

some high authorities, and I doubt not that there are circumstances and communities where prize-giving may be comparatively free from the evil with which (in my opinion) it is here surrounded. In this district there are scarcely any private schools, and children of all classes sit on the same benches. At the distribution of prizes it not unfrequently and very naturally happens that the children of the better educated and more prosperous parents are the gainers of the prizes, and there are, unfortunately, not a few persons ever ready to attribute this to undue favour shown to one class over another. The following is the opinion expressed by a well-known authority on school matters on the subject of prizes: "But it is of importance to know if it be advantageous to education that we force it, or stimulate it by artificial means, by rewards, distinctions, or distribution of prizes; and it is of especial importance to know whether this artificial emulation ought to be employed in schools for the people. The question thus stated I do not hesitate to answer in the negative. . . . It is not allowable to sacrifice the least of the pupils to cause others to make rapid progress; and still less to nourish bad passions in them for the benefit of instruction alone. Any means which might benefit the majority at the expense of several others, or even of a single one, ought to be rejected as immoral. By awarding public prizes to success there is a danger of filling the strong with vanity and pride, of overworking the middling, and of entirely discouraging the weak."

In comparing the results at the different schools as tabulated, attention should be directed to the columns showing the average age of the classes and the percentage of marks obtained. A school that passes all the scholars presented with a low percentage of marks is not to be supposed superior to one in which a few failures occur if the percentage of marks in the latter case be considerably higher. Of course reference must be made to the number of scholars presented; and after all, as I and others have repeatedly pointed out, there are many marks of excellence which cannot appear in a table of results, and the ability to answer correctly a few questions in the different subjects of the programme is not the only nor even the chief object to be aimed at by a really conscientious teacher. Of course any great deficiency in this respect cannot be overlooked; but if the teacher, both by his example and his teaching, be successfully training his scholars in habits of order, obedience, industry, courtesy, and general morality, any slight inferiority in the tabulated results obtained at a single examination of his school may justly be leniently dealt with, and he may fairly be trusted to use every exertion to improve in this respect also. The total failure of the scholars presented in the Second and First Standards at two schools to which pupil-teachers have lately been appointed, shows clearly that the teachers have fallen into the not uncommon error of intrusting the work of those standards too much to the care of these young and inexperienced assistants; but as, under the regulations recently adopted, the employment of a pupil-teacher will be discontinued at both these schools, the same error cannot be repeated. The excellent results recorded in the case of the Kumara School are the more noteworthy, inasmuch as this is the only school in this district where every subject of the programme has its place on the time-table, and is regularly and systematically taught. In the case of the Hokitika School, I am convinced that the results would have been far better than they are, if proper steps had been earlier taken to procure an efficient assistant. The good position occupied by the candidates sent up from this school to the scholarship competition is one proof of excellent teaching. A still more convincing one is to be found in the fact that in the competition for Sir W. Fox's prize the two candidates at the head of the list for the district, including Westland, were scholars from this school, and that they were competing with pupils from the Education Districts of South Canterbury and Southland, and from the Counties of Clutha, Bruce, and Tuapeka. The results at Stafford, Cobden, and Paroa are also very creditable to the teachers of those schools. At Kynnersley a very good year's work has been done by the teacher, who has since left the district. The teacher at Red Jack's has also made a good commencement, every child presented having passed. The highest standard attempted here was the Third, in which one scholar was presented.

Elementary science has been taught at the schools, and with the results given below. I beg to suggest that for the future the branch of science to be taken up shall be the same at all schools, and shall be annually prescribed by the Board; and for the current year I recommend the adoption of Foster's Physiology.

RESULTS IN ELEMENTARY SCIENCE.

SCHOOLS.	STANDARD IV.			STANDARD V.			STANDARD VI.		
	Examined.	Passed.	Average Percentage of Marks.	Examined.	Passed.	Average Percentage of Marks.	Examined.	Passed.	Average Percentage of Marks.
Greymouth	...	...	...	20	9	46	8	6	53
Hokitika	...	...	...	30	29	80	10	10	81
Kumara	22	17	57	20	17	66	2	2	53
Stafford	19	2	35	10	8	71	2	1	44
Goldsborough	...	...	...	8	...	9	...	...	...
Kanieri	14	...	11	4	...	25	...	...	...
Brunnerton	...	...	...	3	3	75	...	...	...
Cobden	...	...	...	3	3	67	4	4	82
Maori Gully	...	...	...	5	...	35	1	1	72

Drawing was taken up at Ross, Kumara, Kanieri, and Woodstock, the junior class drawing on slates, and the fourth, fifth, and sixth on paper. The slate drawing was not, in my opinion, quite so good as last year. The copies were prepared by Mr. Rae, of Greymouth, and the work of the upper standards was examined by him. He reports to the effect that the work on the whole was not equal