

when object-lessons were being given before us, that nothing was more conspicuous than the absence of the objects themselves. But the teacher should have not only several samples of the object being treated for handing round the class, but also any other objects required for comparison and illustration. For example, when he is educating "porosity" in chalk by letting the children see the bubbles rise when the chalk sinks in a glass of water, specimens of sponge, pumice, sugar, &c., also should be available. It is, therefore, very desirable that there should be in every school a case (with glass front) with numerous specimens in it ready for instant use.

The old fault of telling too much is still in evidence in much of the science and object teaching. But, as a celebrated educationalist puts it, we notice that Nature, who makes her pupil teach himself, gives no explanations of this kind. She does not explain the difference between hard and soft objects—she says, Feel them; between this and that fact—she says, Place them side by side, and mark the difference yourself; and generally she says to her pupil, Don't ask me to tell you anything that you can find out for yourself. Science-teaching, then, in a few words, consists in bringing the pupil's mind into direct contact with facts—in getting him to investigate, discover, and invent for himself. Its only basis is the method of investigation.

We have now been far more diffuse than we intended with regard to some of the subjects of instruction, and trust we have not been wearisome. Our excuse, if any be needed, is—the readiness and skill with which many teachers adopted and carried out suggestions we were privileged to give them in former reports encouraged us to once more try and be of some service in this respect.

Discipline.—The discipline at the majority of the schools is very satisfactory indeed, and is creditable to the community as well as to the teachers. Manners generally to us are very pleasing in the school, in the playground, and in the street. At some small schools we found pupils, when once outside their class-rooms, deficient in politeness; and teachers might attend to this, for it arises simply from want of a little training, and not from any wish to offend against good taste.

In conclusion, sir, we must bear testimony to the fact that the Board's teachers, as a body, are most painstaking and zealous in the discharge of their duties. Methods of treatment are improving year by year, and good methods are more general; as a natural consequence, not only is the number of passes increasing, but also—and this is of far more importance—the pupils are receiving a sounder education, in the highest sense of the word, than formerly. Few teachers now are uncertificated, and all but two of those who are have charge of very small schools. At the departmental examinations several pupil-teachers and ex-pupil-teachers obtained their certificates in the E Class, or promotion to the D Class, some with honourable mention in various subjects. University distinctions, also, were obtained by some teachers who had few advantages in the way of outside assistance. We are very pleased indeed to find our teachers so eager to obtain higher certificates, and therefore we hope we shall not be misunderstood if we conclude with this one note of warning to them: "Do not, on account of mere certificates or academical distinctions you may hold, blindly give yourselves up to that egregious *non sequitur*, 'I know; therefore I can teach what I know'—one of the most remarkable educational fallacies that ever blinded the eyes of sensible men, and yet one commonly found amongst the general public. Rather remember that teaching is a profession in itself; that it is a psychological art—an art which, beyond most others, requires peculiar knowledge, experience, and tact; and that therefore he who would be a teacher must for ever be a learner."

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, 1899.

We have the honour to report on the working of the primary State schools of the Wellington Education District for the year 1898.

We have examined 132 schools, being all in operation at the time of our visit to their locality; but, owing to pressure of work, we have not been able to inspect more than about one-fourth of them. At the time of the examinations the number of children on the books was 14,684, an increase on last year's roll of 490, which is slightly below a normal increase, those for the two previous years being 506 and 402 for 1897 and 1896 respectively.

The following table shows the standard passes compared with those of the previous year:—

	Standard I.	Standard II.	Standard III.	Standard IV.	Standard V.	Standard VI.
1897 ...	1639	1684	1588	1407	1080	709
1898 ...	1651	1731	1688	1539	1072	819

Besides these there were 420 pupils in the schools who had previously passed Standard VI., the number for the year before being 392. We notice that the numbers in Standards I., II., and V. remain fairly constant, with a marked increase in the higher Standards III., IV., VI., and the class above Standard VI.; and this we consider in itself a very satisfactory result. The total number of passes made, 8,500, is 89 per cent. on the number examined in standards, or 2 per cent. higher than last year, and 5 per cent. higher than in the previous year. From this point of view also the results are satisfactory. The present high proportion of passes is again