

GOVERNMENT CENTRAL SCHOOL,
HONGKONG, 13th January, 1879.

SIR,—I have the honour to forward to you the Annual Report for the Central School for 1878.
2. On the departure of Mr. STEWART for England on leave, several important changes were made in the Staff of the School. The first was the separation of the duties of the Inspector of Schools from those of the Head Master; the second, the appointment of Mr. ARTHUR as the Acting Second Master, and of Mr. MURRAY late of the Independent College, Taunton, as Fifth Master, in order to compensate for the absence of Mr. BALL, who in consequence of illness was permanently incapacitated for duty. In November, Mr. PIERCY, the Fourth Master, acting on the advice of his medical adviser, resigned, and Mr. MCKINNEY, of the Surveyor General's Department, was at once transferred to the School.

3. It was natural to expect that these numerous changes would inconvenience and retard the progress of the School to a certain extent; I have however to report that the various masters speedily settled down to their work, and the work went steadily forward without interruption.

4. As the absence through sickness among the Staff has been less than in former years, and as the duties of the Inspector of Schools did not trench upon the time of the Head Master, the work according to the time-table was more continuous, and therefore a higher standard at the annual examinations just concluded has been attained. I have reason also to anticipate in the year upon which we have entered even a higher degree of attainment, when the School derives the full advantages of the services of Mr. MAY, who has been recently appointed to the Third Master-ship vacated by Mr. BALL.

5. A steady attempt has been made to facilitate the acquirement of English Speaking during the year. I may mention that it has always been a rule of the School that English Masters in front of their classes were on no account to speak Chinese unless compelled. In addition to this, an entry to the following effect has been made in the time-table, that in every lesson, whether taught by an English Master, or a Chinese Assistant Master, questioning in English was to be employed not only as a test, but in order to facilitate the acquisition of Colloquial English. In the lower classes, the progress, in Colloquial, as far as regards the subject matter of their lessons, has been most marked. I even attribute the high marks obtained by the pupils in the written examinations partially to this source. The amount of matter read this year may not have equalled that of previous years, but the comprehension of what has been read has been far more general over all the classes, as the papers in translation from English into Chinese and from Chinese into English sufficiently show.

6. In the first class I insisted upon the repetition of from six to eight lines from Standard prose authors every morning. This I made the subject of conversation either between the boys and myself or between the boys themselves. By this means I was able to provide subject matter for practice in English Speaking. The result so far has been satisfactory, I anticipate that when the system has had time to develop, and the boys now forming the lower classes have been duly promoted to the Upper School, that English Speaking will become very much more general provided that the boys remain sufficiently long at School for the purpose. I also have devoted an hour a week for Colloquial through

7. At the oral examinations, I have endeavoured to give practical lessons in the art of teaching to the pupil Teachers. If time were at my disposal, these lessons could be formed into a regular method class, where candidates for the English Vernacular Schools recently established might be trained.

8. The attendance for the year is almost the same as that of last year, as far as figures are concerned, but when we take into consideration the fact that all applications for admission since September have been refused, and that therefore the places have left during the same period have not been filled up, the improvement in the average attendance has been very considerable, the average daily attendance for the year being 430.80 as against 431 of last year. It is necessary, however, to explain here that a large number of boys enrolled this year is 608 against 610 of last year. This is necessary, however, to explain of these left at the beginning of the year to enter the Chinese Government Service and for other reasons, therefore only by the improved regularity of the remainder that the high average attendance can be accounted for.

9. It is to be noted that 47 boys were rendered homeless by the recent fire.

10. During the last few months the hours for English were changed on the ground that the school was almost completely destroyed. Formerly the hours were from 8 to 11 A.M. instead of from 9 A.M. to 2 A.M. in the morning. By this arrangement an interval between 8 and 9 in the morning was available, and as the school was now being entirely surrounded by Chinese houses, any amenity and quietness it may once have enjoyed was completely destroyed. From the commencement of School at 6 A.M. to 2 A.M. in the following morning, the school was subjected to a succession of noises in the neighbourhood. No less than 29 vociferous hawkers have been seen in the space of two hours. It frequently has been our experience that after spending nearly an hour in the school to find the whole effect of the lesson lost by a disturbance in the street regarding a few cash.

11. I have to state that he has sent men to prevent these occurrences, but five minutes after the policemen were called I was as noisy as ever. I beg to suggest that the same plan be adopted as in previous years, especially appointed to warn hawkers of the great annoyance that is caused by them during and after the school hours.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,
ALEXANDER FALCONER,
Acting Head Master.

Schools,
&c., &c.

T NOTIFICATION.

received at this Office up to Wednesday, the 9th instant, of the Praya Wall opposite

for Gilman. The specifications may be seen at the Surveyor General's Office, where further particulars may be obtained.

The Government will not bind itself to accept the lowest, or any Tender.

By Command,
W. H. MARSH,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Hongkong, 31st March, 1879.

號九十七第報憲

輔政使司馬
招投承事照得現在招
人投承事照得現在招
街對開之海墘其票在
署收截限收至英四月初
九日禮拜三正午止截凡
欲看該形圖及作工章程
者可赴工務司署詢問便
知詳細各票價值不論低
昂國家非定取價賤者或
總棄而不取
三月卅一日示
一千八百七十九年