

one school and the date of application for another; but even this is inadequate to deal effectually with the mischief. It is not unreasonable to require that a man who deliberately selects a position the emoluments and requirements of which are perfectly well known to him should remain there for at least two years. A shorter period will be insufficient to enable him to make his mark in the school, if he studies his own reputation: it will certainly be insufficient to enable the Board, or its Inspector, to form any decided opinion as to his merits as a teacher, especially at the outset of his career. For my own part, if I had to choose a schoolmaster, I should carefully eschew the man of many schools, knowing that, whatever else he might be, he was certainly fickle.”—(*Mr. Hodgson.*)

*School Prizes.*—“I may as well express my firm conviction, founded on an experience of five-and-twenty years, that, whatever may be their value in schools of a higher grade and of a private or semi-private character, prizes in elementary schools are often mischievous, generally useless, and always unnecessary. If, as is often the case, they are lavishly distributed, the ease with which they are obtained must neutralize whatever stimulating effect they may possess. If, on the other hand, they are reserved for the two or three scholars at the head of each class, the effect on the remainder must be the reverse of encouraging, since there are nearly always a few scholars who are recognized by their class-fellows as beyond the reach of successful rivalry, and, though to these the prospect of receiving a valuable prize may be an additional incentive to exertion, they are, as a rule, the very scholars who least require it. I believe that the publication of lists showing the order of merit and the number of attendances of the scholars in each class would be far more beneficial to the true interest of the scholars, and to the welfare of the school generally. The publication might be effected either through the columns of the local papers, or by means of lists suspended in the reading-room or other place of public resort.”—(*Mr. Smith.*) “Whilst Committees are very kind in providing pleasant excursions and festivities for the children, they are, as a rule, much too indulgent in the matter of prize-giving. I do not altogether approve of giving prizes in primary schools, and I certainly cannot advise that it should be done unless the prizes are few and well earned. I have known several instances in which prizes have been given to every child in a school, and other cases in which prizes were given to children who failed at the standard examination. I recommend that much of the money available for prizes should in future be devoted to the school library.”—(*Mr. Lee.*)

*School Libraries.*—“It is very desirable that every school should have a library. Unless a taste for reading is acquired at school many of the country pupils will eventually lose all they have learned. The good and the gain of a taste for reading have been told by many eloquent tongues. One often remembers, contemplating the many young people here who show no vestige of this taste, ‘What a dreary old age you are preparing for yourselves!’”—(*Mr. O’Sullivan.*) “Every school should have a library containing a selection of readable and instructive books, a standard dictionary, a large atlas, a standard history of England, and an encyclopædia. In addition to this, each good school should have a small museum of simple objects.”—(*Mr. Lee.*)

*Importance of effective Teaching in the Elementary Stages.*—“Head-teachers reiterate the excuse that the heavy requirements of the upper standards render it impossible for them to devote a fair proportion of their time to the lower classes. Where the attendance enables assistance to be given, the infant classes are usually placed under the management of a pupil-teacher or a very poorly paid assistant, who, in the majority of cases, is left without assistance or efficient supervision. Head-teachers apparently fail to appreciate the importance of effective teaching in the elementary stages, and consequently find the greatest difficulty in obtaining intelligent work from the advanced classes. In the larger schools the less competent teachers are, as a rule, relegated to the infant departments, and at almost every inspection it is found necessary to insist upon a revision of the staff.”—(*Mr. Hammond.*) “It is worthy of note, however, that the experience of this school district demonstrates that in the long run there is no surer method of achieving success in school work, and the high percentage of passes in standards which proves the success, than by devoting much time and labour to the teaching and training of these junior scholars. Of course the simultaneous method of instruction should be largely resorted to for the purpose.”—(*Mr. Gammell.*) “I have been of late pointing out to teachers that much of the work of the higher standards can be anticipated in the lower. This can be done not only without injury to the ordinary work, but to its advantage, by awakening the intelligence of the pupils. The knowledge which children acquire out of school is to be used as a foundation.”—(*Mr. O’Sullivan.*)

*Sewing.*—“I have already reported upon the great improvement in this subject, which has, no doubt, been brought about by having all the sewing specimens sent to Napier and examined by three committees of ladies, who allot marks and report upon the general character of the sewing sent from each school. The prizes annually offered by Captain Russell of a sewing-machine, ladies’ workbox, &c., for the best specimens of newly-seated trousers, man’s nightshirt, and darned pair of stockings, have greatly promoted the teaching of this subject under its various aspects, and, now that these prizes are to be awarded at the annual examination of the standard specimens of sewing, I anticipate still further improvement.”—(*Mr. Hill.*) “I recommend the Board to ask each School Committee to invite two or more ladies in each district to report to the Committee on the quality of the needlework. This should be done a week or two before the standard examination. The ladies should be requested not merely to inspect the prepared work of each class, but also to give out a small piece of work to be done in their presence. The Committee would then be good enough to report to the Inspector.”—(*Mr. Lee.*)

*Home-work. Overwork.*—“I must again express my strong disapproval of the large amount of home-work given in many cases. Year by year the weight of enlightened authority becomes greater against this stupid, mischievous practice.”—(*Mr. O’Sullivan.*) “Let no home task of any kind be set to any child under nine years old. After that age, and up to thirteen, let the tasks be such as will not exceed from half an hour’s to an hour’s steady work each evening, according to the age of the pupil. An hour and a quarter’s work ought to suffice for the most advanced of our scholars. If a child cannot, year by year, keep pace with the requirements of the standards (as construed in this district) with such an amount of extra work, superadded to the five hours of unrelenting labour that he has to