kindergarten exercises for training scholars in deftness of hand and correctness of eye should be almost entirely discontinued after children leave the infant-school; and the more so when it is remembered that the mind itself is most effectively trained by such exercises, whenever they are the expression of the children's own thought.

Drawing with coloured chalks, modelling in clay, embroidery of outlines, formation of geometrical patterns and models, and building with cubes, &c., have been tried with excellent results and at very small cost, as convenient methods of continuing the instruction given in the infant-school.

You will be careful to explain to managers how very interesting, inexpensive, and educational all these methods are.

As regards the elementary subjects, spelling, unless founded upon methodical and well-graduated lessons on classes of words, should be absolutely discouraged in the lower classes; and in arithmetic, no sums should be set either in the First or Second Standard which the scholars themselves cannot either put down when set in a concrete form or translate into concrete qualities when set in abstract numbers.

The use of the reading-book for spelling-lessons should also be discouraged. Otherwise the interest in the subject is lessened, and the time which should be devoted to intelligent conversation between the teacher and the class on the matter of the lesson is curtailed.

In connection with object-lessons or other similar instruction, the practice of answering by complete sentences, which largely prevails in infant-schools, should, whenever possible, take the place of elliptical or simultaneous answering.

Attention might be also usefully drawn to the desirability of employing, in these lower parts of schools for older scholars, women teachers who have had experience in infant-teaching, and especially those who have been trained for kindergarten work.

It should never be forgotten that, unless the lessons themselves are made attractive to these young children by their simplicity of treatment, by the suitability and variety of the illustrations, and by association with their everyday life, the most carefully drawn curriculum, and the most thoughtful arrangement of time-tables will fail to attract the children of those parents who set little value on the education of their children.

Their Lordships believe that there is nothing in the Code, or in the present system of examination, that need in the least degree prevent such simple and natural methods of teaching as have been described, and they would be glad to hear of anything that would remove any impediment, should such appear to exist. They desire also to point out that the general intelligence which these methods of instruction tend to foster is of the highest advantage in improving the teaching of other subjects of instruction which form part of the curriculum.

I have, &c.,

G. W. KEKEWICH.

3.—OBJECT-TEACHING.

(Circular 369.)

SIR,—

25th June, 1895.

It has been observed that in schools in which object-teaching has been introduced with most success the teachers have carefully distinguished between two kinds of instruction which in other schools are not seldom confused. These two kinds of instruction are: (1) Observation of the object itself, and (2) giving information about the object. This distinction is of importance, because the scope and method of the lesson differ according to its nature. Object-teaching leads the scholar to acquire knowledge by observation and experiment; and no instruction is properly so called unless an object is presented to the learner, so that the addition to his knowledge may be made through the senses.

Junior teachers have not unfrequently given lessons before Her Majesty's Inspectors which were wrongly described as object-lessons, because in dealing with the topic selected no suitable appeal was made to the eye of the scholar. A lesson, for example, on the elephant to children in village schools, who have no opportunity of visiting either museums or zoological gardens, may convey information and store the memory with interesting facts, but it does not cultivate the habit of obtaining knowledge directly and at first hand, or develop the faculty of observation. However well the lesson may be illustrated by diagrams, pictures, models, or lantern-slides, if the children have no opportunity of handling or watching the actual object which is being dealt with, the teacher will be giving an information-lesson rather than an object-lesson. It should be always remembered that in object-lessons the imparting of information is secondary to the cultivation of the faculty of observation.

Object-teaching should be further distinguished from instruction in natural science. It is elementary science only in so far as it aids the child to observe some of the facts of Nature upon which natural science is founded; but as it deals with such topics without formal arrangement, it differs widely from the systematic study of a particular science. The principles of scientific classification, the continuous study of one group of natural phenomena, the generalisation from facts and the search for natural laws, belong to a later stage of mental discipline, which will be much more effectual if it is being based upon the preliminary training of the senses through sound