

The President and Members of Finance Committee,  
School of Mines and Industries,  
BALLARAT

Gentlemen,

In compliance with the request of the Finance Committee of the School Council that I should investigate the practices observed in Melbourne Technical and Geelong Schools in connexion with Office administration, School Libraries, Book stall and sales of sundry stationery etc. to students, Roll marking etc. I have to report having inspected various centres on the 24th., 25th., and 26th. August.

Each of the four schools visited, has in a general way, adopted methods best suited to its own requirements. Each has some ways of its own - improvements on the others which, collectively, could be usefully adopted by all. The school libraries at the Working Men's College, Geelong, Swinburne and Ballarat are, more or less, controlled by various members of School Teaching Staff without any uniform method of indexing and minus the tabulating of various references to various books on the same subject-matter.

This is important in the saving of much time otherwise wasted by the reader in a fruitless search for details which, after all, may not be contained in the library shelves. None of the foregoing schools observed a satisfactory and economical method.

Prahran Technical School Library is a good example of the facilities offered to students to be placed into almost immediate touch with all the data available. A young lady (junior) is employed as Librarian at a salary of fifteen shillings per week. Her duties embrace a control of the Library, two or three small card index systems, an examination of the books before and after lending, with registration.

All members of the School Teaching Staff act as readers and each article, or any particular subject considered worthy of recording, is noted and a slip with references thereto is handed to the Librarian to be recorded in turn on the appropriate index card.

A card on "House Decoration" for instance may refer the reader to a dozen or more articles in various books and various pages of books and the reader could be assured that any further search would not be rewarded.

The staff members realize the importance and value of thus examining and reading their text books. It is altogether efficient and, in comparison with the best public libraries, gives the maximum of what is required, immediately.

Mr. Catannach, Principal of the Prahran School, expressed an entire satisfaction of this method adding that both staff and students make much use of the library for class-work in Art subjects particularly and for home-reading by students.

Mr. Dean (Education Department) Chief Inspector of Art Schools, with whom I discussed the question of School Libraries, strongly approves of the methods observed at Prahran and suggested that we could not do much better than adopt this system.

B Book-Stall, Stationery and supplies for students class-work was examined at each School -

Swinburne Technical College, Glenferrie contains the best example for all - I mention "best" because all the others, including Ballarat, are beset with a waste of time by staff in overlapping, diffusion of effort, and duplication of work which could be efficiently dealt with by the installation of a Book-Stall and Supplies housed on the School premises similar to that at Swinburne.