

proper purpose. Each one of the subjects referred to can be better taught from the fullness of the teacher's own knowledge, combined with the power of making a lesson interesting. This is how botany had been taught at Cobden and Dobson Schools, with the result that pupils have a knowledge of the plant with its parts, instead of only the verbal description.

The reading generally does not yet show much effect from increased opportunity for practice, but in two schools at least considerable improvement was perceptible. In addition to the reading books already mentioned, new sets of readers and grammars were introduced at the beginning of this year: Longmans' New Readers, and Mason's Standard Grammars.

As some dissatisfaction has been expressed by parents on account of the change, I take the opportunity of giving the reasons for it: 1. To furnish a greater amount of practice in reading. 2. To promote better methods of teaching. 3. To dispense with the use of books printed in small type. 4. To secure uniformity in books throughout the district. Hitherto each teacher has used such books, excepting Readers, as seemed best to him, and consequently, when a child changed its school it had to change its books also.

I have, &c.,

The Chairman, Grey Education Board.

EDWARD T. ROBINSON, Inspector.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR THE WHOLE DISTRICT.

Standard Classes.	Presented.	Absent.	Excepted.	Failed.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.	
						Yrs.	mos.
Above Standard VI. ...	18	...	...	...	...	...	...
Standard VI. ...	89	6	3	27	53	14	1
" V. ...	127	11	5	55	56	13	5
" IV. ...	223	22	10	61	130	12	5
" III. ...	252	11	12	77	152	10	11
" II. ...	249	17	3	37	192	9	8
" I. ...	219	10	8	53	148	8	9
Preparatory ...	569	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ...	1,746	77	41	310	731	*	

* Mean of average age, 11 years 6 months.

WESTLAND.

SIR,—

I have the honour to present my fifteenth annual report on the condition of primary education in the District of Westland.

Thirty schools have been in operation during the past year, six small schools having been opened since the last annual examination. Four of these were open so short a time before the date fixed for the examination that I did not think it advisable to examine them this year. The number of schools examined was therefore twenty-six, and the total roll number was 1,707. Last year the roll number was 1,790, with twenty-four schools. This appears to confirm the statement made in the Board's last annual report, to the effect that the number of children in the district is steadily decreasing; but, though the number of children in the Board's schools has undoubtedly become less, this may be partly traced to the increased efforts of one section of the community to establish schools of their own. Three such schools have been opened (or reopened) lately—at Ross, Kanieri, and Kumara respectively—and these have necessarily taken some scholars from the Board's schools. The actual decrease in the attendance during the past year is rather over $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The number presented, exclusive of those in the preparatory classes, was 1,154, or about $67\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the roll number, so that, with a decrease of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the roll number, there is an increase of $1\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. in the number of scholars above Class P. Excluding those who had already passed Standard VI., 1,117 scholars were presented for examination, but, 82 of these being absent, the number actually examined was 1,035; and 29 were "exceptions." The number of absentees on examination days amounted to 7.3 per cent. of the number presented and 4.8 per cent. of the roll number, both rates being a little lower than last year, though still considerably above the New Zealand average. The absentees were most numerous in the Fourth and Fifth Standards. The total number of "passes" this year was 804, or 80 per cent., which is about equal to the average of the whole colony last year, and an advance of 3 per cent. on our own results for the same period. Table 3 [not reprinted] gives the results of the late examination in all standards at every school, with the average age of the scholars who passed, and the average percentage of marks gained by the whole class. The last four columns on the right-hand side of the table give the final results of the whole examination; the last of all being supposed to give approximately the numbers expressive of the relative efficiency of the several schools. As they stand, however, like all other figures, they can be made to appear to prove anything. It is necessary to divide the schools into at least two classes, one to include all schools having more than one teacher (counting pupil-teachers and monitors). It would be manifestly absurd, for instance, to assume that Mapourika is a better school than Arahura Road because the combined result of the former is higher than that of the latter. I have therefore arranged the schools of the first division in the following table according to the number of scholars examined in standards, and the numerical strength of their staffs. These again may be subdivided into at least four classes as indicated by the horizontal lines:—