

also be a law of mutual attraction in this matter ; and the parent should gravitate towards the teacher as much as the teacher towards the parent.

CLASS READING-BOOKS.—The schools are by no means as well provided with class reading-books as I could wish. I do not mean to convey the impression that any of the schools are without class readers ; but it is not sufficient that a child should be provided with only one book for the year. In England it is an instruction from the Education Department that “all standards must have one ordinary reading-book ; and, in addition to this, in all standards above the Second there must be a historical reading-book ; and, lastly, the geographical or scientific text-book will count as the third reading-book.” I think it most desirable that the same amount and description of reading matter should be afforded the children in this district ; and I recommend to the notice of the Board the necessity of insisting upon the use of at least a historical reading-book in addition to the ordinary reader. I also recommend local Committees to furnish a third reading-book for each class in a school, the books remaining the property of the school. Such a set of books would not involve a large outlay ; they would last at least three years ; and, as children too often tear, spoil, or lose their own books, it is advantageous for a teacher to have a fresh and complete set handy for use at any time. As the newly-published historical and geographical reading-books are interesting, graphic, and instructive, they are therefore great aids to learning. Again, the English code directs that “Robinson Crusoe,” or any other such inexpensive work, may be used as a class reader ; and with this I cordially agree, having used “Robinson Crusoe”—a book almost unsurpassed for the purity of its English—as a class reader many years ago. Such connected reading is, in my opinion, of far greater value than the scrappy paragraphs which some prefer to make use of. I am sorry to find teachers complain of the difficulty in obtaining supplies of books—and sometimes books are supplied to the pupils at an exorbitant price. A local storekeeper in the Wairarapa charged 1s. 6d. each for books costing 4d.

THE TEACHER AND HIS WORK.—After reviewing the results of the year, I am of opinion that much good and conscientious work continues to be done. The instruction in grammar and composition is improving, but they are still the weakest subjects. On the whole, I was much pleased with the neatness and order of the answers on paper, and the good results from the earlier use of the pen. I am persuaded, from close observation of the teacher and his class-work, that nearly all bad results arise from positively bad teaching ; also, I think, there are a few teachers who have earned good reports in past years, but who are not sufficiently improving. In the work of the four higher standards the candidates in many schools scarcely touched the questions in grammar and geography requiring thought and observation ; and in arithmetic the problems or sense questions, in nearly all standards, were often unattempted. These are matters to which attention has been again and again directed, but the unimproving teacher looks too much about him for excuses for neglect in taking up this work, and, when failure arises, really in consequence of weak or defective teaching, it is anybody's fault but his own—most likely the Inspector's for putting questions of the kind. I also still notice that the headmasters of large schools too frequently allow their time to be frittered away by the petty details of management. The entrance of a stranger into such schools practically leads to a stoppage of the work. Each teacher apparently assumes that the visitor has come to see him on personal matters, and not to see his method of imparting instruction. The head-teacher not unfrequently leaves his own work, and distracts the attention of the visitor by taking him off, probably against his will, to see a map made by a prodigy of a pupil, or for some such trivial matter ; and the visitor finally leaves without having seen the intelligence of a class awakened. The greatest courtesy any teacher can pay a visitor is to offer him a seat, and to go on with his own work without ostentation.

PAYMENT BY RESULTS.—In order to reduce to a minimum the defects in class teaching already pointed out, special inducements should be held out to good teachers for thoroughness of work done. At present no difference is made between the hardworking, skilful, and successful teacher and the less energetic routine working man, except so far as the attendance is affected ; and there is nothing, beyond the chance of promotion, to stimulate a teacher to put forth all his energies and devote himself to his work. I am aware that a sense of duty is a powerful monitor in the breasts of many ; but I think the successful teacher should be rewarded for his diligence, and the unsuccessful suffer for his indolence. If the scale of salaries were revised, and about 10 per cent. of the salary paid as a merit grant, partly for percentage of passes made and partly for thoroughness of work, I feel confident a great improvement would take place in examination results. The Board already admit the principle of payment in accordance with the amount of work as determined by the numbers taught ; I simply recommend that payment be also made in relation to the value of the instruction imparted.

STANDARD VII.—One hundred and thirty-six children having passed in Standard VI., it may fairly be assumed that many of them, especially the youngest, would remain another year at school to do advanced work. I know of children who had been ordered to leave school because they had passed the highest standard. This, I think, cannot and should not be insisted on. The time has come when, as in England, a seventh standard should be added. Perhaps the Education Department will move in the matter. In the meantime, if instructed by the Board, I will draw up a temporary syllabus, and next year examine candidates for Standard VII.

DRAWING.—A system of payment by results would also enable the Board to make grants to such schools as efficiently teach one or more of the class subjects outside the standards. For the want of some such system the teaching of class subjects—drawing, singing, needlework, drill, and elementary science—languishes. Of these subjects free-hand drawing is most widely taught, but the instruction is not often given intelligently, although the work of a teacher is much simplified by the excellent books now published for use in State schools, at twopence each. The mere inspection of drawing-books, like the mere inspection of prepared needlework, is often delusive, because the examiner does not know how much of the work has been done by the teacher, or what amount of assistance the pupil has received. I therefore purpose, with the sanction of the Board, arranging for a special annual examination in drawing, to take place on a fixed day in all schools in which drawing is taught. The results will be announced as passes in Grade I. or Grade II., freehand outline work ; and lists can be published of successful candidates, with the names of the schools in which they were taught.