

the passes obtained are only 20 per cent. on the school-roll. I take five other schools, where the teaching is efficient, and where the absent pupils are less than one-fourth: the number of passes obtained in these schools is 55 per cent. This shows conclusively that teaching capacity can produce good results from low attendances and better results when the attendance improves. It also shows that good attendance on the part of the pupils will not produce good results unless the teachers are in every way fit for their work and perform it. Efforts are now being made by the Board, through Committees and teachers, to secure more regular attendance by the issue of daily notices to parents calling attention to the absence of their children, and asking for greater regularity of attendance in the future. This action, I am glad to say, has already produced a good effect in improving the attendance.

INSPECTION.—It is impossible to estimate the results of the teaching in our schools without efficient inspection. The duties of an Inspector are of a very difficult character, especially where many of the teachers require hints as to methods of teaching and the general conduct of their schools. The task of gauging the capacity of the pupils is also one of no small difficulty, so that justice may be done both to teachers and pupils. Progress has undoubtedly been made in our schools, as is shown by the increase of Inspector's marks and the increase of passes per cent. on the school-roll. This is due to the efforts of the teachers and to co-operation and help given by the Inspector. The Inspector's marks for 1884 show an average for the whole schools of 55.9 on those examined; while for 1885 the percentage rose to 62.2. In 1884 the passes showed a percentage of 22.3 on the school-roll; in 1885 it increased to 33.1. In 1884 the percentage of passes obtained on those examined was 53.3; in 1885 it increased to 75.1. These results show that progress has been made during the year; and if better attendance can be secured during the current year more hopeful results will be obtained in the future.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—Four scholarships were competed for during the year, two for boys and two for girls. The number of candidates was nine boys and nine girls. The boys' scholarships were awarded to George Ryan and John Edward Wilson; and the girls' scholarships to Alice Hendry and Marion Cooper. The number of scholarships now held is eight public scholarships, and two private ones offered by the Hon. H. Scotland, M.L.C.

DRAWING.—It is a matter of regret that the rudiments of drawing are not more generally taught in our primary schools. In every calling in life the capacity to make or understand a plan or drawing of work to be done is useful, and in many cases absolutely essential to make a skilled workman or workwoman. As the rudimentary part can be taught almost as easily as writing, the only reason why drawing is not more extensively taught is the want of special knowledge on the part of teachers generally. Books are now supplied by the Government and by private enterprise very cheaply, and there is no longer any excuse why this important branch of technical education should be neglected.

ELEMENTARY SCIENCE.—It is, no doubt, very desirable that elementary science should to a certain extent be taught in our schools; but the difficulties in the way of teaching science thoroughly in our primary schools seem almost insuperable, and if not taught thoroughly it is a mere waste of time, to the disadvantage of more essential primary teaching. The bulk of our children leave school before they master the Fourth Standard, leaving but few over the age of thirteen capable of really understanding such elementary science as is taught by Professor Bickerton's "Materials for Lessons in Elementary Science." For want of special training, few teachers are capable of teaching even the elements, and those who are capable cannot do so effectively without performing the experimental part before the pupils to fix the facts on their memory. For these reasons elementary science can only be taught with advantage in central schools to the higher standards, if proper facilities are provided by the Board.

SINGING.—Singing is not generally taught in our schools. This is much to be regretted, as the capacity to sing by note is a mode of cultivating the intelligence that tends to promote cheerful homes, create social amusements of an innocent character, and is calculated to raise the tone of society by promoting good manners, and generally elevating the masses. It is therefore to be hoped that greater attention will be given to this educational aid in the future.

SEWING.—This important branch of female education is well taught in some of the schools, indifferently taught in others, and wholly untaught in many schools, owing to the absence of a teacher capable of giving the necessary instruction. The Board proposes to remedy this defect during the current year, in schools where there is no female teacher, by obtaining special assistance for teaching sewing during two days of the week where local teachers can be obtained at reasonable rates of remuneration.

BUILDINGS.—During the year a large new school has been built at Inglewood, replacing two small inconvenient buildings. A commodious school has also been built at Fitzroy, and one at Huirangi. A large number of teachers' residences are required throughout the district. If these could be provided for, the Board could obtain more suitable teachers for many of the schools; but the small building grant placed at the disposal of the Board renders it impossible. New schools are required at Bell Block and Upper Waiongona, and the enlargement of the Stratford and Frankley Road schools. These being of the most pressing necessity, the Board proposes during the current year to make provision for these works. Large demands are also made for repairs, such as fencing, painting, lining, and roofing of schools and school residences. The Board regrets that many urgent works of this character will have to stand over owing to the absence of money available for such purposes.

COMMITTEES.—The majority of the School Committees in the district take great interest in school matters. In many cases local contributions are made for painting the schools, planting school grounds, repairing and erecting fences. It is essential for the benefit of education that this aid should be more largely given in all cases, as the Board's funds are inadequate to give a capita- tion grant to Committees and at the same time make extra grants for other local purposes. Al-