

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR THE WHOLE DISTRICT.

Classes.	Presented.	Absent.	Excepted.	Failed.	Passed.	Number of Schools presenting.	Average Age of those that passed.
							Yrs. mos.
Above Standard VI. ...	57	...	...	...	...	13	...
Standard VI. ...	86	2	4	41	39	17	13 9
" V. ...	140	11	7	74	48	26	13 3
" IV. ...	183	13	2	58	110	26	12 2
" III. ...	236	9	15	67	145	25	11 4
" II. ...	222	3	9	23	187	28	10 8
" I. ...	197	3	6	33	155	25	9 4
Preparatory ...	527	...	...	...	...	30	...
Total ...	1,648	41	43	296	684	...	11 9*

* Mean of average age.

NORTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 19th February, 1892.

We have the honour to present the annual return for the past year, which it is our duty to make as Inspectors of the North Canterbury Education District.

In previous returns the limits of the calendar year have not been taken strictly as determining the period included, although this was not quite in accordance with the letter of the regulations. As in other districts, it was generally found convenient to include in the preceding series any examinations made before the 31st of March, the date on which the return referring to the preceding year was required, the period embraced year by year being thus substantially from March to March. The present return, however, in stricter accordance with the regulations, which as recently amended lay more stress on the point, relates to the calendar year 1891, and thus includes (with a certain limitation) three months' work already reported.

During a part of January the Inspectors were engaged, jointly with Mr. Veel, in finishing the results of the December examinations of pupil-teachers and scholarship candidates, and during the remainder of these three months in examining, with as much continuity as harvesting operations would permit, a number of schools, most of them of small size, or situated in outlying neighbourhoods. Sixty-three schools examined in this period were included in the last annual return. Thirty-one of these were examined again before the end of the year, and in the case of this group it has not been deemed necessary to count in or re-insert the results of the earlier examination. The remainder were, with the approval of the Board, arranged to fall due as the first of next year's series.

The work of examining schools was resumed on the 1st June, a month earlier than before, and was steadily pursued till, near the close of September, Mr. Wood's health compelled him to postpone his examinations, and, subsequently, to seek leave of absence. About the same time Normal School affairs brought a further interruption, so that, some time in October, it became necessary to appoint two acting Inspectors to overtake the work. To these gentlemen, Mr. T. S. Foster, M.A., Headmaster of the West Christchurch School, and Mr. J. G. Lawrence Scott, B.A., Headmaster of the East Christchurch School, our warmest thanks are due. The Board has already expressed its appreciation of their services, but it may be permitted to their colleague for the time being to add his tribute to their unselfish devotion. They began work on the 20th October, and during the remainder of the year examined fifty-four schools, chiefly those in the southern part of the district.

To our great regret so large a portion of the Inspectors' time has been taken up in conducting school or other examinations, that separate inspection visits, to which both teachers and Inspectors in many cases attach considerable value, have been still further reduced in number during the past year. The months of April and May were alone available for this purpose, and a great portion of this interval was taken up with the preparation of statistics and of standard tests, the latter amounting to upwards of four hundred short examination papers in the written subjects of the higher classes. The most we could do, under the circumstances, was to select for visits those in which pupil-teachers in the last year of their apprenticeship were employed, and schools whose teachers had lately been employed for the first time in the district, or whose teachers the Inspectors for some other special reason desired to see at work.

During the year, from January to December, 196 schools were examined in accordance with the standard regulations. Twenty-two of these examinations were conducted by two Inspectors jointly, and if, as we see sometimes done in annual returns, each Inspector's work in such schools is reckoned separately, the total number of examinations becomes 218. Deducting from the former total the thirty-one schools examined a second time within the year, we get the complete series of 165, which forms the basis of the appended calculations.

It is very gratifying to be able to record a substantial advance on the results of our last report. On the days appointed for the examinations there were 20,816 children on the school-rolls. Of these, 14,302 were presented in the standard classes, being 340 more than the corresponding number in the previous year. A large percentage (78) of this increase is to be accounted for in the Fifth and Sixth Standards alone; and in connection with this fact we may here remark that one of the most noteworthy features to be found in our annual returns is the clear indication that year by year