

offer a fair technical education to those who desire it, especially to those who show marked ability, joined to strong natural bent in the direction of one of the skilled trades.

The Inspector-General of Schools, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

WM. FIDLER.

TARANAKI.

Mr. MURRAY.

SIR,—

Education Office, New Plymouth, 4th February, 1885.

I have the honour, in reply to yours of the 6th ultimo, to forward the following remarks and suggestions:—

1. *History*.—This subject, to be taught successfully, so that individual pass or marks on an equality with others in standards above the Third, demands much time and effort, especially in the preparation by the scholar and supervision by the teacher of written work. I have no hesitation in saying that present results are obtained at too great a sacrifice of time, which otherwise spent would be of much greater profit to the scholar. I further express the conviction that, with well-selected Historical Readers in our Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Standards, a more useful and a more intelligent comprehension of the subject would be obtained. The inclusion of history in Regulation IX. would be an advantage. The subject has, with an exception or two, never been taught in the schools of this district.

*Geography*.—I feel disposed to suggest a similar treatment of this subject, but there are many objections to such, and no suitable "Readers." The isolated position of the colony, the high cost of travelling, and the scanty outside information brought within reach of children will necessitate, for several years, at any rate, the utmost that can be done in imparting a fair acquaintance with the subject. I cannot agree with the suggestion that geography should be made a class-subject. With a few changes in the syllabus of instruction, teachers will have no great difficulty in working for pass results.

The further proposal to include grammar and composition would be a serious mistake. Were this brought into operation the outside subjects would give place to those upon which pass results depended.

2. I strongly support the retention of the subject. Historical reading lessons are an excellent and pleasing change to the too often dry and uninteresting matter of the ordinary "Reader."

3. The introduction of drawing as a compulsory subject in all standards is a welcome proposal. Its incorporation with writing would lead to better results than those at present obtained. Certainly more analytical instruction in writing will be given, and teachers, encouraged by the success, concede less time to the present slavish system of copying a headline. The plan recommended by the Commission for its introduction seems a good and practicable one.

*Syllabus*.—With respect to the distribution of the subjects, I beg to suggest a few alterations.

Standard I.: Writing.—Read, "The small letters, the ten figures," and a few words selected from the class Reader, "on slate, and dictation."

Standard II.: Geography.—To read, "Knowledge of the meaning of a ground plan, and of a map; of the principle geographical terms," and to be able to name or point out examples on a map of the world.

Standard III.: Geography.—Insert before "chief towns" positions of the continents and oceans and larger seas; and delete "Of the Countries and Capitals of Europe." Arithmetic.—Insert short division by factors. History.—Strike out subject in this standard. Grammar.—Delete, "and very simple . . . into words," and insert analysis of easy sentences into subject and predicate, with simple sentence-building.

Standard IV.: Arithmetic.—Delete "Practice." Grammar.—Insert the parsing of an easy sentence with knowledge of government by transitive verb and preposition; analysis and synthesis of easy simple sentences; reproduction of a short story; delete "letter writing . . . to envelopes." Geography.—Delete "the seasons," and "climate in this connection." History.—An intelligent acquaintance with the text of the "Reader" (to be named) used by the class.

Standard V.: Arithmetic.—Read, Practice; proportion; the easier cases of vulgar and decimal fractions, and problems involving them; mental arithmetic. Grammar.—Delete "or the rendering of the . . . good prose;" insert, Analysis and synthesis of a complex sentence. Physical Geography.—To read, Mountain and river system; the seasons, and climate.—History. As for Standard IV.

Standard VI.: Grammar.—For "essay or letter" read essay from notes supplied; analysis and synthesis of easy compound sentences. History.—As for Standard IV.

*Drawing*.—Standard IV. Read, Outline drawing from model of cube, cross, or other rectangular model. Standard V. Read, Outline drawing from model of cone, circle, or circular model; easy object drawing.

Standard VI.: Read, Practical geometrical drawing; easy shaded object drawing.

*Science*.—What is wanted here is a really useful "Reader." Perhaps Blachin's Readers, now publishing, would do?

*Inspector's Examination*.—The standard tests should be alike for all districts. Such an arrangement would prevent widely different interpretations of the syllabus, and give to the department the best information as to results.

*Pupil-teachers' Regulations*.—(1) These should be uniform throughout the colony, and the yearly examination be conducted by the department; (2) the instruction demanded be entirely of a practical and technical character; (3) the last year's requirements be those for the E certificate; (4) certificate issued only on completion of course and two satisfactory yearly reports