

authorities, and I am sure much good to the cause of education could now be effected by more normal-school training. Our Saturday classes afford very useful help in the teaching of some special subjects, such as kindergarten paper-folding. Formerly the first practical lessons in science were given to teachers, and other very helpful training afforded until the grant-in-aid ceased. Twenty years ago I reported as follows: "In comparatively few schools is the work that of a teacher trained for his profession. The contrast between a school working with good methods and that of a school under an untrained or an unprogressive teacher is very great. It surely must be an established truth in educational as in other matters that if work is to be done it should be well done; and to attempt to work without skilled labour simply means that it will be imperfectly done." These words are true to-day in too many instances. The best educational system will not turn a bad school into a good one, nor will it make any school the best that it might be. Only the skilled teacher can do that, and hence the importance of the best selection of teachers, and of a training which, coupled with personal influence for good, will fit them for their special duties in life.

The contrast between the present state of education in the district, as shown in this report, and the condition of affairs in 1874, when I commenced my duties, is very remarkable; and I purpose, on this occasion of my retirement from the service, giving a few particulars which may be of general interest.

In 1874 I travelled nearly everywhere on horseback over the Wellington, Wanganui, Patea, and Marlborough districts, examining all the schools. The two former districts were in the Wellington Education District, and I took the work of the two latter by special permission of the Wellington Board. Then roads were bad, rivers were mostly unbridged, and tracks through bush or scrub frequently used. Excluding the last three districts of the four mentioned, I examined thirty-two schools in the present Wellington area, which included five in the city, ten in the Porirua Valley, six in the Hutt Valley, and eleven in the Wairarapa.

At my first examination I simply classified in Standards I. and II., which may be estimated at Standards I. and III. of the present code. On an average two children out of ten on the roll passed Standard I.; and of those passing Standard I. one-fourth passed Standard II. Six months later I examined in Standard III. (say, Standard V. of present code), when there were in all the present district only twenty-seven children who could fairly meet requirements. The first examination in Standard IV. (say, Standard VII.) was made in 1875, when four pupils passed in this part of the district.

There are only five teachers now in the service who were doing duty in 1874. I note with satisfaction that nearly all the present leading head teachers have done duty in this district for twenty years or more, and have contributed in no small degree to the educational progress which has been made.

The opening of the Mount Cook Infant School, built on a design made by the architect of the London School Board, in January, 1878, inaugurated the infant-school system in this district; and by its invaluable work it has proved a distributing centre in all infant instruction—tonic sol-fa singing and the earlier kindergarten occupations.

For the past fifteen years the teaching of drawing has extended its scope and advanced in quality; teachers have been thoroughly instructed, and an immense amount of examination work has been overtaken. As it is now decided to discontinue the first-grade examinations, the work of the schools will be largely judged by the character of the class-work as it appears in the pupils' drawing-books; and this closer inspection should lead to greater accuracy of detail, and encourage pupils to take greater pains with their ordinary work. Nearly all the head teachers are now capable drawing instructors, and the future classification of pupils, in this subject as in others, may be safely left in their hands.

At the beginning of 1890 my colleague Mr. Fleming was appointed, and, again, three years ago Mr. Bakewell came to our assistance.

I have, &c.,
ROBERT LEE,
Chief Inspector.

The Chairman, Wellington Education Board.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR THE WHOLE DISTRICT.

Classes.				Presented.	Present.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.
							Yrs. mos.
Above Standard VI.	...	...	...	483	...	...	...
Standard VI.	...	...	...	1,040	1,011	831	13 8
" V.	...	...	...	1,496	1,470	1,211	12 11
" IV.	...	...	...	1,908	1,862	1,591	12 1
" III.	...	...	...	1,953	1,923	1,655	10 9
" II.	...	...	...	1,838	1,800	1,629	9 8
" I.	...	...	...	1,726	1,702	1,626	8 9
Preparatory	...	...	...	4,797	...	...	...
Totals	...	...	...	15,241	9,768	8,543	11 3*

* Mean of average age.

EIGHT ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.

Presented, 1,085; present, 644; passed, 566.