

UNIVERSITY



OF LONDON

APPENDIX
TO THE
REPORT
ON THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF
SOUTHGATE COUNTY SCHOOL

March 1937

N O T E

The Reports on the Inspection or Examination of Schools issued by the University include:-

- (i) A General Report, which if published must be published in extenso and without comment.

 - (ii) An Appendix, which is not intended for publication, but contains detailed criticisms and suggestions not inserted in the General Report, and is a confidential communication for the sole use of the Principal of the School and, if deemed desirable, of the Staff.
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English: A reading from "Twelfth Night" in Form VA was made to live by dramatic expression and only the necessary explanations. Form VB were preparing Macaulay's Essay on Addison for examination. The teacher expounded the points throughout the lesson and it was felt that the pupils might have been called upon to summarise paragraphs, or read an illustrative passage from another book. Time may be saved if the teacher does everything, but monotony of tone may cause loss in other ways.

In Form IVB a piece of analysis was worked by the pupils. By clever use of the board attention was concentrated on each difficulty in turn. In correcting Composition, some spelling faults were written on the board, but since spelling is mainly a matter of the eye it seems unwise to write up a wrongly spelt word, however quickly it is corrected. In Form IVD Wordsworth's Sonnet on Milton was treated so impressively, with only the barest of explanations, that it afforded a good illustration of time wasted wisely. The sonnet was made a possession for ever. When the Master gave it to be learnt for home-work, the Inspector felt that many in the Form knew it already, merely from enjoying and understanding it. A test revealed this to be to a great extent true.

Form IIB were reading "Ivanhoe" and enjoying it. It is suggested that some variation from mere reading round might be introduced, such as silent reading and summarising a paragraph, pronouncing difficult words in chorus, questions asked by the pupils, etc. In the same Form a piece of Goldsmith's writing was taken by the Headmaster, and led to such manifold digressions that the period was a sheer delight to both Inspector and pupils. All were kept on the alert and this seems to be the real secret of successful teaching.

History: A paper written by one pupil in Form VI was read, discussed by the others, and finally summed up ably by the teacher,

so that the utmost value might be obtained from it. Lessons in Form VI and in VB and VC dealt with the career of Disraeli in such a way as to make him a living personality and to make the problems of the time stand out well. Textbooks and atlases were referred to by the pupils, as they were needed, during the lesson. Note-taking was carried on all the time and seemed as if it must detract from the concentration necessary to understand the trend of events and policies.

A lesson in Form IIB was taken at a wisely deliberate pace. Step after step was made clear with the help of excellent skeleton maps on the board, showing only the relative position of places named. This teacher seemed to have a special ability for knowing how to capture attention and drive home the chief points.

Geography: The teaching in all the classes seen was painstaking and thorough. The Mistress in charge of the first year should be careful, with this class, to avoid going too deeply into the details of Physical Geography.

In the middle Forms, while sketch-maps, tables and notes are admirably employed, the Mistress would do well to let the essay take a more important part in the work of the pupils than it does at present.

French: A little more attention to phonetics would improve the pronunciation in the lower Forms, where it is not quite as precise as it might be. A few minutes should be devoted to sound drill at the beginning of every lesson; more care is required to ensure correct intonation.

In some classes more use was made of English than seemed necessary. The pupils should be taught to employ the French names of the letters when spelling French words.

The written work was rather lacking in tidiness, and the writing out of corrections did not seem to be the rule.

German: The work is proceeding satisfactorily and calls for no detailed comment.

Latin: Lessons were attended in Form VI and in Form IIIA, that is, the advanced Form and the beginners' Form. In every case the method was clear, unhurried and interesting. The interest lay in the language itself, and all the pupils seemed anxious to do their utmost. It is suggested that both sentences for translation from English into Latin and pieces for translation at sight that are well within the powers of the class be selected so that the pupils become accustomed to doing quite accurate work. Adjustments to varying capacities of the pupils - always a problem in Latin - can be made by altering the quantity to be done in the given time.

Mathematics: The use of an exercise book for written class-work in Mathematics is very desirable. The present practice of using a rough book for the written work in various school subjects is likely to lead to untidiness and unsystematic work. Evidence of this was found in the written work of Form IIIB. The written solutions of Arithmetic exercises, in several cases, gave little indication of the logical steps; often the written work consisted of a collection of figures without the use of any concrete word.

In oral work it was noticed that some of the teachers were inclined to do too much work for the pupils. In the case of Geometry in Form VB too many questions were confined to a few pupils. Occasionally a question addressed to the class as a whole was answered by the teacher himself without giving sufficient time for any pupil to offer an answer. This may have been due to anxiety on the part of the teacher to get on with the work, but it should be borne in mind that it is by means of the self-activity of the pupils that the content of the lesson can best be grasped by the class as a whole.

Science: The benefit received by the first year pupils from the excellent teaching in Elementary Physics, Plant Life, and Animal Biology, treated separately, would be greatly

increased if the syllabus were modified to one of General Science. Such a syllabus might well consist of a number of topics which could be treated from all three aspects, chemical, physical and biological. It is desirable for the Science of a first year class to be taken by one teacher.

It is suggested that the class work of the middle and upper Forms should be supplemented by occasional talks or lectures on the history of scientific discovery. This would enable the pupils to obtain a fuller treatment of the humanistic aspect of Science than is possible within the time allowance for class work.

A historical chart of scientific discovery would be helpful if posted up in the laboratories.

Art: A lesson was attended in Form IIB, who were working out a design in colour. All were laying on their washes with dexterity and making attempts, of varying merit, at an original design. An exercise set by the Inspector - a two minute impression of a boy, posing for the rest, playing football - brought some promising attempts.

Domestic Science: The Needlework division were engaged in making leather-work purses, cases and belts. They have an electric machine, a treadle, and two hand machines; and they are taught how to use each kind. Interest was shown in this work, but much more was shown in the Cookery. A demonstration was given of the preparation of stuffed herrings and then the girls were set to do the work themselves. They buy what is required and manage their own money accounts; the cooked meals are always bought and taken home. There are electric and gas stoves for the cooking, and the only serious need in equipment is a refrigerator for use during the summer heat. The whole conduct of the work left a very happy impression. Space is a little cramped, and the preparation and eating of the School dinner has to be done in the same room, but everything is made convenient by good will and good temper - a substantial education for life.

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Please read, initial, & return to the Study

(T.S.)

W.A.

P.K.

M.M.

R.S.

E.S.

G.P.M.

M.

E.S.

R.S.S.

W.C.

V.W.

H.

M.M.

M.L.B.

V.S.

E.P.H.

M.K.

A.S.

M.O.C.

E.Z.B.

E.J.P.

I expect that a further report will follow after the written test.



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