

Reginald Rothwell Wilson, 4, 6, 9, East Adelaide Public School; Amy Gladys Wilton, 4, 6, 9, 10, Moonta Continuation School; Helen Wolfe, 3, 4, 7, 9, Subiaco State School; Darcy Newton Wollaston, 4, 6, Mount Barker Public School; Robert Keith Wood, 9, 10, Prince Alfred College; Mina Woods, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, Subiaco State School; John Woodward, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, Perth Boys' School; Netta Gwendoline Wright, 3, 4, 9, Perth Girls' School; Vera Wright, 4, 6, Parkside Public School; Evelyn Margurta Yeaman, 3, 4, Auburn Public School; Albert Roy Yeo, 4, 6, 9, St. Peter's Collegiate School; Ralf Blake-ner Young, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, Norwood Public School.

EXAMINERS' REPORTS.

UNCONSCIOUS HUMOUR.

The reports of the examiners are as follows:—

—Primary English.—

Candidates should study the instructions before beginning work. There was too much writing in the margin, and parts of questions were scattered about the book without any numbers attached. Carelessness was responsible for many mistakes in spelling, the very words used in the questions being often misspelt. Punctuation was weak. In most cases the fault lay in the absence of full stops and notes of interrogation; but in many instances commas were put between a preposition and its case or a verb and its object. This seems to be due to an effort on the part of some teachers to correct the common lack of stops. The use of the abbreviation for "and" was still a flaw in many essays, and entailed the loss of marks, but in this respect the South Australian papers showed a decided improvement. An impression seems to prevail that a lone essay will make up for the entire neglect of other parts of the paper. A good essay does atone for some weakness, but quantity without quality counts for little. As usual there was seldom any evidence of thought before writing or of correction after it. A great improvement was noticeable in the correction of faulty sentences, and glaring errors in parsing were not so common. In the second part of question 2 it was clearly necessary to state what parts of speech "more" and "so" were in the sentences. To parse "so" as a noun in the imaginary sentence "He began his speech with a 'so'" is simply equivalent to saying that "word" is a noun. The analysis was very weak, with some brilliant exceptions. Many candidates took no trouble to understand the meaning of the whole sentence before attempting to divide it into its component parts. Much time was wasted in giving a detailed analysis. On the whole the standard of work was not as high as it was last year, for a large number entered who had no right to expect to satisfy the examiner. It is probable, too, that in the absence of a textbook or other means of defining the work expected, candidates neglect English grammar for other subjects.

—Primary History.—

The Anglo-Saxon institutions, on the whole, were well described, but the use of the historic present frequently resulted in a ludicrous imitation of Mr. Gillies's descriptions. The most serious deficiency in the papers this year was the absence of historical perspective. The textbook deals very clearly with the course of most of the great movements, and the examiner expected that knowledge of these would be sufficiently distinct to avoid confusion of events separated by centuries. The question concerning the rise of the labourers in the fourteenth century was frequently dealt with as if the religious revival of the eighteenth century were part of the movement. The names of Wycliffe, Whitfield, and Wesley were mingled in the same sentence, and Wilberforce was credited by many with relieving the oppressed villeins. The changes from villeinage to free labour and the growth of the factory system are two important phases in the development of social life in England which must not be confused. There was much guessing as to the causes of the Peninsular war, and the battles in Spain were frequently confused with those fought by Marlborough a century earlier. The question which asked for notes on the four great Englishmen produced a remarkable crop of generalities. A candidate might as well say nothing of Capt. Cook as say that "he was very generous and kind, and was liked by all who knew him," and had far better leave the question unattempted than to write—"Milton is sometimes referred to as one of the Lake poets, because he visited Coleridge in the Lake district so often." An unconscious humorist affirmed that "Walter Raleigh croqueted with

Queen Elizabeth," and a very careless candidate said, "Sir Walter Raleigh fought 53 Spanish ships in the Revenge, and when he was taken prisoner said—'Here die I Sir Richard Grenville.'" So again—"Walpole was not afraid to face the fiery eyes of death," and "Walpole lifted England from a small island up into a large one." A little reflection on such answers will serve to show that the written work of the candidates needs more supervision. If they wrote less and thought more carefully there would not be so many blue pencil marks to lower the percentage in the final estimate of the papers.

—Primary Geography.—

More care should be taken to describe accurately the exact positions of places. In this connection map drawing should be more generally practised, and lists of names committed to memory are of doubtful educational value. Not a few papers gave evidence of this mere learning by rote. For example, in the map required by question 2 the rivers of Australia were shown in correct sequence, but in inverse order. In question 1, which asked that 10 of the principal seaports in England and Wales should be "accurately defined," the counties in which these seaports are situated were seldom mentioned. Many candidates failed to show a proper appreciation of the meaning of density of population as compared with absolute population. Some stated that the reason New South Wales had a predominant population was because it "began with a convict stock;" others erroneously regarded the population of Victoria as in excess of that of New South Wales, at the same time ascribing this to "the number of politicians frequenting the Federal capital." The spelling of geographical names was usually very careless, and it would seem that this part of the subject does not receive adequate attention. Some names are systematically misspelt. From year to year about half the candidates spell Glasgow as "Glasgow." One candidate stated that "Glasgow was a town noted for its glass industry."

—Primary Greek.—

As a whole, the Greek papers were fairly satisfactory. Some of the better candidates produced some really good work, while most of the failures even were not quite as hopeless as in the case of the Latin. The translation from Greek into English was generally well done, but there is much room for improvement in the translation from English into Greek. Most of the candidates failed to realize the difference between the force of the aorist tense and that of the imperfect. The fact that a subject in the neuter plural requires its predicate in the singular in Greek was forgotten by the majority. "Hodos" was frequently written "odds," and "horos" "oros," not to mention the wrong spiritus on the definite article. Though one can hardly expect primary candidates to have thoroughly mastered all the peculiarities of Greek accentuation, a little oral teaching would soon familiarize them with the difference between the rough and the smooth breathing on Greek vowels. In question 7 several lost marks through want of precision. It is a delusion to suppose that vague statements, such as "the one means every city, the other all the city," will pass muster. In many papers the spelling of English words was careless, such errors as "wip," "faired," "accusitive," "genative," "talents" for "talons," being common. More attention, too, should be paid to the formation of the Greek characters, as in several instances it was very hard to decipher them.

—Primary Latin.—

Though there were a few excellent papers the work on the whole in this subject was decidedly poor. In a very large number of the papers there was a sad lack of method in the arrangement of the answers. In some there was absolutely nothing to show the transition from one question to the next, and in others answers to different parts of the same question were so mixed up that it was difficult to find them. Instead of answering questions 3 and 4 in tabular form, many gave the examiner much trouble by repeating for each of the forms required a formula after the style of "the nominative singular masculine of the comparative of 'celer' equals 'celerior.'" Writing out the whole as if it were a piece of contiguous prose. The translation of the Latin sentences was, generally speaking, fairly satisfactory, though many of the weaker candidates had recourse to wild guessing, with disastrous results. So many came to grief over part of question 1 that the examiner was led to suppose that the story in the textbook from which it was taken verbatim had not been studied. The translation from English into Latin was, with but few exceptions, very bad. This was owing not so much to a lack of vocabulary as to an utter inability to apply grammatical rules. Inflectional endings were hopelessly confused, and

very elementary rules of syntax had not been mastered. There was much carelessness, too, in the spelling of Latin words that were evidently familiar. Even such words as "Caesar" and "Graecia," which were printed in the questions, were misspelt, while not a few wrote "Quintus" for "Balbus." The very large proportion of incorrect answers to question 3 showed that candidates had not been properly drilled in the declensions. The same remarks apply to question 6. With regard to question 7 the examiner wishes to remark that those who marked all the quantities long or all short indiscriminately on the chance that some would be correct obtained no marks. Quite a large number of the candidates seemed to have no idea as to what "marking the quantity of a vowel" means, as such answers as "the e in videtur has an airy sound," "the e in videtur is the second vowel" testify.

—Primary Geometry.—

In the answers to the practical portion of the paper the chief faults were lack of accuracy and insufficiency of constructional detail. For instance, in question 1 the angles set off by protractor were very frequently inaccurate to the extent of 1 deg., and in question 3 the angle A as drawn by most candidates differed from 75 deg. by 1 deg. to 3 deg. As examples of the second fault the following may be cited:—In question 3 there was often no indication of the way in which the base was bisected and the median constructed, while in question 5 very few showed any construction for the drawing of one line parallel to another. The weakest point in the book work was the proof by superposition in question 6. Even candidates who appeared to have some comprehension of the method did not take sufficient care in describing how the triangles should be fitted together to ensure coincidence, and a large proportion had no clear ideas of the method at all. The last question was answered better than was expected, though many merely asserted without argument that the angle ADC was greater than the angle DAC, apparently because it looked so.

R. J. M. CLUCAS, Secretary to the Board.