

emerge in the reading-lesson; they are more or less distasteful, and the study is dry when treated separately as a dictionary lesson. It is only when the teacher has a true perception of these matters that the pupil can rise to a sense of the beauty of language that flits iridescent over the pages of great authors.

Spelling is a useful discipline in accuracy as well as a common criterion of education. Set tests were for the most part well done. Sometimes the general spelling is very faulty, and, as above indicated, the character of the errors suggests that the reading is badly corrected. When at the end of a line the word is divided, but not in syllables, it is evident that something of the meaning of the word is lost.

Where teaching of letter-formation is weak the copy-book may be good, yet the general writing poor. The parts of the letters should be analysed, and their relation made clear. The average child is not able to distinguish the parts till they are shown. His analytic faculty is in embryo. The teacher sometimes trusts to the child's sense of what is right; he should remember that, in addition to cultivating the child's power of writing and reading, he has also to cultivate the child's sense—*e.g.*, his sense of difference, of similarity, of cause, &c. The fact that in these matters there is embryonic development must not be lost sight of; it has become to-day an elementary truth of psychology. In a few schools the external appearance of copy and other books was unsatisfactory; it should be the pupil's pleasure as well as his duty to keep his book as clean and beautiful as possible.

Composition still leaves much to be desired. In connection with its formal aspect the power to give a reason for corrections made requires cultivation; the correction of an error may be the most important matter in Standard IV. The reason is equally important in Standard V, and most so in Standard VI. School playground grammar is as much a matter for the teacher as school grammar, and errors should be carefully noted and corrected. When oral solecism is allowed to pass in the presence of the Inspector, he must think that the same occurs in his absence. This would explain many of the defects found in the essays. Here again, for the sake of younger teachers, I enumerate some faults discovered during the year. Sometimes the child uses inelegant or crude expressions that in a grammatical sense cannot be called wrong, yet which require refining at the hands of the teachers—*e.g.*, inelegancies: "There is a lot"; "See the sea." Contractions: "There are plenty hills." Omission of relative when subject. Misuse of apostrophe: "The boy's play games." Misuse of synonym: "Starting" for "beginning." Repetition of the same connective, especially "so," "then." Use of continuative for definitive pronouns, or of a cunulative for an adversative conjunction, or of a pronoun without a noun to refer to. Misuse of common words—*e.g.*, in-into (after a verb of motion), use-used ("We use to go to that school"); get, not after a verb of motion, but to denote simple possession, or in such uses as the following: "getting wounded," being wounded; "he is getting old now," becoming, &c.; "got frozen," was frozen; use of "like" as a conjunction: "right," duty—*e.g.*, "He had a right to do it"; "were," where; "to," too; "their," there; "as," has; "can," may—*e.g.*, "I hope it will be fine so that I can enjoy the picnic." Misplacing of "only," "merely," and phrases. False sequence of tenses—*e.g.*, "If it had not been for you the boy may have been hurt." Misspelling as noted above—a reflex of defective enunciation, &c.

At five or six schools paraphrasing was very weak. When the essay is short or unoriginal it is obvious that the object of the exercise has been misunderstood. Essay-writing is not primarily for teaching of morals, or geography, or history, or general knowledge, although occasional practice may be given in dealing with topics of each kind, because composition method (description, narration, exposition, &c.) and diction vary somewhat in practical application. What is wanted is a vigorous and virile and, if possible, a polished mode of giving expression to one's ideas. Essay-writing is not the art of putting into condensed form a mass of information the child does not possess; it is the art of putting into clear and even striking form matter that he does know, or things he has observed. The simpler the subject and the nearer to his interests the better. There are various devices—*e.g.*, logical sequence and connection, the principles of antithesis, climax, suspense, inversion, exclamation, interrogation, the use of synonym and figure of speech—by which what the child thinks can be given written expression in more or less clear or memorable form. The application of these to the actual thoughts of a child is the object of composition. In Standards III and IV it is sufficient to gain proper sequence and connection with power over the various forms of pronoun and verb. The other principles should be introduced warily in Standards V and VI.

If merely memorizing be taken into account, recitation is satisfactorily dealt with in the great majority of the schools, but really good modulation is rare. There is too often a horizontal monotone. Where slackness is found in reading it is usual that the recitation shows similar weakness—*e.g.*, clipped endings, the alteration of small relational words—showing that the thought is not followed—or such variation as "The rose's brief bright light of joy." Poetry is the jewellery of language, and it ought to be far removed from imperfect expression. It is our most purely oral subject; in it the primary school approaches nearest to the study of literature—the vivid interpretation of the author's mind. One seeks not merely the thought embodied—that is science; sound and sense frequently illustrate each other—the vowels clap hands, and the consonants rejoice together, and under all, like the beating of a heart, is the flow and movement of the rhythm. Even blank verse is a fiery trellis on which continually variegated patterns appear. If deficiencies are prevalent in a subject like recitation, where the matter is said over and over again, they are evidently due not only to the child's carelessness, but also to poor and careless teaching.

ARITHMETIC.—Only two of the twenty-six candidates for the Junior National Scholarship failed to obtain the minimum (25 per cent.) in arithmetic. In Standard VI, however, the pro-