

Mr. Burnside's estimate is more favourable. He says, "Geography A is handled in an intelligent manner in most of the schools. It is apparent to an examiner, however, that in many cases too much reliance is placed upon the text-book. . . . When taught by the use of a reader alone, geography B has been found by our teachers to produce results not at all satisfactory. It is customary, therefore, to draw up a scheme of work in geography B for each class. In this way the subject is becoming more valuable and instructive. I should like to see more attention to map-drawing. It must not be forgotten that, to teach geography with success, the teacher must have a wide and varied knowledge of the subject, and at least a passing acquaintance with the methods of the practical sciences."

Mr. Plummer's remarks are also worth transcribing: "Many teachers have handled geography A in a very creditable manner. Some, however, seem to think that the requirements of the syllabus can be fulfilled by the use of a text-book in the hands of a pupil. In their schools, needless to say, the result is poor. A fair proportion, again, rely on oral teaching, more or less skilful, in school, forgetting all about the child's powers of observation, and the necessity of making use of them in a practical way. No lessons are taken outside. To some of these teachers it has come somewhat in the nature of a shock to be told that they are expected, when taking a course of lessons on the work of a river, to take their pupils to the side of a stream near at hand, or, when dealing with the work of the sea, to take them down to the beach. Better methods are now used in teaching geography B, and, as a rule, our pupils are acquiring some definite knowledge of political geography."

On the whole, we may conclude that satisfactory progress is being made in the teaching of this subject, and that the aims of the Inspectors in directing its methods and scope are calculated to secure its continuance. It is likely that the regulations dealing with the subject will soon be modified, and one may hope that the discredited "reading-book" method of dealing with it will be discarded. Should this method be continued, more suitable "readers" than any now available will be urgently needed.

What Mr. Burnside reports about drawing is, I think, fairly applicable to the whole of the Auckland District: "Freehand drawing and memory drawing are generally of good quality, while much of the brush drawing and flat-tinting is admirably executed. Model-drawing does not show to much advantage."

Mr. Plummer mentions his finding in some schools an insufficient number of exercises, and the same fact has repeatedly come under my own notice. This is probably due to too much time being taken up with each exercise. "Many teachers make the mistake," Mr. Stewart writes, "of using too many crutches; the centre line is either ruled or the paper is creased instead; children are allowed to measure with rulers or folded paper; in some cases I have found actual tracing; eye-judgment is almost entirely neglected in country schools, and pupils are often allowed to draw in a series of very short strokes, instead of being trained to develop the art of drawing with a sweeping light line. In some of the model-drawing at the Proficiency Examination I was surprised to find all the straight-line work done with rulers. *All these practices should be banished from the schoolroom.* Drawing from simple objects does not receive the attention that it ought. It makes the subject more interesting to the younger children."

I am of opinion that the drawing of objects should hold a much more prominent position in the syllabus and in the work of our schools than it now does. What is the practical value of being able to make a good or satisfactory copy of another's drawing on the flat? Yet this is all that the great majority of our pupils ever attain to. The direction in the syllabus that only "objects such as have no appreciable thickness" are to be used in the drawing of the first three standards makes it impossible to lay a foundation for object-drawing in the lower half of the school. In this matter the syllabus is behind the times. Free-arm drawing is practised in a considerable number of schools, especially in the larger ones and in the lower classes. Much good work of this kind comes under one's notice in a year, but it is sometimes used to little purpose through the want of skilful direction. Mr. Stewart remarks that freehand drawing from the flat "is almost without exception good in those schools which take free-arm drawing on blackboards in the preparatory classes and in Standards I and II." Speaking of country schools, Mr. Cox notes that "where teachers themselves have been through a course of lessons the brush drawing is usually very satisfactory."

When oral lessons are given in history, or oral lessons are combined with the reading of a History Reader, pupils usually show a fair knowledge of what has been taught. In other circumstances very little knowledge of the subject is gained, and an interest in the story of our country and its great men is, I fear, but seldom kindled. A change in the History Readers to be used in the schools has now been made, two books—an elementary and a more advanced one—being authorized. As these books are written in simple language, it is hoped that the reading of them in combination with oral lessons and a due amount of revision will place the treatment of this subject on a more satisfactory footing. For lasting knowledge revision is indispensable. If a separate History Reader for each standard class could have been provided, the gain would doubtless have been still greater.

Mr. Plummer, the only Inspector who this year attempts an estimate of the work in civic instruction, says it is generally satisfactory. In the light of my experience, this estimate is not ungenerous. Mr. Cox very justly remarks that teachers often attempt too much. An instance of this is afforded by the too frequent attempt to teach all the steps that a Bill in Parliament goes through before it becomes part of the law of the land. It should suffice if children learn the great functions of Parliament—fixing the general taxes we are to pay, settling how this revenue is to be expended, and making laws for the general good of the country and for the protection of life and property. Things that come home to the observation or experience of the older children are far more worthy of fuller consideration. The raising and expending of local taxes or rates; the election of members of public bodies; the work of the police and of Courts of Justice; the work of banks in keeping money safe, in transmitting payments to distant places, and in lending money to prosperous traders; the different kinds of money and of instruments acting as money, and their convenience; direct and indirect taxation, and its