

lated to raise the standard of efficiency in the more essential subjects. I am convinced that during the past year, from this cause alone, the character of the instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic has deteriorated. Unless more time is allotted to the reading lesson during the next year than has been done during the past, I fear the results in this important subject will, in many schools, be disastrous. The schools as a whole are, I believe, continuing to do good useful work. In most of them the instruction is fairly sound, and the results satisfactory. Of the 43 schools, I consider there are 27 fairly satisfactory; and, of the rest, 10 are above the average in management and results, and 6 are far below the average, and are to be looked upon as unsatisfactory. Singing is taught in 15 schools, in 6 of which the instruction is good. Freehand drawing is taught in 33 schools, being well taught in 6. Very elementary instruction is given in the outlines of physics or physiology in 23 schools—the instruction being satisfactory in 8—but there has been very little real experimental teaching. Twenty-one schools teach sewing, the work being exceedingly good in 7, and best of all in the Mount Cook Girls' School, which alone presented the work for each standard, according to the form prescribed. Instruction in drill is given in 24 schools; and in 13, including all the boys' schools of the City of Wellington, the instruction is decidedly efficient. Of the eight schools in the City of Wellington, the Mount Cook Girls' School produced the best results at the late examination, having passed 250 candidates out of 289 presented. The Mount Cook Infant School fully maintains its high and widespread reputation. In the Thorndon Infant School instruction is satisfactorily given; but the special character of the Mount Cook Infant management is wanting. The Terrace School again produced good results, and it now ranks as one of the best of the city schools. The work throughout the Te Aro School has very much improved, and the results are satisfactory. The passes in the Thorndon School, this year, show a falling-off. The absence of the headmaster for six months, and the exceedingly crowded state of the building, will largely account for this. Owing to the high classification in the past, this school still contains the greatest number of Fifth and Sixth Standard children. At the time of my visit the working condition of the temporary Newtown School was thoroughly unsatisfactory. The teacher has since been removed, and I have every reason to believe the new school is now under good management. Owing to the change in the headmastership, the work of the Mount Cook Boys' School has been much disturbed. I think the present headmaster will raise its position; it now appears in good working order, and I trust the next examination will show improved results. In this and the Thorndon School, large classes presented in Standard IV., and many presented in other standards, failed altogether. I shall again touch on this subject in speaking of the standards. The work, however, in several classes, was manifestly defective in method and character. The condition of the eight City schools, at the time of my visit, may be thus summarized: Good, 3; satisfactory, 4; unsatisfactory, 1. The table of results, included in this report, will show the classification of each school. Of the eight district-town schools, a very striking improvement was manifest in the management and working results of the Greytown and Carterton Schools. Masterton is the only one which is at all unsatisfactory. Here a very large class of 40 candidates, for Standard IV., were unprepared; and much of the work, especially the writing, was of an inferior order. The discipline was also weak. The master is, nevertheless, hardworking and capable of doing good work. The instruction in the upper class, taught by himself, was, as usual, of a good order, especially the reading. Four extra subjects, and most of the ordinary subjects, were exceedingly well presented in the Featherston School, which ranks highest of the district-town schools. The work in the Carterton School was characterized by its exceeding neatness, and the writing was all that could be desired. All the candidates of Standards V. and VI. in Featherston and Carterton passed well. The condition of the eight district-town schools may be thus stated: Good, 2; satisfactory, 5; unsatisfactory, 1. Of the 18 country schools, that at Waihinga is the best taught. The writing at the Taita and Waihinga was excellent. The new schools at Mungaroa, Judgeford, and Park Vale are successfully established, and are all in good hands. Tawa, Pauatahanui, Fernridge, and Matarawa continue to do very creditable work. The remaining schools are more or less satisfactory, except Karori, Makara, and Johnsonville. At Karori the discipline and management were, as usual, weak, and the instruction in the upper classes exceedingly defective. At Makara the instruction generally is of the poorest order. The condition of the eighteen country schools may be thus summed up: Good, 3; satisfactory, 10; unsatisfactory, 3. Of the nine remaining small schools, two—Gladstone and Tenui—although they are by no means in an unsatisfactory condition, showed a falling-off from last year's results. The schools at Kaiwairua and Korokoro had improved very much. The condition of the whole may be thus stated: Good, 1; satisfactory, 7; unsatisfactory, 1. I am sorry to find there is much unsound teaching and bad method in the instruction of the lower-standard, and sometimes, especially in arithmetic, in the higher-standard, work of large schools. This arises partly from want of knowledge or training on the part of the subordinate teachers, and partly on account of weaknesses in the management. Among the many causes of failure in preparing for standard examinations the following may be enumerated: Bad classification at starting; want of reclassification, say every quarter; omission of parts of the programme, such as the composition required for Standard III., certain rules in arithmetic for Standard IV., and numeration; the subjects not having been covered in time to allow for revision and sufficient practice; bad judgment in estimating the amount and style of work required; the unsound character of the teaching, say in copy-writing and pronunciation; method of instruction by junior teachers not criticised by the headmaster; want of frequent test examinations by headmaster; work ill-conditioned; discipline weak; absence of oral and class inductive teaching; leaning too much on text-books; bad methods (especially in arithmetic); and pupils not being practised in answering examination-papers as to neatness, order, and quantity. In home-lesson work there is sometimes no variety whatever, and the exercise-books are often in very bad form. I fear many head-teachers are too much in their seats, and too seldom in front of classes giving instructions either to aid the pupils or to guide the teachers. Much valuable time appears to be frittered away in attending to visitors, in petty matters which could be committed to messengers or pupil-teachers, and in the keeping of registers and making-up of returns. I recommend the City School Committees to hold annually, as in Dunedin, an exhibition of school work, and to give prizes for, say, neat exercise-books, drawings, sewing, map-drawing, writing; and, if possible, for mental