

Pupil Teachers.—It seems hardly worth while to repeat a suggestion that has frequently been made by Boards and Inspectors, and endorsed by Teachers' Institutes in all parts of the colony, since there seems to be a fixed determination on the part of the Government to avoid any alterations in the Education Act. But as the suggestion referred to—viz., the examination of pupil-teachers by the department—could be provided for without any alteration of the Act, merely by a Governor's Order in Council, it is difficult to understand why these representations have been consistently ignored. The advantages of the proposed change are so numerous and self-evident that no argument is needed in support of the proposal, which, if adopted, would at once place all pupil-teachers throughout the colony on a footing of absolute equality.

Private Schools.—Your Board is aware that, with its consent, I have for some years past examined the private schools maintained by the Roman Catholics of this district. I have not hitherto mentioned them in my annual reports, as it appeared to me unnecessary to do so. Seeing, however, reference to such examinations in other Inspectors' reports I thought it only fair to the Blenheim private schools to give the chief particulars of the results of their examinations this year. They are as follows:—

—	Presented.	Examined in Standards.	Passed.	—	Presented.	Examined in Standards.	Passed.
<i>St. Mary's Boys' School.</i>				<i>Convent Girls.</i>			
Above Standard VI.	1	...	...	Above Standard VI.	1	...	...
Standard VI.	...	4	4	Standard VI.	...	5	5
Standard V.	...	5	5	Standard V.	...	6	5
Standard IV.	...	13	12	Standard IV.	...	11	9
Standard III.	...	16	15	Standard III.	...	17	14
Standard II.	...	12	10	Standard II.	...	18	18
Standard I.	...	...	...	Standard I.	...	30	30
Preparatory	...	...	...	Preparatory	...	24	...
	51	46	40		112	87	81

Amendments in the Education Act.—The suggestion contained in my last report, relative to a conference of educational authorities to consider this subject, was adopted by your Board, and a circular was addressed to the other Boards asking their opinions as to the desirableness or otherwise of the proposed conference. All the Boards, with one exception, replied to the circular, and most of them expressed approval of the idea. A letter embodying the replies received from the several Boards was sent to the Premier, with a request that steps might be taken to convene such a conference at the earliest possible period. The reply received was to the effect that the letter and its enclosures had been "forwarded to the Minister of Education for his consideration." There seems to be an unaccountable dread on the part of Governments, past and present, to approach the consideration of this very important question—such as almost suggests a reversion to the mysterious *tapu* of a former period. An idea appears to prevail in some quarters that any attempt to repair the educational building would bring the whole edifice about our ears. Those who hold this view must have a very poor opinion of the stability of the structure, or the prudence and sagacity of any to whom the revision of the Act may be committed. The attempts hitherto made to remedy some of the defects of the original Act have been chiefly confined to details of management, some half-dozen different amendments having been passed since 1877. But the chief faults of the system have been altogether disregarded. It is to be hoped, however, that the much-needed revision will be no longer postponed, since no fear need be entertained that the main principles of the Act would be subverted—unless, indeed, it should be found to be the manifest desire of a majority of the people that these also should be reconsidered.

The Chairman, Board of Education, Marlborough.

I have, &c.,

JOHN SMITH, Inspector.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR THE WHOLE DISTRICT.

Standard Classes.				Presented.	Examined in Standards.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.
							Yrs. mos.
Class above Standard VI.	...	...	...	68	...	...	...
Standard VI.	...	...	...	96	92	75	14 2
" V.	...	...	...	253	235	178	13 6
" IV.	...	...	...	266	253	189	12 9
" III.	...	...	...	347	341	270	11 1
" II.	...	...	...	283	273	259	9 11
" I.	...	...	...	221	218	210	8 9
Preparatory	...	...	...	596	...	...	...
Totals	...	...	...	2,130	1,412	1,181	11 8*

* Mean of average age.