



THE MALTA GOVERNMENT GAZETTE.

N° 2229.]

Saturday, 8th July 1865.

[Price One Penny.

All public Acts appearing in this Gazette, signed by the proper Authorities, are to be considered as Official and obeyed as such.
By command, VICTOR HOULTON, Chief Secretary to Government.

GOVERNMENT NOTICE.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR has been pleased to direct the publication, for general information, of the Report from the Commission appointed by His Excellency, on the 11th February last, to enquire into the public instruction as taught in the Lyceum and Primary Schools of Malta and Gozo;—and the Letter accompanying the same.

The Letter and the Report will be published in Italian in a future Gazette.

By command,

Palace, Valletta,
July 8th, 1865.

VICTOR HOULTON,
Chief Secretary to Government.

Committee Room,
Public Library,
Malta, 23 June 1865.

Sir,

We, the Commissioners appointed by Your Excellency, "to enquire into the state of public instruction as taught in the Lyceum and the Primary Schools of Malta and Gozo," have the honor to lay before Your Excellency our Report.

Being assured of the deep interest Your Excellency takes in the well-being of the people over whom you are called to preside, and knowing that Your Excellency views Education as one of the greatest benefits that can be bestowed upon a people; it is unnecessary for us to dwell upon this very interesting subject.

We have endeavoured to the best of our abilities to perform the responsible task committed to us; we trust that our Report will furnish Your Excellency with the information you desire, and that such recommendations as we have ventured to make will meet with Your Excellency's approval.

There are at the present time 71 Schools of Primary Instruction distributed through the Islands, and these Schools are attended by nearly 6,000 children; there are however still 9,000 children between the ages of 5 and 15 who do not attend any Schools, and are therefore growing up entirely uneducated.

The amount paid for Primary Instruction in Malta is £ 3,912, a sum much less in proportion to the population than is paid by any other country in Europe at all advanced in civilization.

In England each child costs annually 30s.; in Malta 12s. 10d.

In France no less than 58,000,000 francs are annually spent in Primary Instruction, yet notwithstanding this very large expenditure, in a late Report of the Minister charged with the duty of enquiring into the state of Elementary Education in France, it is stated that out of every 100 children attending the Primary Schools, 40 leave without having received any education.

We are not in a position to state the amount of education that each pupil who has left the Primary Schools of Malta has obtained, the result of our enquiries however at the present time does not impress

NOTIFICAZIONE DI GOVERNO.

SUA ECCELLENZA IL GOVERNATORE si è compiuto di ordinare la pubblicazione, per informazione di tutti, del Rapporto fatto dalla Commissione nominata da Sua Eccellenza, l'11 Febbrajo p. p., per investigare lo stato della pubblica istruzione com'è insegnata nel Liceo e nelle Scuole Primarie di Malta e del Gozo;—e della Lettera che lo accompagna.

La Lettera e il Rapporto saranno pubblicati in Italiano in una prossima Gazzetta.

Per comando,

Palazzo, Valletta,
8 Luglio 1865.

VICTOR HOULTON,
Principale Segretario di Governo.

us with the belief, that in this respect the Schools of Malta have been more successful than those of France and the Minister before quoted says "that a Mechanic with a machine producing such indifferent results would immediately set to work to discover and remedy its defects."

We have endeavoured, in our Report, to point out the defects we have discovered, and we have suggested such remedies as we believe may be readily effected without any great increase of expenditure, having also a due regard to the means the Country affords.

We have drawn attention to the inadequate remuneration given to many of the Masters and Mistresses, and we recommend these persons to Your Excellency's consideration.

Several School Rooms are inconvenient, insufficient in size for the wants of the School, and their localities indifferent, these we recommend for improvement.

Although 71 Government Schools exist in the Islands, there are still several populous Casals without the advantage of Schools, and we desire to draw Your Excellency's attention to this fact, with a view to establishing Schools in them.

We have pleasure in stating that we have received every attention from the Rector of the University, his Secretary, the Director of the Primary Schools, and the Professors and Masters &c., of the Educational Establishments.

In consequence of the Memorandum published in the Government Gazette, several Gentlemen presented themselves, and furnished us with papers containing much valuable information, all these documents are forwarded to Your Excellency, with our Report and its Appendices.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,
Your Excellency's
obedient and humble Servants,

R. C. ROMER, Colonel,
EMILIO SCEBERRAS,
B. B. BAKER.

To His Excellency
Lieut. Gen. Sir H. K. STORKS, GCB., GCMG.,
Governor,
&c. &c. &c.

Report of the Commission appointed by His Excellency the Governor, to enquire into the state of public instruction, as taught in the Lyceum and the Primary Schools of Malta and Gozo, pursuant to Government Notice of 11th February 1865.

The Commission began their labours by an attentive perusal of the Yearly Reports transmitted to the Head of the Government by the Director of the Primary Schools, as well as a minute examination of the "Programmes of Instruction" in order to become thoroughly acquainted with the principles on which the Schools are conducted, and the progressive grades of Instruction to which the pupils may aspire.

The Commission then proceeded to the inspection of the Schools, and the examination of the Senior Classes, with a view to ascertain what amount of knowledge the pupils had really acquired, when compared with the programmes published.

The following is a summary of the result.

Primary Schools.

VALLETTA. Visited 23rd February,
2nd, 6th, 7th, 9th, 14th, 15th, 27th March.

Boys. 3rd Class.

Italian: reading and dictation, indifferent,—scarcely any knowledge of the meaning of words.

English: accent, bad,—no knowledge of the subject read.

Slate Arithmetic: 3 out of 27 pupils succeeded, after a considerable time, in working a short sum in simple multiplication, proving it by division.

4th Class.

Italian: reading, not satisfactory. Parsing, much inferior to what might be expected from the senior class.

English: (4th Reading Book) accent, bad,—acquainted with the meaning of words occasionally. Parsing, imperfectly acquainted with the parts of speech, conjugation of verbs, and the comparison of adjectives. Dictation, in some instances, fair.

Arithmetic: 4 out of 12 worked, after some delay, an eas sum in proportion. (These pupils were seated next to each other

Girls. 3rd Class.

Italian: reading, indifferent,—no knowledge of the meaning of words.

English: mere monosyllables, read with great difficulty.

4th Class.

Italian: reading, mechanical,—unacquainted with the meaning of words.

English: reading, indifferent,—understand very little of what they read, and have no knowledge of grammar.

Arithmetic: 4 out of 23 worked correctly a sum in compound multiplication,—proportion being a failure.

10th March.

Visited the Secondary School for young Ladies at Valletta, and also the Infant School: the former satisfactory.

FLORIANA. 3rd March.

Boys. 3rd Class.

Italian and English: somewhat superior to the 3rd Class in Valletta; though unable to work a simple sum in proportion (Slate Arithmetic).

4th Class.

No pupils, the Teacher stating that those who had been promoted last year from the 3rd Class, had left for the Lyceum.

Girls. 3rd Class.

Afforded much the same results as above.

SENGLEA. 13th March.

Boys. 3rd Class.

Italian: reading and writing, middling,—limited knowledge of the meaning of words.

English: accent, bad,—no knowledge either of grammar or the meaning of what they read.

Arithmetic: failed entirely in proportion, but 1 out of 14 (a Pupil Teacher) worked a sum in simple multiplication correctly.

Girls.

Said to be 4 Classes, none examined: the want of ventilation, and other causes, rendered the atmosphere of the rooms so offensive that the Commission withdrew.

VITTORIOSA. 13th March.

Boys. 2nd Class.

No 3rd or 4th extant. The Teacher stated that they had gone to the Lyceum. This Class proved equal in many respects, if not superior, to the generality of the 3rd Classes. This caused some surprise, especially as English is not contemplated in the programme of this Class: but the surprise of the Commission abated considerably on ascertaining from the pupils themselves, that several were in the 4th year of their course.

Girls. 3rd and 4th Classes combined.

Italian: reading, indifferent. Parsing, very unsatisfactory.

English: very indifferent.

Arithmetic: 1 out of 14 worked a sum in compound multiplication, but all failed in simple multiplication by 3 figures.

Industrial work: superior to what had been hitherto exhibited.

COSPICUA. 20th March.

Boys. 3rd Class.

Italian: reading, middling. Parsing, very unsatisfactory.

English: quite beginners.

Arithmetic: all failed in a simple sum in proportion, and 1 out of 28 worked a sum in simple multiplication by 3 figures. (Several of the pupils had been upwards of 12 months in this Class).

Girls. 3rd and 4th Classes combined.

Italian: reading, fair. Parsing, very indifferent.

English: very weak.

Arithmetic: 1 out of 21 worked correctly a sum in simple multiplication. (This pupil had been in the Dockyard School until the age of 14).

Discipline: lax.

BIRCHIRARA. 21st March.

Boys. 3rd Class.

Italian: reading and parsing, superior to the 3rd Class in Valletta.

English: beginners.

Arithmetic: 1 out of 18 worked correctly a simple sum in proportion, and 8 worked a simple sum in multiplication by 3 figures.

Girls. 3rd Class.

Only 3 present; not examined.

2nd Class.

Italian: beginners. (Accommodation not sufficient for the number of pupils on the books).

CURMI. 22nd March.

Boys. 3rd Class.

20 present. Italian: reading and parsing, fair. The pupils understood more of what they read than the generality.

English: beginners.

Arithmetic: all failed in proportion, as well as in simple multiplication.

Girls. 2nd Class.

12 present. Italian and Arithmetic: quite beginners.

ZABBAR. 24th March.

Boys. 3rd Class.

7 present. Italian: reading and parsing, indifferent.

English: beginners.

Arithmetic: all failed in proportion as well as in simple multiplication.

The Commission consider this School the weakest they have yet visited.

Girls. 3rd Class.

The above observations are equally applicable to this branch of the Establishment.

ZEITUN. 24th March.

Boys. 3rd Class.

26 present, 4 of whom had previously belonged to a 4th Class no longer extant. Italian: reading, passable,—but the pupils could not conjugate a verb.

English: very indifferent.

Arithmetic: the usual sum in proportion was worked by one, and the multiplication by three.*

The Teacher had evidently been laboring under a severe illness.

Girls. 4th Class.

14 present. Italian: reading, very poor,—no knowledge of verbs.

English: not well acquainted with the letters of the alphabet.

Arithmetic: not one could do a sum in simple multiplication by 3 figures.

Geography: not taught in this School.

* On all these occasions the sum given in multiplication was $89,367 \times 509$;—and in proportion "If a man spend 4s. 6d. a day how much will he spend in a year."

NOTABLE. 28th March.

Boys. (No 3rd or 4th Classes) 2nd Class.

Italian: beginners.

Arithmetic: 1 out of 15 worked a sum in short division, and all failed in simple subtraction. (Rooms in a disreputable condition).

Girls.

The School had been closed for a fortnight, in consequence of the indisposition of the Mistress.

ZEBBUG. 28th March.

Boys. 3rd Class.

8 present. Italian: reading and parsing, middling.

English: beginners.

Arithmetic: all failed in the usual proportion sum, and one worked correctly the usual sum in multiplication.

Girls. 3rd Class.

7 present. Italian: reading, very indifferent.

Arithmetic: very unsatisfactory.

English: quite beginners.

Geography: not taught.

CRENDI. 30th March.

Boys. 3rd Class.

5 present. Italian: reading and parsing, fair,—pupils understood what they read, and had a knowledge of verbs.

English: accent, bad,—they understood a little of what they read, and had a slight knowledge of grammar.

Arithmetic: all failed in the usual sum in proportion, 2 worked a sum in compound multiplication, and 2 a sum in simple multiplication by 3 figures, proved by division.

2nd Class.

Questioned in the multiplication table, and answered correctly.

Girls. 2nd Class.

11 present. Italian and English: beginners.

Arithmetic: acquainted with the multiplication table.

GOZO. RABATO. 9th and 10th May.

Boys. 3rd Class.

16 present. Italian: reading and parsing, middling.

English: beginners.

The Teacher stated that the pupils had little inclination to study this language.

Arithmetic: 2 worked correctly the usual sum in proportion, as well as sums in reduction of money.

Geography: taught only in the 1st Class, neglected in the 2nd Class, and totally forgotten in the 3rd.

2nd Class.

The pupils showed average ability with other Classes of the same standing.

Girls. 2nd or Senior Class.

20 present. Remarked that the pupils seemed to be of a higher social position than those usually attending Primary Schools.

Reading and parsing, tolerable.

Arithmetic: rather weak.

NADUR. 9th May.

Boys.

1 of the 3rd Class, and 11 of the 2nd Class present. Italian: reading and parsing, beginners.

Arithmetic: 1 boy worked and proved a sum in compound multiplication by 2 figures, 3 did the same in simple multiplication, and 6 worked a sum in multiplication by one figure.

Girls.

Pupils very young, and doing little.

GARBO. 10th May.

Boys.

Only 17 present, 3 of whom in the 2nd Class. Italian: reading, very indifferent.

Arithmetic: none could do the usual sum in simple multiplication.

Girls.

21 present, 5 belonging to 2nd Class, could read Italian a little, and knew the multiplication table.

GOZO. 11th May.

Secondary School.

The Commission remarked as a defect that no particular Master was in charge of this School, consequently there were no means of ascertaining whether the lessons are given regularly, or whether the arrangements of the time table are strictly adhered to: that the

latter is doubtful, the Commission have reason to infer from what came under their own observation.

Attention seemed to be paid to the teaching of Latin and Italian. The English class was composed of only 5 students, they had a fair knowledge of syntax, and their Teacher is active and intelligent. In Geography the questions put were very simple, restricted in fact to the mere "outlines," but the students had a very limited knowledge of this branch. The Arithmetic (considered an obligatory lesson) proved a disgraceful failure.

The Junior Class, though studying Algebra, could not do a simple sum in proportion.

The Commission even allowed the students to consult each other, thinking that their collective ability would enable them to make out a rational answer; but, after considerable delay, it was given up in despair.

The Master was then requested to put the same question to the Senior Class (composed of young men), but he replied, that if the Junior Class could not solve it, it would be useless to call upon the Seniors, as they must have long forgotten their Arithmetic. The Drawing School is said to have 5 students, the Commission found only one.

Thus, while on the one hand it must be acknowledged that great credit is due to the zealous Director for the manner in which he has organized these Institutions, and the discipline he has introduced; on the other, it is to be regretted that in his laudable anxiety to uphold the credit of these Schools, he should have published for general information reports and programmes which have tended to raise expectations in the mind of the Public that he has not the remotest means of fulfilling; hence it may be inferred that the æsthetic and poetical analysis of Italian and British Authors, composition in the didactic and descriptive styles, the laws and statistics of the different countries, a complete course of arithmetic, geometry, &c.; as specified in the programmes of the Girls' as well as the Boys' Schools, are inserted chiefly to show what he would wish to be taught in the Schools, rather than what is, or can possibly be taught, considering the matériel at his disposal.

In proof of this assertion, the pupils of the Senior Classes, ranging from 12 to 16 years of age, cannot yet be said to read fluently and correctly, they seldom understand what they do read, are deficient in orthography and break down in the conjugation of the simplest verbs both in Italian and English, while in Arithmetic they are wretchedly backward. A glaring instance of this took place on the 5th April in the presence of two members of the Commission, when 7 pupils of the Primary Schools, varying from 13 to 17 years of age, were examined for admission into the Lyceum, and rejected, though the standard of knowledge required (perhaps the lowest in any country in Europe was merely that of writing legibly and correctly 5 or 6 lines in Italian, under dictation, and working a sum in division by two figures).

The Commission consider it necessary here to remark that the Director himself expressed his disappointment at the result of the examinations in the Valletta Schools, and suggested the equity of having the pupils examined according to the system on which they had been taught.

To this measure the Commission readily assented, with a view also to test the qualifications of the persons to whom the professedly multifarious branches of tuition are confided, and the same system was subsequently adopted when inspecting the Country Schools.

In justice to the Masters (whose scanty remuneration is barely sufficient to furnish them with the indispensable necessities of life, and will never induce men of superior acquirements to undertake the laborious duties that necessarily devolve on them) it must be said that they endeavoured to acquit themselves to the best of their ability, but the Commission possessing a knowledge of facts deduced from their own previous examinations, could not fail to perceive that all the questions put, were questions of habitual routine common to all the Schools, and that the slightest deviation from the beaten track deranged the whole machinery.

This was shown by the inability of the pupils to answer the questions unexpectedly put by the Commission on several occasions relative to the meaning of the answers they had just given, when, strange to relate, it was found that they seldom had any knowledge of the purport of the words they had uttered, and the only justification offered by the Teachers was to the effect that in the Primary Schools they were not required to translate, thus proving that the pupils are taught to repeat by rote either in Italian or in bad English, what they do not understand.

Under these circumstances the Commission respectfully venture to suggest.

1st. That the Government having for so many years maintained gratuitous Infant Schools in Valletta, Floriana, and Cospicua, in which children are taught to read and spell in Maltese, it does not appear absolutely necessary that the Primary Schools in these places should receive pupils who are of so tender an age, or so illiterate, as not to be acquainted with the letters of the alphabet, otherwise it must be admitted that two Schools in the same District are, to a certain extent, maintained for the same purpose, an admission which involves the necessity (in accordance with the programme) of having the pupils of the Primary Schools also taught during the whole of the first year to read a little Maltese Spelling Book, expressly prepared in conventional orthography, whereas their time might be much more usefully employed in learning to read Italian on their first entering, especially as the Italian characters are also used in teaching them to read Maltese, a dialect that should be retained merely as the medium of oral communication in the minor Classes, its use in the Island never being required in any other form.

The Commission venture here to submit that an Infant School should also be established at Senglea and at Vittoriosa, and an additional one in Valletta, the present School being situated at the lower extremity of the town, its distance from the upper part renders it extremely inconvenient for children to traverse the streets during all seasons of the year.

2nd. That the Primary Schools, whether considered as popular Schools, or as preparatory to the Lyceum, with which however there seems to be no connecting link,—the greatest importance should be attached to the tuition given in the Italian language, which, being the written language of the Country, must necessarily be considered the basis of instruction,—writing, arithmetic, elementary geography and history, so as to afford a hope that pupils on completing their course in these Schools (say at the age of 15) may have obtained the groundwork of an education that would enable them to prosecute their studies advantageously in the Lyceum, or become the means of more effectually improving their social position.

The study of the English language should commence and be steadily pursued in the 3rd year's course, when the pupils may be supposed to have overcome the principal difficulties of reading Italian, and to have acquired some slight knowledge of grammar; as the contemporaneous study of two languages so widely differing from their own native dialect must prove embarrassing, and considerably retard their progress. The programme also states that the tuition in English commences in the 3rd Class, but the Commission find that in most Schools it commences in the 2nd Class.

3rd. That the older Teachers and Schoolmistresses should be superannuated, and the best and most energetic of the juniors promoted in order of merit, to be ascertained by a competitive examination conducted by the Rector of the University, the Principal Director of Primary Schools, and the respective Teachers of English, Italian, and arithmetic in the Lyceum, allowing such candidates a period of two months for preparation. The vacancies thus created might also be filled by competition among the senior Pupil Teachers, or others who might come forward, if the remuneration, generally, were made in some degree commensurate with the demand for superior attainments.

4th. That with a view eventually to ensure a more efficient staff of Teachers in these Schools, the standard of their acquirements when competing for employment in this line, should not be inferior to that of students who have completed their course *satisfactorily* in the Lyceum, in conformity with the project now submitted by the Commission under that Head.

The successful Candidates should then commence their training for this special branch, under the direction and tuition of the "Professore di Metodologia," and be held in reserve either to fill up any vacancy that might occur, or as occasional substitutes during the illness or absence of a regular Teacher.

The latter would also be a means of enabling the Director to test their respective merits before placing them on the permanent Establishment.

5th. That to facilitate this measure, it would be advisable to allow a limited number of youths to pursue their studies in the Lyceum gratuitously, on declaring their wish to follow the Scholastic Profession and obtain employment in the Public Schools. The Rector should at the same time be empowered to call upon such

students to give a guarantee for the payment of their past dues should they fail in the performance of their engagements, or not serve satisfactorily for a period of 4 years.

6th. That, with a view permanently to improve the condition of the Model School in Valletta, and insure real progress in the English language, an English Teacher should be obtained from a Training School in England, to undertake the tuition of this and some of the collateral branches in the 4th or Senior Class, directing his attention also to the Assistants when instructing their Classes in English.

7th. That the Schools should be carefully inspected at irregular intervals. The persons gratuitously appointed for this purpose should report to the Principal Director, or to higher authority if necessary, any irregularity that might come under their notice, or suggest any measures that might tend to further the moral and intellectual development of the pupils, and promote the objects for which these gratuitous Institutions were founded.

Inspections of this nature would doubtless also infuse greater vitality into this branch of Instruction, by occasionally arousing the flagging energies of the Teachers, and inducing them to extend their own acquirements, as well as by stimulating them to greater exertion in the training of their pupils.

8th. That with a view to increase the popularity of these Schools in the Casals, a small gratification should be allowed to the Priest of the Parish to attend the Village School weekly, and give the pupils religious instruction, independently of that which they are *supposed* to receive from the Teachers in conformity with the programme; this would give him a direct interest in the School that would not fail to extend itself to his parishioners, and thus lead, it is to be hoped, to an increase in the number of pupils, and consequently to the wider spread of education among the poorer classes in the Country, a benefit of which they ought to avail themselves to a far greater extent, the Commission having found by statistical calculations that the number attending Schools is to the non-attendants as 1 to 2.7.

9th. That all the Country Schools should be allowed the aid of at least *one* paid Pupil Teacher when there are 3 Classes, as the Commission had occasion to remark in several instances, that the Teacher's attention had to be directed to 3 Classes contemporaneously, a circumstance that operated manifestly to the disadvantage of the whole, Teacher included.

With regard to the Girls' Schools the Commission observe:

That scarcely the shadow of what is set forth in the programmes can be taught by those to whom the tuition is confided, while the difficulties attending the attainment of the real object of such Institutions, are of such a nature that the Island affords no resources available for the purpose of overcoming them.

In other Countries, the co-operation of religious Societies, as well as of persons who engage in scholastic pursuits as the bias of their own inclinations, tends greatly to obviate the main difficulties that present themselves; but it must be borne in mind that in these cases the only language used is the native language of the pupils, in which the whole course of instruction is given, whereas in Malta the native dialect affords no facilities whatever in an educational point of view, and is available for no other purpose than that of orally explaining the meaning of words. The Teachers here therefore labor under additional disadvantages, and have to compete with greater difficulties, in being obliged to substitute English and Italian, which are both foreign languages to the pupils of the Primary Schools.

Nor, on the other hand, can these languages be dispensed with, the Maltese being merely a spoken and not a written language, they must necessarily be the groundwork of instruction in all the other branches, such as arithmetic, elementary geography, history, &c.

Thus, under the peculiar circumstances of the Island the pupils have to learn two foreign languages, and the Teachers to be well acquainted with the three, independently of all the accessories of a general education; and if the difficulty in finding qualified male Teachers is great, it appears to be insurmountable where female Teachers are concerned.

The only suggestions that the Commission venture to submit in this respect, as the least objectionable with regard to expenditure, are:

1st. That the advantage of a trained Schoolmistress brought from England, having been conceded to the female Secondary School, a similar advantage should be afforded the Primary Institutions. The most intelligent of the actual Assistants and Pupil Teachers in the Valletta and Floriana Schools, might then form an afternoon

Class alternately with those of Cospicua, Senglea, and Vittoriosa, under the tuition of an active and experienced Teacher, whose non-acquaintance with the native dialect would prove beneficial by forcing them to acquire a better knowledge of the English language, while they are able to teach; a measure of this kind would be an incalculable advantage to these Schools, as the Teachers having no means of further improvement under present circumstances, may be considered as having already reached the maximum of their attainments, respecting which the Commission might say much that would not redound to the credit of these Institutions.

2nd. That to excite greater emulation and prevent favoritism, half yearly examinations of these training Classes should be held by a Board composed of the Principal Director, the English Teacher, and a Civil Service Official selected by Government. On these occasions the Board should be empowered to recommend the student who had made most progress, for an increase of a few pence per diem until regularly promoted.

It is hoped that by a little judicious management, the staff of Teachers in these Schools might thus be steadily and considerably improved, without in any way deranging the present organization, or causing the confusion incidental to a sudden change of system, a proceeding which should be avoided in both Schools, as it would immediately undo all that the Director has been striving for years to accomplish. Hence it has been suggested that the training Classes should be instructed in the afternoon, on alternate days; the pupils being then engaged principally at needlework they could be superintended by the respective Directresses and some of the junior Pupil Teachers, without inconvenience, while the English Training Mistress might frequent the Schools in the morning, and become thoroughly acquainted with the defects of the several Teachers, with a view to their subsequent correction. To this may be added, that the beneficial results attending this arrangement would soon be brought to act on the Country Schools by enabling the Director to select better qualified leading Teachers for the principal posts, and thus gradually establish the whole system on a more solid basis.

As a general suggestion the Commission submit, that due attention should be paid to the condition of the Schoolrooms, which, in some cases, is disreputable; that play-grounds should be attached to them when they can be obtained, and that either the Master, or the Mistress, should live on the premises, when practicable.

Lyceum.

The investigations pursued in this Institution have led, on the whole, to more favorable conclusions than were anticipated, the course of instruction being divested of all those high flown pretensions which, when put to the test, invariably result in a failure.

The Rector is vigilant and unremitting in the discharge of his duties, the Masters are fully competent to teach what they have undertaken, and enjoy collectively a fair reputation as such, the discipline maintained in the several class-rooms, seems also satisfactory. The question therefore naturally suggests itself, why does the Establishment not stand so high in public opinion as it ought?

The Commission will in reply endeavour briefly to submit, as the result of their enquiries, the principal causes that in their opinion tend to lessen the utility of the Lyceum and lower it in public estimation. These are:

1st. *The facility of admission.* This is the starting point at which the evil commences. The mere writing of a few lines under dictation in easy Italian, of which the applicant is not required to understand a single word (though the Statute, article 66, provides that he "shall be competently versed" in that language) and the working of a sum in division by two figures, form too low a standard; it prejudices the decorum of the Institution, and its injurious effects sensibly pervade every Class in these Schools, notwithstanding the existence of 6 Classes of English, 5 of Italian, and the divisions, subdivisions and sections found in other branches.

Still, the advocates of this system adduce as an argument in its defence, and in support of its popularity, that on the Registers of the Lyceum there is the unprecedented number of 470 pupils! But, setting aside the question whether quantity is preferable to quality, or whether it would be more advantageous to the interests of the country to have less than half that number quit the Lyceum well educated Youths, rather than the whole number lamentably deficient in several of the most important branches of education;

it may be asked, how many of these 470 are steadily following a regular course of study? The Return furnished at the request of the Commission (and herewith enclosed) proves, by the straggling classification of the pupils, that there is not *one!* with the exception perhaps of those who are in the preparatory Class. It may also be asked, what constitutes a regular course in the Lyceum, or what period is assigned for its completion? There does not appear to be any thing of the kind. No branches being obligatory, every pupil on admission, though furnished by the Rector with the necessary instructions, follows the bent of his own inclinations, and frequents the Class or Classes that he, in his own judgment, may deem most essential to his purpose. In addition to this, be it remarked, that the payment exacted from each pupil being only one shilling a month, many of the boys in the minor Classes are sent by their parents more "to keep them out of mischief" than with the ultimate intention of having them educated. This fact is proved by the assertion of the Rector, who stated to the Commission that his reports repeatedly sent to parents respecting the negligence or bad behaviour of their sons, seldom elicited the slightest attention until he proceeded to the extreme measure of *expulsion*, which was the only means of inducing them to exert their parental authority. Are these then the students who by their number are expected to support the credit, or prove the popularity and the utility of the Institution! The Secretary of the University admitting also in his own published Statement, that more than four fifths of the pupils in the Lyceum do not prosecute their studies beyond what may be considered merely elementary.

2nd. *The system of promoting the pupils before they are qualified.* If the evil consequent on the facility of admission be such as to leave the whole mass, the system adopted with regard to the promotion to higher Classes is not of a nature to rectify that evil. There are three periods of admission during the scholastic year, on the conditions above specified, viz. October, January, and April. Supposing 12 to be admitted in January, the room occupied by the lowest Class being full and consequently unable to contain the additional 12, an equal number of those admitted in October, preceding would be promoted to a higher Class to afford them suitable accommodation; if that room also should be full, the same operation would be repeated with the other Classes in succession; and the same proceeding would again take place in April. Thus it may be said, that promotion in the Lyceum is regulated according to the size of the class-rooms rather than by the merit of the pupils! It is true that yearly examinations are held, but these seem intended chiefly to regulate the distribution of prizes, and not to judge of a pupil's qualifications for promotion.

The result of this system is self-evident, the Masters in the higher Classes are obliged to lower the grade of their instruction to the level of the intelligence of the pupils thus promoted, and the objects of the Institution are defeated either by the want of space or by the very numbers which constitute the boast of those who uphold the system.

In the meanwhile the straggling classification above alluded to, necessarily renders the several Schools totally independent of each other, there is no compact and methodical system of instruction pursued as an established principle, there is no point of convergence to which all the arrangements of a Scholastic Institution should tend. Nor do the Regulations seem to require it, as the Commission perceive that the Professors of the University hold distinct sittings and examinations of their own, to decide on the admission or rejection of applicants for matriculation in the respective Faculties, the students coming from the Lyceum being placed on a par with others who have studied under private Tutors.

The Commission, though fully convinced of the necessity of elevating the standard of instruction in the Lyceum, would not in its present condition recommend any immediate changes, excepting such as might tend gradually to prepare the way for prospective improvements without disorganising the actual classification of so numerous a body of pupils.

For this purpose, while retaining the actual distinction of the several departments, it is submitted,

1st. That the preparatory School should be retained for the present, the conditions of admission to be those determined by the Statute.

2nd. That, to enter as *regular* students in the Lyceum, strictly so called, the pupils of the preparatory School should undergo a satisfactory examination in Italian and English parsing, and easy translation in both languages, arithmetic (comprising vulgar fractions and simple proportion), and the outlines of geography. The pupils of private Schools should be admitted on the same conditions.

3rd. That the regular course of study in the Lyceum, strictly so called, should occupy a period of four years, and comprise certain branches to be considered obligatory. Appendix A.

4th. That no promotions should take place during the scholastic year, and that yearly examinations should be held by the body of Masters (the Rector presiding) to decide on the propriety of such promotions.

5th. That the students in the Commercial Department of the Lyceum should pursue the course of study specified in Appendix B, also to be considered obligatory. This would comprise a course of three years, leaving the 4th year optional with regard to a higher grade of instruction.

6th. That, should it be deemed expedient, the proposed scheme of studies might be introduced the next scholastic year, commencing with the 1st or Junior Class only, to be composed of those pupils who are qualified for admission to the Lyceum as *regular* students, in the terms above stated.

7th. That the present trifling payment exacted from the pupils of the preparatory School be also continued, but, as the new plan is successively introduced in the different Classes, the same should be increased to 4s. per mensem. This would also afford the means of allowing the additional Professors in the 4th year, a suitable gratification for extra services, without increasing the actual expenditure.

8th. That, not to clash too abruptly with the system that has of late obtained, or preclude the possibility of youths attending the Lyceum for the purpose of studying certain special branches at their own option, the present system should, in this respect, be allowed to continue, but the students thus coming under the denomination of "Irregular Students," should be called upon to pay 5s. per mensem for the convenience afforded them.

9th. That, with reference to Appendices A and B, the Greek language (ancient and modern) should not be considered obligatory. The Lyceum, under present circumstances, being essentially *Italian*, there are very few students in this branch, and of these none pursue a regular course with the intention of becoming Classical Scholars. Still, a special hour being assigned for this lesson in the time table, unconnected with the other engagements of the respective Classes, it is to be hoped that the students will not fail eventually to appreciate the importance of this branch of a liberal education. A majority of the Commission is also of opinion, that neither French nor Arabic should be considered obligatory.

10th. That, with a view to facilitate the practical acquisition of the English language, while so many advantages have hitherto been conceded exclusively to the Italian as the general medium of instruction, it would be advisable that English texts should be used in teaching history and geography in the 3rd and 4th Classes.

The Commission, in submitting these observations on the Lyceum, beg to state, that, actuated by the principles of good faith, they have suggested after mature deliberation, merely what in their opinion, and under the present circumstances of the Island, may be considered practicable in affording the youth of Malta a general European education that would enable them to acquit themselves honorably in any career that it may suit their interest or their inclination to follow. In closing this Report, however, the Commission strongly recommend the due observance of article 28 of the Statute, with regard to the system of inspection, to render which still more effective the number of non-official members should be increased. This would doubtless lead to further prospective improvements, harmonizing this Institution with those in other countries in accordance with the exigencies of the times.

Much has evidently been done of late years to improve the state of these Schools, in comparison with which the old and antiquated system may be said to sink into insignificance, but the march of intellect and the general spread of education have naturally led to an increased demand, proving that still more remains to be accomplished.

In this respect the Commission are of opinion that greater importance should be attached to the Schools of Design, Land-surveying, and Navigation, Schools which should afford many students a remunerative career in the exercise of a profession either in their native country or elsewhere.

In the School of Design, which should either be enlarged or conducted on different principles, the study seems limited to the mere copying of a few lithographic or other prints, a system that is not calculated either to create or to foster a taste for the Fine Arts.

With regard to the School of Land-surveying, a profession in which, *de facto* if not *de jure*, the "Perito Agrimensore" in this Country combines with the Surveyor and Appraiser, also the Builder and Civil Architect, and consequently exercises a direct influence over the judgment and the resources of his employers, to say nothing of the effects which his sworn "Perizie" must have in influencing the decisions of a Court of Justice, it must be remarked, that notwithstanding the many improvements successively introduced, the standard of attainments exacted at the examination of this Class of Practitioners is not supposed sufficiently to guarantee the interests of the community where landed property is concerned. To an imperfect knowledge of the Italian language, may be added, a very superficial acquaintance with purely elementary mathematics and of architecture, "nil"—that branch not being taught in the Lyceum. Nor can a year's practice under a licensed Land-surveyor educated in the same School, afford the student an opportunity of acquiring an adequate practical knowledge of his profession, as contemplated in the Regulations, but he is obliged, if ambitious of distinction, to seek extraneous aid derivable from private sources, a means of which all cannot avail themselves.

It is therefore suggested that the conditions of admission to the School of Land-surveying should be the four years' course proposed for the Lyceum, in which case the study of Latin might be considered optional, with a view to enable the student more assiduously to attend the drawing School, where it is hoped that measures will be taken to introduce the study of architecture.

In the School of Navigation the course of studies prescribed is sufficiently comprehensive in a professional point of view, but the Commission are not aware whether the plan of instruction in this department is fully carried out. In England and in France efforts have been made to raise the standard of the qualifications exacted from all who present themselves for examination as Masters in the Mercantile Navy, and if the students are properly prepared in their preliminary studies it is to be regretted that the mathematical branch of this department should be limited to a brief course of "Practical Geometry and Plane Trigonometry," while it is equally a cause of regret and surprise that after sixty-five years of British dominion in these Islands, even the First Class Masters in the Mercantile Marine who "are authorised to command Merchant Vessels navigating in any part of the world," should not as British subjects sailing under British Colours, be required to know a single syllable of the English language.

Malta, 23rd June 1865.

R. C. ROMER, *Colonel*,

EMILIO SCIBERRAS,

B. B. BAKER.

APPENDIX A.

Scheme of Studies proposed for the LYCEUM (strictly so called).

1st Year		2nd Year		3rd Year		4th Year	
Subject of Study	No. of Lessons Weekly	Subject of Study	No. of Lessons Weekly	Subject of Study	No. of Lessons Weekly	Subject of Study	No. of Lessons Weekly
Italian	6	Italian	6	Italian (comprising Rhetoric)	6	Rhetoric	3
English	6	English	6	English	3	English	3
Latin	6	Latin	3	Latin	3	Latin	3
Arithmetic	4	Mathematics	3	Mathematics	6	Mathematics	6
Geography	3	Geography	3	History (taught in English)	3	History (taught in English)	3
Writing	3	History	3	French (optional)	6	Logic	2
French (optional)	2	French (optional)	6	Greek (optional)	3	Physics	2
						Chemistry	2
						Natural History	2
						Greek (optional)	3

* These lectures are to be considered as independent of the respective courses now given in the Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, and intended merely for those students who do not proceed beyond the course of studies in the Lyceum, of which that Faculty should be the completion.

Proposed Time Table of the LYCEUM (strictly so called).

(Subject to such alterations as may be rendered necessary by special circumstances).

Days	Years	Morning			Afternoon		
		Hours			Hours		
		8 to 9 30	9 30 to 11	11 to 12 30	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4
Monday	4th	Rhetoric	History	Mathematics		Greek	Logic
	3rd	English	Mathematics	History		French	Rhetoric
	2nd	English	Italian	Latin		Mathematics	French
	1st	Italian	English	Arithmetic		Latin	Geography
Tuesday	4th	English	Latin	Mathematics		Physics	Natural History
	3rd	Italian	Mathematics	Latin		French	Greek
	2nd	English	Italian	Geography		History	French
	1st	Italian	English	French		Latin	Writing
Wednesday	4th	Rhetoric	History	Mathematics			Chemistry
	3rd	English	Mathematics	History		French	Rhetoric
	2nd	English	Italian	Latin		Mathematics	French
	1st	Italian	English	Arithmetic		Latin	Geography
Thursday	4th	English	Latin	Mathematics		Greek	Logic
	3rd	Italian	Mathematics	Latin		French	Greek
	2nd	English	Italian	Geography		History	French
	1st	Italian	English	Arithmetic		Latin	Writing
Friday	4th	Rhetoric	History	Mathematics		Physics	Natural History
	3rd	English	Mathematics	History		French	Rhetoric
	2nd	English	Italian	Latin		Mathematics	French
	1st	Italian	English	French		Latin	Geography
Saturday	4th	English	Latin	Mathematics		Greek	Chemistry
	3rd	Italian	Mathematics	Latin		French	Greek
	2nd	English	Italian	Geography		History	French
	1st	Italian	English	Arithmetic		Latin	Writing

Drawing School,—open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in order to afford the students time to attend when their regular classes are not engaged.
 Arabic,—taught at the same hours as usual.

APPENDIX B.

Scheme of Studies proposed for the Commercial Department of the LYCEUM.

1st Year		2nd Year		3rd Year	
Subject of Study	No. of Lessons Weekly	Subject of Study	No. of Lessons Weekly	Subject of Study	No. of Lessons Weekly
Italian	6	Italian	6	Italian (comprising Rhetoric)	6
English	6	English	6	English	3
Arithmetic	4	*Arithmetic (Mercantile)	3	History (taught in English)	3
Geography	3	Geography	3	(Book-keeping	6
Writing	6	History	3	Mercantile Transactions	3
French (optional)	2	French (optional)	6	French (optional)	6
				Greek (optional)	3

* There being a special Teacher for these branches, his lessons would not interfere with those in the Mathematical Department.

Time Table. COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENT.

Days	Years	Morning			Afternoon		
		Hours			Hours		
		8 to 9 30	9 30 to 11	11 to 12 30	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4
Monday	3rd	English	Book-keeping	History		French	Rhetoric
	2nd	English	Italian			Mercantile arithmetic	French
	1st	Italian	English	Arithmetic		Writing	Geography
Tuesday	3rd	Italian	Book-keeping	Mercantile operations		French	Greek
	2nd	English	Italian	Geography		History	French
	1st	Italian	English	French			Writing
Wednesday	3rd	English	Book-keeping	History		French	Rhetoric
	2nd	English	Italian			Mercantile arithmetic	French
	1st	Italian	English	Arithmetic		Writing	Geography
Thursday	3rd	Italian	Book-keeping	Mercantile operations		French	Greek
	2nd	English	Italian	Geography		History	French
	1st	Italian	English	Arithmetic			Writing
Friday	3rd	English	Book-keeping	History		French	Rhetoric
	2nd	English	Italian			Mercantile arithmetic	French
	1st	Italian	English	French		Writing	Geography
Saturday	3rd	Italian	Book-keeping	Mercantile operations		French	Greek
	2nd	English	Italian	Geography		History	French
	1st	Italian	English	Arithmetic			Writing