

to the number of subjects to be taught as to faulty arrangement of the course of instruction, an inferior treatment of the subjects. The fact that several of the very small schools, taught by young teachers not long out of their pupil-teacher days, did very fine work in all the subjects—pass, class, and additional—clearly shows that the syllabus is no more than can be overtaken in a year by a good teacher.

With regard to faulty arrangement of the course of instruction, we have already pointed out that the work intended to be done should be arranged for months beforehand, each subject, or portion of a subject, being assigned its proper number of lessons according to its importance. If a teacher arranges his programme of instruction in this manner, teaches honestly and steadily week by week from the beginning of the school year, and supervises his work at regular and frequent intervals, he will find that he will be able not only to overtake all the subjects without undue pressure or cram, but also to teach them in such an educative manner as will promote the mental training of his pupils. It is the trifling away, often unconsciously, the early part of the year, and the postponement of revision till close to the examination time, that lead to some of the work not being overtaken, and to a lack of mental assimilation—the condition of all educative study—of what has been attempted.

Of the order and discipline and general behaviour of the pupils we are glad to be able to speak in high terms of praise as far as the majority of schools are concerned. The attention at lessons, certainly, is not always as good as it might be; but this, while sometimes due to inferior treatment of the subject in hand, is more frequently the result of very large classes.

The manners of the pupils generally are most pleasing.

Before closing this report we desire to mention two things that interfere considerably with the educational progress of several schools—irregular attendance, and frequent changes of teachers.

With regard to irregular attendance, we may say that, while a gradual improvement in this respect has taken place during the past few years, there are still far too many schools—some of them large town schools, too—where the pupils attend most irregularly. In many districts, of course, the parents require at certain times of the year the help of their children in farming operations. With such cases as these we have no fault to find; but we desire to point out that irregular attendance is due most frequently to pure apathy and indifference on the part of the parents. At the same time, we are not prepared to say that there is not, in some cases, a certain amount of excuse for this apathy and indifference; for it is not unusual to find the attendance improve or fall off at a school upon a change of head teachers taking place. Such cases, however, are the exception.

With regard to frequent changes of teachers, it must be very evident that they cause much loss of time and waste of effort. Examinations take place, and results are poor; but no one is responsible. Parents, of course, are disappointed, and the whole management comes in for blame. We are not prepared to make any recommendation in connection with this matter, but will merely say that, while we should be sorry to see deserving teachers fail to obtain promotion, we think it would be possible to effect all genuine promotions without as many changes as usually take place.

This report has been written under difficulties, owing to the additions that were being made to the Board's offices while we were engaged upon it.

We have, &c.,

W. H. VEREKER-BINDON, M.A., Chief Inspector.

JAMES MILNE, M.A., Assistant Inspector.

The Chairman, Board of Education, Wanganui.

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Wellington, 28th February, 1896.

We have the honour to present our report on the work and condition of the primary State schools of the Wellington District for the year 1895.

The number of schools maintained during the year has increased from 94 to 100. New schools were opened at Makairo and Nikau, near Pahiatua; at Aohonga, on the East Coast; at Maungapakeha, near Tinui; at West Taratahi, in the Wairarapa; and at Mitchelltown, near Wellington. Since its erection the Maungapakeha schoolroom has been burned down, and the school at present is not being carried on. All the previously-existing schools are being maintained. During the year many school buildings and grounds have been improved. The enlargements at Pahiatua, Mangatainoka, and Petone, the recent renovations of the Te Aro School, and the refurnishing of the Mount Cook Boys' School have much improved their working condition. The Newtown School, only recently enlarged, is again almost unworkably congested with over a thousand children in attendance; but a new school is in course of erection on an excellent site more removed from the centre of the city, which will soon relieve the pressure. The schools in the Te Aro end of the city are all full, with the exception of one or two classes in the Mount Cook Girls' School. These include the Clyde Quay, Mount Cook, and Te Aro Schools. Very soon, if not immediately, some additional accommodation will be required in this part of the city. In other parts of the district the available seats in existing schools are fairly sufficient for present requirements; but there is now demand for several aided schools in remote parts of the district, and, as settlement progresses, this demand may be expected to continue for some time.

Our summary of the examination returns shows that 13,236 children were on the books of the schools, as compared with 12,643 last year—an increase of 593. The number of children actually examined in six standards, exclusive of infant classes and 344 now in the class above Standard VI., was 8,592, of whom 7,185 passed. This is an increase on last year's returns of 466 pre-