

consider that were this plan adopted in the upper classes of the school not only would it tend to improve the quality of the work, but it would open up to the child the way of collecting facts and then marshalling them in order of importance, and thus composition could be made a subject in which the pupil could be trained to find out much for himself. We may add that class discussion, with blackboard correction of typical errors, is more educative and economical than toilsome repetition of individual markings. We would again emphasize the need for special attention being paid to the writing of ordinary business and social letters. If pupils are taught from the middle divisions upwards to write letters, there should be no excuse in the higher classes for the lack of proper form and punctuation and in correct spelling, or for obscurity of expression, while the cultural influence of the school life should be sufficient to secure politeness in addressing either friends or strangers.

*Arithmetic.*—In regard to arithmetic, we think that the suggestion made at the recent conference—viz., that concrete teaching should be dispensed with as soon as possible—is a correct one. When an adequate foundation of the concrete relations has been laid, they should be laid aside and abstract symbols considered. As a matter of fact, much of the teacher's endeavour is to save pupils from too much concreteness. Accuracy in the fundamentals is not achieved until the necessity for thought in reckoning has been reduced to a minimum; it is when we stop to think that mistakes are made in addition or other process work. Thus drill for habit-formation must be given; and, while this is recognized usually as being the prerogative of the infant department, it should be continued throughout the school. Of the general arithmetic work in the standards we consider that in S5 to be the least satisfactory, for in this class seldom do the children show more than a fair degree of proficiency. This is probably due to the fact that the pupil has now to face exercises which are quite dissimilar from those he has met in the previous standard. Much may be done here with practical work, handwork being used as a method of teaching.

We frequently meet children who think that they have "no head" for arithmetic—a fixed idea which is aggravated by the parents' view that none of the family could ever do arithmetic. In such cases the teacher must establish confidence within the child, and he can do this best by giving him exercises that are well within his compass. It has been said that many a pupil loses his arithmetic morale because of what he fancies to be a hard problem, when the real trouble is that he cannot use correctly 7 times 8, or is unable to keep a column of figures in line. He wastes half his mental energy in thinking of what should be purely mechanical. Arithmetic is popularly chosen as a subject for home-work, and is frequently the occasion of much waste of time. No problem should be given a child for home exercise that he does not understand and cannot do without the aid of his parents. Lastly, we may emphasize in the case of arithmetic the need for careful setting out, which, indeed, is just as important as method, inasmuch as it leads to accuracy.

*Geography, History.*—Of the other subjects of the course we consider that very satisfactory work is done in geography, and that history has received intelligent treatment at the hands of the teachers. We welcome the proposal adopted by the Council of Education to modernize the syllabus in history for secondary schools, and trust that a similar course may be arranged for primary schools.

*Drawing.*—In drawing, some excellent work is done. Our only comment is that we are inclined to think that perhaps we have made too extensive demands in expecting that every child shall present work in every branch. It might be well to leave to the child or the teacher the branch of drawing which he desires to offer. Many of the schools still present drawing-books in the infant classes, in spite of the fact that the walls are specially prepared for drawing. We consider that in the early stage the book hampers the freedom of the child and probably retards his skill. Where blackboards are available there is no need for a book. Some of the best work that we have seen has been done on the walls of the class-room.

*Science.*—We are very pleased to record our appreciation of the progress that has been made in science. This is due to the energy and ability of the Supervisor of Agriculture, to the increase in skill acquired by the teachers through attending refresher courses in science, and to the adoption of a definite programme suited to the district. Even in the smaller country schools we found that science had been well taught. The pupils' notes contain merely three entries: (1) What we did; (2) what we saw; (3) what we think: showing that training in scientific method has begun. The services of an additional instructor are undoubtedly necessary in the district.

*Singing.*—The programme of singing in the syllabus which has been so favourably commented upon is not carried out to any reasonable degree, apparently because teachers do not know how to set about it. The candidates who come to us for examination in practical music do not show an amount of knowledge commensurate with the time they have spent over the subject from the beginning of their school course, and the newly trained teachers do not appear to have acquired much facility in teaching it. We consider that they should go through the course laid down in the syllabus, so that they are thoroughly familiar with not only the requirements for each standard and for grouped classes, but also the method of teaching it. The value of singing as a cultural subject is being appreciated more highly every year, and it is to be regretted that we are not making better provision for it.

*Manual-training Instruction.*—In the manual-training subjects we appreciate very much the work done by the special instructors in the subjects under the Manual and Technical Regulations. Our inspection of the classes and the reports received show us that the subjects are efficiently taught, while their practical utility, especially of cookery, is much appreciated.

*PUPIL-TEACHERS.*—We consider that the head teachers and their staffs give, on the whole, very satisfactory instruction to the pupil-teachers and probationers attached to their schools. Reports on the progress of all trainees are submitted quarterly, and at the same time notes of criticism lessons given are furnished. From an examination of these we are able to trace the gradual improvement in teaching skill, and the trainees themselves are accustomed before entering training college to face