

We should like also to see the children encouraged more widely to form the reading habit. "A child's desire to read should never be frustrated by want of books." The extension of the school library is therefore a very wise measure, and most schools have now their libraries. But the teacher must show some interest in what the pupil is reading, and he can make most popular the books that he considers best, thus directing the pupils into safe channels. While teachers realize that reading for content is the proper aim in the standard classes, few test the comprehension in the best way, and we would urge the adoption of some such methods of doing this as we have from time to time illustrated at our visits.

Reading aloud will be helped materially by good teaching of recitation, and we are of opinion that this branch requires much more careful attention. While the child should first have from the teacher a general idea of the poem as a whole, he should be required to learn it thoroughly, and to deliver it in a manner that at least shows appreciation of it. "Artificiality is to be avoided, but so, too, is slovenliness, whether in articulation or in emphasis. There is no lesson like the poetry lesson for producing that intimacy between teacher and class which makes school a happy place." Further, no child should leave the primary school without carrying with him in his memory some of the finest treasures of the English language in prose and verse.

*Spelling.*—Spelling may be said to be satisfactory. The teaching of this subject, however, demands the earnest consideration of teachers. We rarely see spelling actually taught. The methods commonly used are methods not of teaching but of testing. Definite instruction in accordance with modern practice is essential. Daily testing is quite unnecessary: progress can be measured by means of tests given once or twice weekly. As the words taught should be those comprising the pupils' writing vocabulary, it is the function of the teacher to choose only words which an intelligent child of that age and standard of attainment can reasonably be expected to use in communicating his thoughts to others. The spelling-book makes the child waste time over many words which he can already spell, and forces others on him which he does not naturally use. Many of our pupils consequently misspell their words in spite of the book. We recommend teachers, therefore, to ascertain the words the pupils cannot spell, and prepare their own lists accordingly. Dictation is still given daily in many schools, taking the larger part of the time for spelling. This is not at all necessary—once a week would probably be found sufficient, the passage being selected with a definite object, such as its merit as prose, and not merely because it contains hard words. Further, it should be prepared beforehand—a point which is very frequently overlooked.

*Composition.*—Composition is, on the whole, well done. Greater attention is necessary to logical arrangement and to paraphrasing, while in the higher classes a more advanced though not stilted vocabulary is desirable. This subject is at once the most important and the most difficult in the curriculum, and yet we think it receives least preparation from many teachers. Children are still set to produce compositions on topics without first having had reasonable opportunity to collect ideas. The practice of announcing subjects beforehand, encouraging the pupils to get information to make notes from which to write, should be more widely adopted. The planning-out of the work should be carefully taught, so that pupils may have a scheme to follow: the details they can then supply. The habit of forming their sentences on good English models may be fostered by correlation with the reading. Nor should oral composition be confined to the lowest classes. The art of expressing thoughts in good spoken English is a most desirable accomplishment. Formal grammar bulks too largely in some of the schemes, without any corresponding benefit to the composition.

*Arithmetic.*—Arithmetic is being treated on more rational lines, and the general quality of the work is well maintained. In the past many teachers accepted the text-book interpretation of the syllabus—and many still do so—with the result that meaningless and useless examples were worked, and consequently much valuable time and effort were wasted. By concentrating on quick and accurate working of short and real problems a further advance can be made. As a rule, too extensive a programme has been attempted, and too much time allotted to this subject. The instruction of the syllabus that there should be at first no really formal instruction in arithmetic cannot mean that it should not be taught in the infant departments. Our experience has shown that, by the end of the second year, with rational treatment the composition of the first twenty numbers can be very well mastered by the great majority of the pupils. It is important, however, to remember that it is only at a comparatively late stage that written symbols act as aids to thought; while the simple number relations—those on which the later and more complex ones are to be based—are being learned, symbols give little or no help. There is no justification, however, for the practice adopted by some headmasters of exceeding the requirements of the syllabus, when setting their term examinations, under the wrong impression that they are demanding a high standard. A thorough knowledge of the facts contained in the first twenty numbers constitutes a safe foundation in arithmetic, and this is all that the preparatory division is concerned with.

*History and Geography.*—In accordance with your directions, written tests in history and geography were used at our annual visit. There is still much to be desired in the teaching of both subjects, and we would again emphasize the need for better equipment on the part of the young teacher, as in no subjects is the inspiring touch of the teacher so necessary. In history particularly, where too much reliance is placed upon the text-book, the child finds the subject dry as dust. To prevent this the teacher must know and feel history, and where this knowledge and appreciation are absent the teacher is prone to rely upon the text-book instead of giving life and reality through his own personal touch. This we feel explains in large measure the unsatisfactory condition of the subject in the schools.

*Drawing.*—The treatment of this subject varies from very good to fair. Where the subject is treated on broad lines the results are very satisfactory, but where the old formal work is carried on little progress is being made. Teachers should bear in mind that the aim in teaching drawing is not the production of finished pictures, but the training in judgment and the creation and development