

higher grades the work is arranged largely on the concentric plan. Some idea of its extent and character can be gained by the synopsis given in the Appendix of what is prescribed for the First Grade, for the first half-year of the Fourth Grade, and for the Sixth Grade (Standard IV or V). As in our syllabus, more work is suggested than any teacher will desire to complete. This is done with a view to leaving a choice for the teacher.

Geography is not the only subject in which preparation is made for that kind of concrete teaching that creates a living interest in the minds of pupils; growing plants, tanks for the observation of aquatic life, and other appliances meet the eye in this and other schools. What is more, the teachers know how to use them so as to train the observation of the children, to lead their pupils by careful reasoning to form inferences based upon their observation, and to express in clear language what they have learnt and thought out.

The Normal School does not confine itself to the training of the students at present on its register; by means of Normal Extension Classes it is ever seeking to improve the general and special knowledge of teachers whose period of training has passed. These classes, which are fully organized, are conducted, some at the Normal School, but the majority at other places in different parts of Chicago. A third of the instructors in 1905-6 were members of the staff of the Normal School, and their classes were apparently the most successful. More than two-thirds of the classes were systematic "study classes"; teachers who complete a course in one of these may now have their work considered when they are classified for promotion;\* but without this pecuniary incentive, during the two years 1904-6, 2,300 to 2,500 teachers availed themselves of the opportunities afforded in Extension Classes. The average in each class was eighteen to twenty. For most of the information given above I am indebted to the Report of the Chicago Board of Education.

The Chicago Normal School has its own printing and publishing department, known as "The Chicago Normal School Press," which, besides printing the forms and circulars required by the school, publishes a magazine, the *Educational Bi-monthly*, various class-notes and outlines for teaching the different subjects of the school programme, and autographs on topics taken up by the several departments of the teachers' college, written either by the staff or by senior students—for instance, the Department of History and Sociology has issued a series of "Municipal Studies" (No. 1, 52 pages, "The Fight for Life in Chicago"—a sketch of the sanitary history of the city, compiled largely from official reports; No. 2, 41 pages, "The History of Chicago's Water-supply"; &c.); these are intended as aids to the study of civics, emphasis being laid on public functions rather than upon the mere machinery of government. Again, the Extension Department has issued pamphlets intended for teachers attending the Normal Extension Classes (e.g., "Conversion and Disposition of Food in the Body"—a very practical summary of the leading scientific facts on the subject, well up to date).

#### *School-books and School Libraries.*

No school-books may be used in any Chicago schools, either elementary or high, unless they are included in the list authorised by the Board of Education. Statements have been made from time to time of the influence exercised by large publishing firms and corporations to have their books placed upon this list; but it is obvious that that influence might be just as great as it is alleged to be if the choice of books were entirely in the hands of the principals of the schools. There seems to be some ground for the criticism that old-fashioned books, or books implying obsolete methods of instruction, are, by reason of the influence of the publishing firms or from other causes, retained upon the list to the exclusion of text-books more in accord with the modern methods of education; the list certainly seems to be far from ideal, especially in the case of the books prescribed for use in some of the high-school subjects.

School-books are not free, but are to be provided by the pupils, generally within a week of their entrance into a class; the Board of Education, however, pays for books supplied to indigent pupils. Books for supplementary reading are provided in the schools, and nearly every school has a good school library for circulation and for reference. The Board publishes an excellent list of books suggested for school libraries; the last list (1907) contains the titles of 2,671 books, of which 2,531 are suitable for children, and the remaining 140 are reference-books for teachers.

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\* A report of the Committee on School Management, adopted by the Board on the 23rd May, 1906, is printed in the Appendix, and will give a good idea of the method of promotion.