

is here a wide discrepancy, and explanation should be forthcoming when a full school year is not maintained.

*Efficiency.*—In efficiency the general record of the schools is worthy of commendation. There are seven schools in Grade IV and upwards. Three of these are recorded as very good, and the remainder as good. Among the schools under sole teachers there is naturally a greater variation of standard. Five are entered as very good, eleven as good, and six as satisfactory. The remaining six presented weaker results, due to the inexperience of the teachers. The system of supplying courses and tests continues to have good effect in the smaller schools, and the results in the schools of Grades II and III are especially commendable. The general degree of efficiency is high, and this estimate is applicable to the training of the pupils in intelligence, industry, application, and powers of observation. The teachers have also exercised good judgment in the classification of pupils, thereby providing for the thorough preparation of the work of each standard before promotion is allowed.

The conditions under which the schools are carried on are being modified in some school districts owing to the establishment of dairy factories. The evils connected with the employment of child-labour have not been prominent and little complaint has been voiced. The schools affected are small in size and few in number, and are scattered over a wide area. It has so far not been feasible to enable teachers to acquire the knowledge to qualify them to give special instruction relating to dairying. Something in this direction will eventually be required.

*Certificates of Proficiency and Competency.*—There are seventy-five pupils on the roll in Standard VI, and of these fifty-eight obtained proficiency certificates and eight certificates of competency. The respective percentages are 77 and 10. The high rate of passes is partly due to the special local conditions. Practically every pupil attended for the full year, and there are very few changes in the personnel of the classes. Under such circumstances a high number of passes is to be expected, especially as the preparation and promotion of the Fifth Standard are matters receiving careful attention.

*English.*—The general result in the English subjects is good. The *reading* of the pupils is very seldom defective in fluency and expression. In pronunciation there are few glaring defects. More especially in the smaller schools there is frequently a lack of distinctness and of purity in vowel sounds. A set of phonetic exercises has been issued for use in the schools, and it is hoped that improvement will result. There is also a certain amount of wrong emphasis due to an insufficiency of the exercise of intelligence in the interpretation of the reading-matter. There is less excuse for this fault in recitation owing to the closer study that the passages receive. *Spelling* is usually well prepared, especially in cases where the lessons are studied for reading before the learning of spelling is taken as a separate exercise. In *composition* there is a pleasing degree of accuracy of statement, and during the past year there has been improvement in arrangement of the matter and freedom of expression. There is rather frequently, however, too little readiness in oral composition. Analytical and constructive exercises are usually answered intelligently. In *writing*, while the general result is satisfactory, there is experienced in many cases the difficulty of avoiding on one hand too great attention to detail with a consequent tendency to cramp the style, and on the other excessive freedom in quick writing, with "scribble" as the result. A reasonable amount of both care in construction and rapidity of execution will produce an acceptable running hand.

*Arithmetic.*—The arithmetic of the schools continues to reach a good general standard. What is required to increase the benefit of the subject to scholars is increased reliance on experiment, and to a greater extent selection of the exercises according to practical application. The rearrangement of the syllabus with the necessary revision of text-books presents the opportunity to provide the means. Some teachers still fail to appreciate the necessity for consecutive statement of processes and for neatness in all exercises.

*Geography.*—The schools under sole teachers have followed a uniform, definite course. In this the use of maps, pictures, and local features are freely used, and the physical, mathematical, and commercial geography are correlated. The result is encouraging. In some of the larger schools there is evidence that the subject has been treated too discursively, and the knowledge of the pupils is too indefinite.

*Drawing.*—In this subject some improvement has been achieved. Emphasis has been laid on freehand drawing in outline from objects and the practical application of a simple course of geometrical drawing. Little more should be expected from teachers of the smaller schools. In freehand drawing the use of copies should be regarded as merely preparation for object-drawing. In geometrical drawing the exercises should relate to familiar subjects of study and to elements of design. In the larger schools completer courses in design and in colour may reasonably be demanded.

*Other Subjects.*—To the additional subjects has been devoted an amount of attention equal to that given in the previous year. It is common to find a sole teacher presenting a course in all these subjects, although this is beyond the requirements of the syllabus. No change has been made in the course of physical instruction, as the scheme required by the new regulations has not yet been initiated in this district. While the number of schools including singing in the course has remained the same, it is expected that the instructions given to a large number of teachers during the year will lead to an increase in the amount of singing as well as to an improvement in its quality. Emphasis has been laid on the value of voice-training, as a pure tone leads to good results in other respects.

The five Catholic schools all presented work that was either good or very good. This success is due to the adoption of suitable schemes of work, to the attention to proper classification, and to adherence to good methods of instruction.

The Chairman, Westland Education Board.

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