

Before I leave this subject of science, as the revision of the syllabus is now engaging much public attention, I will venture, at the risk of subjecting myself to the reproach of wishing to increase rather than diminish the amount of work prescribed to scholars and teachers, to call attention to a grave omission in our school course of science. There is one branch of science not directly concerned with the practical life of many of us, but so elevating in its influence on the mind, so fitted to inspire awe and reverence in the young thinker, so far removed above the reach of controversy that all classes of our divided community approve of it, which yet by some strange oversight seems dropping out of public notice and school life altogether. I need hardly say that I refer to the ancient science of astronomy—the science in which modern methods achieved their first triumph, a knowledge of the truths of which gives us moderns our great superiority over the men of ancient times. There should be no real difficulty in teaching the most prominent facts of this noble science in elementary lessons to the higher standards; and the lessons need not be merely book-work, as the attention of the children may be directed to the celestial objects observable by night, and to the phenomena of which so much may be learned even with the unassisted eye. Amid the many matters in which the education of to-day excels that of fifty years ago, it is not creditable to us that we have overlooked the claims of the grandest of all the sciences; indeed, I think, that to pretend to educate a child, and then to teach him nothing of the wonders of the heavens, may justly subject us to his reproaches in future days when he shall have become aware of his loss, and of the wrong done him.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, Education Board.

JOHN GAMMELL, B.A., Inspector.

#### REPORT ON THE EXTRA CLASSES OF THE RIVERTON DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL.

The following is the Rector's abstract of the past year's work in these classes:—

Subject.	Class.	Number of Pupils.	Work done.
Latin	I.	1	Cæsar, De Bello Gallico, Book IV.
	II.	2	Dr. Smith's Principia Latina, Part IV. to Ex. 30.
	III.	4	Dr. Smith's Principia Latina, Part I. to Ex. 53.
French	I.	1	Cæsar, De Bello Gallico, Book I. to Ch. XX.
	II.	7	Dr. Smith's Principia Latina, Part I. to Ex. 24.
	III.	2	Voltaire's Charles XII., Book IV.
Algebra	I.	2	Dr. Smith's French Principia, Part I.
	II.	4	Dr. Smith's French Principia, Part I., to Ex. 45.
	III.	2	Voltaire's Charles XII., Book IV.
	IV.	1	To simultaneous equations.
Euclid	I.	2	To simple equations and problems.
	II.	2	To least common multiple.
	III.	1	To division.
			Euclid, Books I., II.
			Euclid, Book I.

In all, fifteen children avail themselves of the advantages of these classes. Two of them, however, were absent from the examination.

In Latin the majority of the scholars in the two classes examined acquitted themselves with great credit; one scholar, a girl in the third class, gaining nearly cent. per cent. of marks. Some good work was done both in translation and retranslation, particularly the latter. The average of marks obtained in these classes was 54 per cent.

In French, too, the result obtained must, I think, be regarded with considerable satisfaction. No scholar came much below half-marks, and one obtained 82 per cent. I should, like, however, to see the "French into English" more accurately rendered, and this, I remember, was the weak point last year. The average of marks for the subject was 56 per cent.

In algebra the examination was a searching one, and the result shows that the children have been well grounded in the subject, the papers showing much good work in the elementary rules, factoring, and equations. In algebraical fractions the scholars seemed less strong. The average percentage for the subject was 48.

The Euclid is the least satisfactory part of the high-school work. Only three scholars were examined in it, and of these only one obtained marks. This scholar, however, acquitted himself with considerable credit.

The average percentage of marks obtained in all four subjects was 45, whilst one of the best scholars was absent from the examination through indisposition.

I append the class-lists showing the percentage of marks obtained by each scholar in the several subjects.

JOHN GAMMELL, B.A., Inspector.