

not be the case. We should then find that grammar and composition would be taught regularly side by side; that the geography of Standard VI. would not be so much more advanced than that of Standard V.

The English pass subjects are the best taught. Of these the results in reading are the most disappointing. Until supplementary reading matter is provided fluent reading will not be the rule. In those schools where two readers have been used the results are very marked. The reading of the preparatory class of the Greymouth District High School was very good, much better than that heard in Standards I. and II. of some of the country schools. Pattern reading and careful correction by the teacher and plenty of practice by the pupil should go a long way to remedy a very marked defect.

Spelling is the best taught subject of the syllabus. More attention to the spelling of common words that the pupil uses would be more practical than the learning how to spell long uncommon words that he may not meet again in his lifetime. One often finds the words of the spelling test all correct, while the composition exercise has many errors.

After examining the writing of all the schools I am convinced that many of our teachers do not attempt to teach the subject at all, and yet no subject of the school course will so well repay the teacher for his labour. Too often the pupils are set to write while the teacher is engaged in other work. Blackboard explanation, careful pointing out of errors to the individual, and strict supervision must produce correct, if not graceful, writing. A copy written by the teacher on the pupil's slate or book is often more helpful than one set on the blackboard.

When we consider that a quarter of the school day is taken up by arithmetic the results ought to be better than they are. Mental work, and plenty of it, will do for the pupil what slate work will never do. Tables are well attended to in the lower standards, but in the upper standards they are often neglected. Yet, surely for every standard they are all important. A simple Fourth Standard question in reduction would present difficulty to many a Sixth Standard pupil. Until Standard VI. syllabus is very much reduced teachers will complain that the time for revision is very limited.

Of the class subjects grammar is the most disappointing. When teachers recognise that it is one of the most important educational subjects we shall have better work. As many of our pupils now pass to the secondary class, where the English work is most important, it behoves all to see that the foundations of English grammar are well and truly laid.

Why do our teachers choose as subjects for object lessons the most out-of-the-way things? They are not meant to be information lessons: the object is rather that the child should see or discover for itself, and then tell the teacher in its own words what it has seen. Thus the foundation is being laid for composition. My advice is, choose common objects, and let the children know they have eyes to see and hands to handle.

If in this short report I have shown defects rather than merits, it is because, if we wish to advance, we must look upon the defects and strive to correct them. During my examination round I quietly pointed out the weaknesses to many of the teachers, all of whom were thankful for my criticism. On my inspection visit I hope to be of assistance to many of the younger teachers, especially those in the more isolated places. That the Board has in its service many earnest, conscientious, and industrious teachers I am fully convinced.

I have, &c.,
The Chairman, Education Board, Greymouth.
H. SMITH, B.A., Inspector.

WESTLAND.

SIR,—
Education Office, Hokitika, 26th January, 1903.
I have the honour to present the following report on the schools of the district for the year 1902:—

The primary schools, numbering thirty-five, were duly examined, also the secondary class of the Hokitika District High School, five Catholic schools, candidates for scholarships, and pupil-teachers. With the exception of those of South Westland, each of the public schools of the district were visited at least once for the purposes of inspection.

The following table supplies information regarding the number of pupils and of promotions in connection with the examination of the public schools:—

SUMMARY OF PASS RESULTS.

Classes.					Total Roll.	Present at In- spector's Annual Visit.	Passed.	Average Age of Pupils in each Class.
					Yrs. mos.			
Standard VII.	...	...	...	...	45	39	...	14 6
" VI.	...	...	...	...	91	87	71	13 9
" V.	...	...	...	...	104	100	90	13 1
" IV.	...	...	...	...	151	147	108	12 0
" III.	...	...	...	...	121	119	103	11 0
" II.	...	...	...	...	118	114	98	9 9
" I.	...	...	...	...	119	115	111	9 0
Preparatory	...	...	...	...	337	320	...	6 5
Totals ...					1,086	1,041	581	11 2*

* Mean of average age.