

the Norsewood School District, who are kept from school in consequence of the inoperativeness of the Education Act, which the Committee have introduced, but which has been found to be unworkable. Should clause 6 of the amended Education Act of 1885 be carried out, as I sincerely trust it will be, by School Committees, the above-named schools will require further additions during the coming year. With regard to light, ventilation, internal arrangement, and suitability of out-offices, the recent school additions are in every way satisfactory, and form a favourable contrast with the earlier buildings erected in the district. The painting of the school-rooms, which has been commenced, is a step in the right direction, and must tend, as is already apparent in several schools, to improve the tastes of the children and to arouse their activity in this direction. Already in a number of schools the handiwork of the girls is being displayed by the erection of brackets and macrame draperies, and in a few instances ferns and flowering plants are carefully kept and tended by them. The neatest, cleanest, and best-arranged schools in the district are Waipawa, Hampden, Taradale, and Makatoku, which are models of what school-rooms ought to be.

Works Required.—There are now only three districts where the buildings used for school purposes are not the property of the Board. These are at Mohaka, Te Ongaonga, and Takapau. At Waerenga-a-hika the building which was erected several years back by the settlers, and afterwards conveyed to the Board, stands upon a Native-school reserve, and, as the lease of the land expires shortly, the removal of the building, which is scarcely fit for school purposes, will become a necessity. I have several times drawn attention to the desirability of acquiring a portion of a ten-acre confiscated block in the neighbourhood as a school site, as the population is rapidly increasing, and the school attendance is far too large to warrant the closing of the school. Such a result, however, must ensue unless something is soon done in the direction pointed out by me. It is to be regretted that a residence is not attached to a schoolhouse in each district. I am convinced that if the schools, more especially the schools in outlying districts, are to become efficient there must be a teacher's residence provided for each. Teachers of experience will not go into places where there is no suitable house accommodation, and where the only lodging-house is the country inn. It seems to me that the small country school might be made quite as attractive to teachers with growing families as the town school, if only a little foresight was shown in providing a suitable residence to each school, and a paddock where a horse and cow might be kept, so as to lessen the cost of living in the teacher's family. There are eleven schools without a residence, and there are three others where the buildings are in sad need of repairs.

Examinations.—The standard examinations, all of which I was able to complete before the beginning of the midsummer holidays, compare very favourably with the results of former years. In several districts the school work was hindered by the alterations and additions which were undertaken; but, on the other hand, few days were lost either from sickness or bad weather, both the weather and the general health of the pupils having been remarkably good throughout the year. There has been a satisfactory increase in the number of pupils presented for examination in standards; but what is of much greater importance, as showing the actual progress of education during the year, is the fact that the increase has taken place mostly in the higher standards. Although there were 250 fewer children presented in standards in 1884 than in 1885, I notice that there were more children examined in Standard I. in the former year than in the latter. Standard VI. shows the largest proportionate increase for the year, both in the number presented for examination and the number passed. At the date of my examination there were 4,401 pupils enrolled as attending school; 2,735, or 62·2 per cent., of these were deemed capable of being presented for examination in standards; fifty-three were re-presented in standards they had already passed, under rule 2 of the Government regulations dated June, 1884; and the remaining 1,613 were classed as infants, or as preparing for Standard I.

From the following table it will be seen that 2,641 of those presented in standards were present at the examination, and that 2,066 of them, or 75·5 per cent., passed the necessary tests:—

Standard.	Average Age.	Number presented in New Standards.			Number examined.			Number passed in New Standards.			Per-centage of Passes of those examined.	Per-centage of Passes for 1884.
		M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.		
Standard I. ...	8·8	421	441	862	405	425	830	332	361	693	83·5	87
Standard II. ...	10·2	393	332	725	384	325	709	294	279	573	80·8	78·6
Standard III. ...	11·1	269	238	507	262	232	494	198	177	375	75·9	81·8
Standard IV. ...	12·5	203	170	373	197	171	368	140	136	276	75·5	67·6
Standard V. ...	13·3	97	97	194	82	87	169	35	51	86	50·8	62
Standard VI. ...	13·1	41	33	74	40	31	71	34	29	63	88·7	70·5
Number re-presented in standards		1,424	1,311	2,735	1,370	1,271	2,641	1,033	1,033	2,066	75·5	...
Infants too young for standards		25	28	53	25	28	53					
		870	743	1,613	704	622	1,326					
		2,319	2,082	4,401	2,099	1,921	4,020					