

making promotions. Such is not always the case, for I have found some teachers awarding failure-marks in composition and reading, and yet, without remark, promoting the pupil.

EXAMINATION.—Seventy public and five private schools were examined (the larger schools in the manner suggested in the above paragraph, the smaller ones in more minute detail). Additional S6 examinations were held at Blenheim, Renwick, Havelock, Picton, Marlboroughtown, and Seddon. The total enrolment at public schools at times of the annual visits was 2,142, of whom 2,019 were present. Last year the numbers were 2,065 and 1,984. The increased enrolment was seventy-seven and the increased number present twenty-five.

At private schools 178 were enrolled and 165 present.

The combined roll of public and private schools was therefore 2,320.

The following general summary relates to the times of my annual visits:—

Classes.						Number on Roll.	Present at the Annual Examination.	Average Age of Pupils in Each Class.
								Yrs. mos.
Standard VII	...	...	...	...	...	31	28	15 2
" VI	...	...	...	...	...	186	178	13 8
" V	...	...	...	...	...	234	225	12 11
" IV	...	...	...	...	...	254	246	12 0
" III	...	...	...	...	...	272	265	11 0
" II	...	...	...	...	...	223	218	9 11
" I	...	...	...	...	...	264	257	9 2
Preparatory	...	...	...	...	...	678	602	7 3
Total for 1908						2,142	2,019	11 5*
Total for 1907						2,065	1,948	...

* Mean of average age.

Not all Standard VI were candidates for certificates. Only 161 pupils presented themselves at the special tests. To them seventy-seven proficiency and thirty-eight competency certificates were awarded. The number of successes was lower than last year's, owing probably to the effect of a regulation issued during the year requiring 50 per cent. in English instead of 40 per cent.

To pupils in private schools four proficiency and two competency certificates were awarded.

It may be noted in the above table that the age of class P. tends to increase. Comparing Standard I with Standard VI it will be observed that a very fair proportion of pupils admitted continue attendance till they complete the course. Standard VII has increased in numbers, and is represented in thirteen schools instead of nine. The progress during the extra year in Standard VII is, speaking generally, less satisfactory than in the remaining standards. Only two of these classes produced candidates for the Civil Service Junior Examination.

At thirty-five schools all children were present at examination.

ATTENDANCE.—The average in 1907 both for the Dominion and for Marlborough was 84.6. In 1908 the Marlborough average increased to 87.5, which is the highest yet attained. This figure is worth notice, for it indicates a growing interest in education and a growing appreciation of its advantages.

In November, 1907, the Board adopted 420 half-days as the standard of duty in respect of times the school should be open. The following table is therefore interesting: 1904, 12 schools recorded 420 half-days; 1905 (including 10 half-days of winter classes); 16; 1906, 18; 1907, 19; 1908, 40 (including 8 half-days of Easter classes). Fifty-three schools recorded over 400 half-days. The more constant school year, combined with the increased regularity of attendance, cannot but make for greater efficiency.

CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHERS.

						Certificated.	Licensed.	Uncertificated.	Total.
Head teachers	..	..	..	..	..	12	..	..	12
Assistants	..	..	..	..	..	12	..	5	17
Sole teachers	..	..	..	..	..	6	3	48	57
Totals	..	..	..	..	..	30	3	53	86

There are also six pupil-teachers, one teacher of woodwork, one of cookery; and Marlborough shares with Nelson, Grey, and Westland the services of Mr. Bruce, the expert in agriculture.

By regulations lately issued the complement of students at Wellington Training College has been raised to 100. Some progress, though grudging, is also made towards giving our uncertificated teachers an opportunity for training. Five studentships of at most £40 per annum are available for uncertificated teachers of two years' experience in schools under Grade 4, in the Middle Training College District, which region comprises the Education Districts of Grey, Nelson, Marlborough, Wellington, Hawke's Bay, Wanganui, and Taranaki. This is not equal to one