

and design was exhibited, so that it was quite a revelation to find what beautiful original designs could be produced by the children, who had had little more than two years' training and experience. Both natural flower and geometric forms were effectively used, especially in two of the private schools—Sacred Heart and St. Canice's. As a rule, though, there was a lack of system in this work, which was too often neglected in the lower classes, as the straight-line work of Standards I and II was rarely picturesque. The development of taste and originality should be systematically encouraged from the beginning. Sometimes these varieties of freehand would dwarf the instrumental drawing (geometry and scale) into insignificance, and in future more attention will be expected in this quarter. Where, as in Standard VI, model-drawing is taken with freehand, the former should have bestowed upon it at least as much time as the latter. Partial neglect of the former was a frequent contributor to failures in Standard VI. Many of our teachers, too, would obtain benefit from further lessons in drawing from models, as well as in the principles of design.

SINGING is generally, but not universally, taught, fourteen sole teachers lacking the ability or the confidence to make any attempt to train their pupils. We have considered the treatment efficient in seventy-five schools, seventeen of these having shown good results.

HISTORY is very generally alternated with geography B course, so that this year only seventy-six schools have taken up the subject. Of these, forty-three treated satisfactorily the topics selected, in ten instances a commendable knowledge being displayed. We rather doubt the efficacy of the generally adopted plan of teaching history merely by way of teachers' lectures. The different facts, events, and topics, even with the enlargement of detail, come to be regarded as detached incidents, administered like separate pills, once or twice a week. True, a skilful teacher may do much to supply connections in the sequence of events, but only in the hands of a born enthusiast can the dead past be made to live again in the minds of present hearers, effects be seen to follow causes, the noble deeds of the illustrious dead be brought to stir the imagination, to quicken the pulse of a listless modern race, to enthuse zeal, patriotism, and lofty ideals.

We have little to censure and much to commend in the general conduct of our schools. On the teachers' part anxiety to learn, a desire to improve, and a willingness to undertake new methods of treatment and courses of preparation have been often apparent, and we are pleased to find a large number this year attempting to improve their status by entering for the C certificate examination.

We cannot refrain from expressing our gratitude to the Wellington Education Board, and especially to the Principal of the Wellington Training College, for their offer to throw open the college for a fortnight to any teacher who, in his holidays, desires to visit it to obtain the benefit of its instruction. The winter and spring college holidays (last week in June and first in September) are, of course, excepted. The time suggested for such visits is the last two weeks of July and the first two of August, and, by arrangement with the Board, the winter holidays might be easily adapted to the time suggested. Many, however, in this district have their long vacation in February and March (hop-picking), and should that time suit the Principal a large number of our teachers would probably be delighted to spend a part of their holidays in the profitable manner suggested.

The order and behaviour of the pupils are usually good, though some few teachers, mostly beginners, fail in the first essential of a good teacher—the maintenance of discipline. In some of the small schools teachers might well pay greater attention to the cleanliness and neatness of the schoolrooms and apparatus, as well as to the tidiness of the grounds, and in no single instance should the necessary facilities for the cleanliness of the children's hands be absent. The pupils should be encouraged also in the formation of flower-gardens and in the ornamentation of schoolrooms, so that the school and its precincts may have upon them that refining influence that is the natural accompaniment of order, cleanliness, and beauty.

We have, &c.,

G. A. HARKNESS, M.A. } Inspectors.
A. CRAWFORD, B.A. }

To the Chairman, Education Board, Nelson.

GREY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Greymouth, 11th March, 1907.

I have the honour to present the following report on the schools for the year 1906, based on my observation and examination of those schools which were left unexamined by the lamented death of the late Inspector Smith. As the inspection visits for the year were made by the late Inspector, and the material available to me for forming a judgment on the work done was limited to that provided by my examination of only a portion of the schools, my remarks on methods and on the state of education in the district generally will necessarily be contracted and brief.

Besides examining the secondary class of the Grey District High School and candidates for scholarships—regarding which reports have been already presented to you—I examined sixteen schools. In all the smaller schools I examined all the standards and classified them myself.

Of the teachers, so far as the schools examined by me are an index, it may be said that, generally speaking, there are no drones, and in the great majority of cases what is needed is guidance rather than a spur. In some of the country schools an extraordinary amount of hard work has been done, and there can be no doubt as to the earnestness and energy displayed. In most cases, however, the zeal has not been "according to knowledge," and the programme of work attempted has been out of all proportion to the requirements and reasonable possibilities of the case.