

our pupil-teachers are within easy reach of one or other of our three chief centres—Wanganui, Palmerston North, and Hawera. We have had this in view in framing the new pupil-teachers' regulations, and by these all pupil-teachers during their course must attend for at least two years one or other of the singing classes authorised by the Board. Singing is now a compulsory subject of examination for third- and fourth-year pupil-teachers. We trust that pupil-teachers will see that the increased demands made on them in the matter of study will tend to their ultimate good, and that they will strenuously endeavour to obtain their full D at the completion of their term.

Scholarships.—We would offer just one remark here by way of advice to teachers, and it is this: It is still worth while urging pupils to gain scholarships so long as these are offered. Apart from the monetary view altogether, it is worth a great deal in the after life of a boy or girl to be able to say "I won a scholarship." We say this to help to counteract the idea which is gaining ground that now, since free secondary education is offered to all who pass Standard VI., a scholarship is not worth going for.

Manual and Technical Instruction.—Quite a number of teachers, influenced by the summer school classes, have during the year been giving attention to some of the subjects that come under this head. Brush-work has been found by many to be a very useful adjunct to drawing. The pupils take to it with great relish, and some of the work shown us was extremely creditable. In most of our larger infant rooms one at least of the various forms of kindergarten work is now being taught. We do not recommend that these subjects be taken up generally until the long-promised new syllabus has come into operation; but in all schools where there is more than one teacher, although it may not be possible to earn the departmental grant, it is possible to devote some time to at least one subject in the lower class of the school.

Summer School.—The first summer school was held at Wanganui, in January, 1902. It was very largely attended by teachers from all parts of the district. Dr. Smyth, M.A., late Chief Inspector, was the organizer, and to his efforts, combined with those of a strong committee of teachers, the success of the gathering was largely due. That the school bore abundant fruit is evident in a quickened interest in school-work generally, an insight gained into one or two forms of manual instruction, and a readiness on the part of teachers to experiment with new methods and break away from old and stereotyped lines of teaching. We have not yet determined upon our next summer school, but we hope, if possible, to arrange for a winter gathering, when an opportunity will be given to teachers of becoming further acquainted with one or two manual subjects, and of discussing the best methods of dealing with others.

Conclusion.—We have, in concluding our report, to bear testimony to the faithful and earnest work done by the large majority of our teachers. We recognise that the teacher's life is one that has discouragements and difficulties which outsiders know little about. Especially is this the case with those of our profession who are placed in out-of-the-way districts, isolated from their fellow teachers, and with very few chances for social intercourse. We feel that we do not often enough express to such our appreciation of their difficulties and discouragements; but we would say here to them, and to teachers generally, that it is our constant aim to measure their results and achievements in the light of the situation and circumstances in which they are placed. We thank the teachers for their kindness to us when we are on our rounds, and bespeak their earnest co-operation with us in our task—often by no means an easy one—of maintaining and furthering the cause of educational progress in our district.

We have, &c.,

WM. GRAY, M.A., B.Sc. } Inspectors.
JAS. MILNE, M.A. }

The Chairman, Education Board, Wanganui.

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Wellington, February, 1903.

We have the honour to lay before you our report for 1902 on the primary schools of the Wellington Education District.

All Board schools in operation at the time of the Inspectors' visits—a total of 140—were examined. In 1901 the total was 143, but of these, four—Te Aupapa, Whareama, Mangatiti, and Pencarrow—were closed, and two—South Karori and Masterton Infants'—have been incorporated with the main school in each district. Three new schools—Momona, Wai-o-waka, and Plimmerton—were examined during the year. Of the schools closed in 1902, Wharau, Whareama, Mangatiti, and Pencarrow have been reopened, and a new school has been established at Marima in a rented building. The school at Maungapakeha is now being held in the building erected by the Board. Seven Roman Catholic schools were examined and reported on.

The total number of children presented for examination was 15,258, an increase of only seventeen on the roll of the previous year, and of only forty-seven on that of 1900. Comparing the figures with those of last year we find that the preparatory class shows a decrease of 174, Standard I. an increase of 106, Standard II. an increase of thirty-five, Standard III. a decrease of eighty-four, Standard IV. a decrease of fifty-eight, Standard V. an increase of 116, Standard VI. an increase of thirty-five, and Standard VII. an increase of forty-one. The increase in Standards V., VI., and VII. is satisfactory, for it tends to show that the number remaining at school in the upper standards is increasing; but the decrease in the preparatory class is not promising.

For the last three years the examination roll number of the district has practically remained unchanged. The March quarterly returns for 1902 showed a roll number of 15,365, an increase on the corresponding numbers for 1901 and 1900, but in December the roll number fell to 14,898, an