

highly gratifying to all concerned. The central examinations for Standard VI were held in December, the largest schools being visited last. The results were not forwarded till breaking-up day, and by that means regular attendance was assured till then.

*Schools and Buildings.*—The buildings generally are in a satisfactory state.

The following remarks deal generally with some of the subjects:—

*Reading.*—This may be said to be satisfactory. The really fluent and expressive readers were in the minority. In the lower classes bad phrasing and errors in pronunciation were the main faults, and in the higher classes there was an absence of emphasis and modulation, whilst in many cases the reading was too rapid. To remedy this defect pattern reading is necessary, and should form part of every reading-lesson. I should like silent reading encouraged, particularly in the higher classes. It has a greater educational value, and should not be neglected. Comprehension was distinctly good, but if more attention had been paid to actual practice in reading some of the defects mentioned would have been lessened. I do not wish it to be understood that comprehension is unnecessary, but too much time may be spent at that to the detriment of the ordinary reading-lesson.

*Spelling.*—By the majority of teachers this subject had been well handled, and the results were highly creditable. Mistakes were more frequent in the dictation than in the lists of words.

*Writing.*—The results here were somewhat disappointing. Writing is the easiest of our school subjects, and good results can be obtained if the necessary details are strictly adhered to. Posture, holding of the pen, a good copy, plenty of blackboard illustration, and above all careful supervision and correction are required. By the time a pupil reaches the Sixth Standard copybooks might well be dispensed with and the practice given to rapidity and current writing.

*Recitation.*—The best recitation was noted in the preparatory classes. It was quite a pleasure to listen to the efforts of these children; the modulation, emphasis, actions to suit the words in many instances were of a high order of merit. In the other classes the pieces chosen were generally suitable, correctly repeated, but in many cases expression was wanting. Here again the teacher's pattern saves the situation. The comprehension of the pieces was good.

*Arithmetic.*—At the annual visit this was carefully tested, and the results were generally satisfactory. Considerable care and intelligence were displayed in the setting out of the sums, and the paper work was neatly done. In future, mental work will enter largely into the tests at the annual visit.

*Physical Exercises.*—Physical drill in some form is practised in all schools, and breathing-exercises receive ample attention. The old-fashioned one hour's drill is now a thing of the past, and the pupils are deriving great benefit by having short daily exercises.

*Drawing.*—Some excellent pencil-work was shown, and drawing from actual objects is gradually taking the place of drawing from copies. Model-drawing was not satisfactory, the ruler in nearly all cases having been used. In model-drawing ruling or measuring is not allowed. The pencil may be held at arm's length from the eye for the purpose of comparing the various lines with the line chosen as the standard of measurement, but nothing more. Geometrical drawing was fair, and in a few schools solid geometry was taught with some success. Brush drawing was distinctly good, but this subject should not be overdone.

*Manual and Technical.*—[See E.-5, Report on Manual and Technical Instruction.]

*Singing.*—In some schools singing was entirely neglected. This is to be regretted, as singing well taught has considerable bearing on the physical, mental, and moral education of the scholars. It brightens the school-work, cultivates good taste, assists in distinctness of articulation, and is a decided help to reading and recitation. The singing-lesson need not be long, but it should embrace modulator practice, voice-training exercises, ear tests, rhythms, and in the upper standards training in sight reading. Three or four songs, indifferently performed at the annual visit, do not seem to me to be a fair year's work; and, further, the real educational value of the singing-lesson is lost. The largest schools did very well, part singing entering into the program. With most teachers the practical part is the stumbling-block, and to get over this a year's course is now arranged for, and specimen lessons will be given at various intervals.

*Geography.*—In most cases good schemes of work had been prepared, and the results were generally satisfactory. Local geography requires much closer attention. Mapping was satisfactory.

*History.*—Historical readers are in use in all schools, but the subject is in many cases treated as a reading-lesson. This is hardly satisfactory. Oral lessons should be regularly given, a black-board summary made as the lesson progresses, and finally composition should play its part.

*Needlework.*—The specimens were generally neat, clean, and carefully executed. In the upper classes of a few schools plain advanced needlework was undertaken, and really good work presented. In the lower classes the sewing was good, but too fine in type. This causes eye-strain and headache, and is decidedly detrimental to the children.

*Discipline, Tone, &c.*—Nothing but praise can be given here. The pupils are well mannered, obedient, and attentive to their duties. This speaks well for the teachers, who are fully aware of their great responsibilities, and are doing their utmost to advance the education of the district.

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The Chairman, Marlborough Education Board.

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