

least able to express satisfaction. No subject has suffered more from the exploded idea of "faculty training" than has recitation, and we still find teachers who look upon the poetry lesson as an instrument for developing the memory instead of as a means of cultivating in the children an appreciation of, and love for, literature in its true sense.

*History.*—We cannot say that history is well taught. Apart from the elaborate programme laid down in the syllabus, the subject in itself calls for special knowledge and real experience on the part of the teacher, who, too often, is indifferently equipped in either respect. So far as our primary schools are concerned we believe that in this, as in other subjects, far better results would be obtained were the requirements made less ambitious and kept more within the real comprehension of our primary children.

*Arithmetic.*—In regard to arithmetic, a subject under some public discussion at present, we see no reason to alter the opinion that has again and again been expressed in our reports. As an example we quote from our report of 1912: "We here again express our opinion that the excessive demands made in arithmetic by the ordinary school examinations not only seriously retard the pupil's progress in other and more important subjects, but absolutely render impossible a rational treatment of the subject itself. In its 'Suggestions to Teachers' the English Board of Education lays special emphasis on the danger to the effective teaching of arithmetic arising from undue attention to abstract and difficult examples. The result of facing the child with problems of undue difficulty and complexity has been that our teachers are driven to sacrifice instruction in principles to the mere working of examples as types. By constant repetition and mechanical drill the pupil is familiarized with these types with the very words in which they are expressed (the 'cue' words, as they have been aptly called), till by wearisome practice he becomes habituated to the processes required for their solution. When examination tests conform to these familiar types the pupil passes; but when the tests deal with unfamiliar matters, or are expressed in unfamiliar phraseology—that is, when the 'cue' words are missing—the pupil fails. The problem in arithmetic makes a threefold demand on the child: (1) Comprehension of the language in which the problem is set out, (2) comprehension of what is required to be done in order to solve the problem, (3) knowledge of the mechanical operations in arithmetic necessary to get the answer. The first, as Professor Suzzalo points out, is a question of language, the second a question of reasoning-power. Our contention is that the bulk of problem work in arithmetic not only deals with facts and circumstances that do not lie within the experience of the average child of twelve or thirteen years of age, but as a rule it is beyond the natural scope of his reasoning-powers and comprehension of language, and that, instead of these being cultivated with the object of enabling the child to cope with such work in a rational manner, and to derive real educational benefit therefrom, valuable school time is being wasted in the acquisition of what at best is a merely factitious facility in getting answers. Opinions, of course, differ, but facts speak for themselves. No subject receives so much attention in our primary system as arithmetic—at least 20 per cent. of the child's school life is devoted to it—and we cannot pretend that the results are in any way commensurate with this expenditure of time and teaching-energy. The practical business man is not satisfied with the working knowledge of figures possessed by the boy who enters his office, nor is the secondary teacher satisfied with the arithmetic of the pupil who takes up his secondary course."

*INFANT INSTRUCTION.*—In no branch of education has there been greater development during recent years than in infant instruction and management, and the infant-mistresses in our large schools deserve special commendation for the whole-hearted and admirable way in which they have adopted the new methods and ideas. In spite of large classes the principles of individual instruction and auto-education are being successfully applied, and both infant-mistresses and their assistants have shown unremitting industry in the making and preparation of the large quantities of apparatus and material necessary for modern infant-work. On the other hand, in sole-teacher schools neglect of proper infant instruction has not infrequently come under our notice.

*REGISTRATION, SCHOOL RECORDS, ETC.*—Registration we find almost invariably correct and up to date. Schemes of work and work-books are satisfactory. We have, however, been in some instances under the necessity of drawing attention to the regulations requiring "that schemes be prepared not later than the second week of the school year," and "that the head teacher show a general outline of his plan for supervising and guiding the work of the school," also "that the work-book should contain sufficient detail to show that the teacher has given adequate preparation to each day's work." A circular is being issued from the office dealing with this matter.

*MANUAL TRAINING.*—The Supervisor of Manual Training, Mr. E. Howe, reports very favourably on the progress made in his department of education. During the year 113 classes were held in woodwork and 107 in domestic science, with some 4,400 pupils on the rolls. With a keen and enthusiastic staff of instructors a high standard of work has been maintained in all the classes. As Mr. Howe points out, it is in the handwork lesson that the pupil is not only told things but does things, where he learns by doing, and not merely by being told. We sincerely hope the time is not far off when the benefits and advantages of manual training will be more fully recognized in our educational system.

*PHYSICAL INSTRUCTION.*—The Senior Instructor reports the condition of the schools as ranging from satisfactory to good, but points out the necessity for refresher courses in view of the frequent changes not only in the staffs of the schools but also in the staff of instructors. Corrective classes have been established in some sixteen of the city and suburban schools. Good work has been done, but here again changes in the school staffs have in some instances adversely affected the results. We have in previous reports emphasized the benefits and success of these corrective classes, which for years have been a conspicuous feature of Miss Blackburne's work. She has shown exceptional ability in their management, and we would strongly recommend that she be given more scope and a freer hand for their development.