

the exhibition, and expressed his pleasure in what he saw. In addition, large numbers of the public viewed the work, and expressed both astonishment and approval. There was also something striking in the evident satisfaction of the children in their handiwork. They were learning by active production, not by passive recipience. Teachers and pupils alike deserve hearty thanks for the interest they took in the project.

REMARKS ON THE VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

ENGLISH.—The school libraries are evidently fostering the love of reading, and the *School Journal* is a valuable aid to the same end. I should, however, like to find more use made of the daily or weekly papers, and of the five- or ten-minute morning conversation on the subject-matter read or observations made. Reading-sheets are required in a number of the schools; where Class P. is large this is the most effective method of dealing with the subject. In higher standards, three constantly observed defects under the head of pronunciation are, the misuse of "h," the intrusive "r"—broard, rotundar, peninsular (noun), and wrong vocalization—*i.e.*, the production of an impure vowel, the word "ice-burg" will illustrate the defect. A slow and clear articulation is the remedy for these faults. The phrase, as a unit of thought, should be carefully studied in the lower standards, and then there will be little difficulty with the due distribution of accent. The cultivation of an ear for rhythm in words and beauty of diction is an unfailing indication of good teaching. In general, the comprehension of the matter read was better than in previous years. In all schools the upper standards should be taught how to use a dictionary. This receives attention in some schools, but is neglected in others. Reading and oral composition are companion studies. Free oral expression of ideas is not yet sufficiently cultivated in Standards I and II. Where the principles of the essay are taught and the papers received are carefully corrected and discussed the result is good; but I have noticed, especially in the largest schools, some lack of thoroughness in this respect. Every error is an opportunity for the useful study of word function—an opportunity the more to be availed of since so much of grammar has been discharged from the syllabus. Such formal grammar as remains in the syllabus is receiving more attention than hitherto; some teachers still begin with the noun and the verb, instead of with subject and predicate. From the exhibits sent to the Fine Arts Exhibition it was evident that the majority of the schools have attained a very fair standard in writing. The general writing, as seen in the notebooks and on slates, especially in the setting-forth of arithmetic, still demand a careful supervision. In some schools the children bring their own nibs, which are frequently bad or unsuitable—then the writing suffers. In the lower classes the teacher must see that every slate is properly ruled. Spelling was considered satisfactory in fifty-three of the seventy-three schools to which announced visits were paid. Only two of the remaining twenty were above grade 1.

In the following table the standard of English is indicated. There are seventy-three schools in this summary:—

						Satisfactory to Excellent.	Not up to Satisfactory Standard.
Reading	..	..	..	..	..	62	11
Composition (including grammar)	..	..	..	..	..	24	49
Writing..	..	..	..	..	..	62	11
Spelling	..	..	..	..	..	53	20
Recitation	..	..	..	..	..	57	16

Except in composition, the general result is very satisfactory.

ARITHMETIC.—In some quarters accuracy appears to be considered of less importance than method; these are two sides neither of which can safely be neglected. Of 179 candidates from public schools for examination in Standard VI, six were presented in the arithmetic of Standard V; forty-seven others failed to attain the minimum required for the proficiency certificate. While this may be improved upon, it is nevertheless a fair result. It is to be observed that in the Junior National Scholarship test, arithmetic is practically the only subject in which candidates fail to obtain the minimum mark. This should encourage the teachers to make renewed efforts. The main work of improvement must begin in Standard IV, for the chief difficulties in the subject are found in Standard V. The best arithmetic of the past year was observed in Marshlands, Ugbrooke, Ocean Bay, and Picton. Thirty-four schools were considered satisfactory in arithmetic in 1909, as compared with thirty in 1908—the total number of schools being seventy-three and seventy respectively.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.—During the past three years there has been a progressive amelioration in these subjects, but they are not yet of a satisfactory standard. More may be done with the practical work of geography A in Standards III and IV. "The Imperial Geography," which is found in some schools, is not authorized for use by the pupils. Some schools make good use of maps and mapping; others do too little. Maps showing very careful detail are not required, but there is hardly any work in geography B that would not be made more interesting and remembered better if illustrated with rapidly drawn maps, showing only the details under consideration. In any case, the use of the atlas is very necessary. The great stimulus to interest in geography afforded by the daily and weekly papers is apt to be overlooked in country schools. The *School Journal* of the past year has afforded a valuable fund of suitable and up-to-date information on matters of geographical interest.

We sadly need a text-book in history appropriate to the needs of New Zealand—one that should deal very lightly with the main topics of English history, and then, taking up the thread of colonial history, elaborate the story of our own land: Captain Cook, the early immigrants, the Treaty of Waitangi, the Maoris and the land question, the work of Dieffenbach, von Hockstetter, von Haast, the effects of the discovery of gold, the provinces, the public-works policy, leading Ministers of the Crown and their policies, our chief writers and artists, the historical development of industry, standard