

neighbourhood leading up to a general treatment of those of the colony. Thus the children would gain some intelligent idea of the meaning and value of geography and would be ready to appreciate the broader instruction which it seems to me should not begin till the upper standards. In Standard IV. Australia and the map of the world as at present defined, in Standard V. the British Islands and chief British possessions, and in Standard VI. what concerns us most remotely—a general knowledge of the continents—would give ample opportunity for intelligent teaching. It is impossible to teach thoroughly, that is, to educate the mind of the pupil so that he will take an interest in knowledge for its own sake, if we attempt to overload his mind with bare facts. This explains why so many children retrograde after leaving school; there they have acquired only a mass of inextricably mingled items of information and a pronounced distaste for developing any self-culture. Once a child is made to see the utility and feel the absorbing interest of geography, he will naturally pursue its study after leaving school, perhaps almost unconsciously at first by noting references in the newspapers, then by reading narratives of travel and special works on the subject.

Of the additional subjects, singing is perhaps the one most unsatisfactorily taught. We can hope for little improvement until musical attainments are demanded of teachers. In the German elementary schools most of the teachers play some orchestral instrument, such as the violin, and have a thorough theoretical training in music. They teach their classes exactly as leaders of choruses or orchestras do, infusing enthusiasm into their work. In those schools the pupils are commonly required to compose, line by line, a new melody for some short song or poem, first singing the air, then writing the notes down, then adding parts, copying the whole into their M.S. music books, and finishing the lesson by singing in class the new production. It is to such instruction, no doubt, that Germany in great part owes the high place she holds among the musical nations. In our children there lies the

simplest and purest of music, yet what little we attempt rather kills than develops it.

No system of education can safely neglect physical training. This should be, perhaps, pre-eminent; we cannot have the *mens sana* without the *corpus sanum*. The Greeks and Romans recognised this; but, in spite of the constant deterioration of the physique of man, our schools take little heed of the claims of physical education. Drill is the only form in which they recognise its demands, and even this is usually crowded out of the daily work by reason of the pressing needs of the examination syllabus. There is not, it is true, the same need with us sport-loving colonials as with the Germans, of minute and exhaustive gymnastic exercises; but our population is growing denser, and we are rapidly developing a town dweller whose stature and physical strength we ought to improve. Sandow has lately shown how much can be done in this way by simple means, and I hope the next syllabus will demand that more attention be given to the education of the body and its powers.

In this brief review of the syllabus I have endeavoured to point out the grave faults of that part of our primary system which most directly affects the actual working of our schools. Much better results should be obtained in writing and composition, and the teachers' ignorance of the elementary principles of elocution is in great part responsible for the poor reading and recitation that grates on the ears of visitors to our schools. The drawing scheme is utterly unscientific and thoroughly antiquated, and the teaching of history, whenever it is not grossly neglected, is grounded upon no reasonable plan and therefore meaningless, being quite incapable of inspiring pupils with those noble aims and ideals in which lies the true value of history. The overcrowded state of the syllabus will, I hope, stand proved before the eyes of most of my readers.

To remedy this grave fault I have suggested, among other points, the curtailment of arithmetic and geography in Standards IV. and VI., and the omission of grammar from