

reality, on account of the fullness with which the requirements in the various topics are described. Again, increased practice in the teaching of nature lessons, of drawing and other new subjects, will eventually make them the most popular and the easiest on the programme. Much of the feeling of over-pressure experienced at present arises from the want of interest, which is the result of defective methods of presentation. In a primitive form of society man could afford to satisfy his few wants in spite of energies misdirected and wasted by crude machinery and unskilled labor. But as society became more complex and social demands multiplied, a proper economy of productive forces became the prime necessity. Just so in educational matters. The many-sided culture demanded by modern life renders necessary the wisest economy of educational energy. In the words of Dr. Eliot, our school programmes must be shortened and enriched. As to how this can be done, the most authoritative deliverance comes from the reports of two committees appointed in England—one in 1886 by the English parliament, the other in 1887 by the London school-board. These committees, including the most distinguished educationists of the country, after an exhaustive investigation, have recently reported. Acting on a motion of the Hon. Senator Power, the board sent for these valuable reports, and they have just come to hand. As offering a solution of difficulties, and for the information of this board, I beg to present, in a condensed form, those recommendations in the reports which are most suited to the circumstances of a new country not unduly trammelled by the traditions of the past.

They recommend:—

1. That the method of Kindergarten teaching be developed for senior scholars throughout the schools, so as to supply a graduated course of manual training in connection with science teaching and object lessons.
2. That the teaching of all subjects be accompanied, where possible, by experiments and ocular demonstration, and that the necessary apparatus be supplied to the schools.
3. That the board encourage modelling in clay in all departments of schools, both in connection with drawing as a training of the artistic faculties, and for the illustration of the teaching of geography and other subjects.
4. That all manual instructions should be given in connection with the scientific principles underlying the work, and with suitable drawing and geometry.
5. That greater attention be paid to the teaching of mechanics, and that models for illustrating the instruction be supplied.
6. That instruction in practical geometry be included in the teaching of drawing, and that mechanical drawing to scale with actual measurements be encouraged in all boys' departments.
7. That the time now given for dictation be reduced, and that in substitution for the part omitted in the lower classes the reproduction by children in their own words of passages read out to them, and in the senior classes original composition be usually taken.
8. That the teaching of reading should be specially directed to give children an interest in books, and to encourage them to read for their own pleasure, and that reading books should be used for imparting a knowledge of geography, history, social economy and facts of common life to all children who may not be able to take such subjects for examination.
9. That in order to allow time for experimental teaching and manual work, the time now given to spelling, parsing and grammar generally be reduced.

10. That principals of all schools be required to forward each year, for the approval of the school committee, a scheme of object lessons and a copy of the time tables proposed to be used.

11. That teachers be informed that the board do not pay so much attention to the percentages obtained at written examinations as to the general tone and character of the school work as set out in the supervisors' reports.

12. That the play grounds attached to schools be used for the formation of clubs for hardy sports, gymnastic exercises and drill.

13. That the question of organized physical education out of school hours receive careful consideration.

14. That with a view to secure the improvement of kindergarten in the schools of the board, the education departments be required to grant certificates to teachers after examination, showing that they have been trained in the principles and sound practices of kindergarten.

Acting in the spirit of these recommendations would imply:

1. A great deal of intelligent and interesting reading in all the classes, for the purpose of securing readiness in word, recognition, command of language and fluency of expression. Opposed to this in the younger classes would be the mischievous habit of continually interrupting the reader and harrassing him with trivial explanations. Minute accuracy is neither natural nor desirable in very young children. A correct general understanding is all that is necessary at that stage. Let the teacher be a good reader, and read much to her pupils for their imitation.
2. But little attention to spelling as a specific exercise until the pupil could read fairly well. After they have spent three or four years in becoming familiar with the forms of words by much reading and by simple exercise in composition, spelling could then be taught thoroughly at the least cost, thus saving much time for other important work.
3. That arithmetic should be practical, dealing with matters of every-day life. Arithmetical puzzles should be postponed until they could be solved by algebra. There are practical difficulties enough for the purposes of mental gymnastics without creating artificial ones. Actual weights and measures, ocular demonstration and experiment would elucidate principles and render the subject less obtruse. Here again time could be saved.
4. That but little attention be given to grammar or parsing until the eighth grade be reached. The mental discipline can be supplied in more useful ways, while the practical uses can be acquired by exercises in composition and letter-writing.
5. That geography be combined as much as possible with object lessons, and be taught from maps made by the teachers and pupils. Modelling in clay is required for the best teaching of geography.
6. That interesting biographical sketches should form the beginnings of history teaching.
7. That instrumental and geometrical drawing, for the purposes of training the eye and hand to accuracy, should be continually associated with free hand drawing. Writing is very much improved by the teaching of drawing.
8. That in teaching nature lessons pupils should be made to base their conclusions on what they observe, not on what they are told.
9. That singing should be obligatory in all schools. It lends brightness to school hours and gives a taste for a higher kind of recreation in subsequent life.
10. That teachers should be teachers and not lesson hearers.