

Public Examination of Schools.—Thirty-nine only, of the eighty-five schools in session during the winter term, reported examinations held. This being unsatisfactory to me, upon my recommendation, the School Commissioners passed the following resolution :—

Resolved :—“ That all Teachers employed in this County shall be required to hold, in future, *public examinations* of the Schools, under their charge, as directed by law, or present to the Commissioners good and sufficient reasons why such examinations had not been held,—under penalty of having their returns disapproved.” The Trustees of each section received due notice of the passing of the resolution; and, as a result, ninety-three of the ninety-five schools in session reported examinations; and two furnished satisfactory reasons for not holding them. These examinations were well attended by parents and school visitors, who expressed their satisfaction of the management of the schools. I am convinced that this step was in the right direction, and will tend to secure, in a greater degree than now the interest and co-operation of the residents of the sections, in the labors of the teachers, for the best interests of education.

Lessons.—It is a common error for teachers to assign too long lessons from the text-book, and be satisfied with imperfect recitations. A short lesson well learned and practically applied by the pupil under the direction of the teacher, will produce lasting results. What is committed to memory from the text book, is soon forgotten, if the recitation consists in repeating, by rote, what has been learned; while what is taken in by the pupil understandingly, and given back in some practical form, will seldom, if ever, be erased from the mind. A great want in our schools is *thoroughness* in teaching. This is too often confounded with exhaustive teaching. The teacher should be able to discriminate between them. Exhaustive teaching requires of the pupil knowledge of a subject in all its details. Thorough teaching seeks to ground him in the elementary facts and principles of that subject; that he may be prepared to go forward, in his own strength, if need be, to an exhaustive knowledge of it. The general needs of life require a general knowledge, thorough, so far as it goes, of many things; while special needs require an exhaustive knowledge of very few. The general education of the individual got in the Common School is to fit him for life's general needs. Hence *thorough* not *exhaustive*, teaching is required in these schools.

In conclusion a review of the past year's work, evinces as much progress as could reasonably be expected, and affords hope, that the return of good times will induce all to regard with renewed interest, the pressing claims of the Public Schools.

I am your obedient servant,

COLIN W. ROSCOE.

REV. A. S. HUNT, A. M.,
Superintendent of Education.