

building, examine the children attending the school, and notify parents or guardians of any disease or bodily defect from which the child is suffering.

A Director of and instructors for physical training, as well as medical officers, have been appointed. The latter have already taken up their duties, and have notified us that they will shortly be visiting this district.

The Education Department renewed the grant that had been made late in the previous year for the instruction of uncertificated teachers. A class or direct personal tuition was conducted at Murchison, and teachers taking recognized correspondence classes were assisted in the payment of their fees. As we stated last year, the great majority of our uncertificated teachers are too remote from any convenient centre to attend regular classes, so that in this district we have to rely, in the main, on the assistance offered by correspondence classes. In all, fourteen teachers availed themselves of the classes, of whom four qualified for certificates and three gained partial success. For the coming year the allocation of the grant will enable the Board to pay half-fees, up to a maximum of £4, of teachers taking approved correspondence classes. It is to be noted that no part of the grant is available for those who have been probationers or pupil-teachers, nor can it be used for any but Class D subjects.

No very unusual features have characterized school routine during the past year. In the early part of this and of the previous year considerable difficulty was found in supplying temporarily the places of teachers who were absent from duty on account of illness or other serious cause. In one month twenty-seven relieving-teachers were employed. Before the end of the year the trouble had largely disappeared, and in spite of it teaching has been given regularly and systematically, with very little break or hindrance from childish epidemics or any other cause.

The efforts, especially of the regular staffs of our larger schools, have been accompanied by that zeal, enthusiasm, and uncomplaining devotion to duty that usually characterize the earnest teacher, and the result has been a further gain in the general efficiency of the schools, as is shown in the tabulated form given below :—

<i>Efficiency of Schools.</i>					
Good to excellent	..	..	1	Efficient ..	1912. 1911. .. 96 .. 90
Good ..	..	..	21		
Satisfactory to good	..	..	29		
Satisfactory ..	..	..	45		
Fair to satisfactory	..	..	10	Non-efficient..	.. 20 .. 23
Fair ..	..	..	8		
Moderate to fair	..	..	2		

Sixteen of the non-efficient schools are in Grades 0 or I, positions which we cannot expect to fill with qualified teachers, so that it is gratifying to find such a large proportion of our schools in a satisfactory state of efficiency. The majority deserve much higher commendation, and we desire to express our appreciation of the earnest efforts of all, and especially of the good service rendered by so many of our teaching staff.

We have, &c.,

The Chairman, Nelson Education Board.

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

GREY.

Education Office, Greymouth, 27th February, 1913.

SIR,—

I have the honour to present the annual report on the schools of this district for the year 1912.

As I commenced duty as Inspector so late as the beginning of October, my report must necessarily be somewhat brief. I have had no opportunity of seeing the actual work of the teachers, and any remarks I may make in connexion therewith are based on the results as observed in the conduct of my examination of the classes, observation of the general behaviour of the children, and the unavoidably brief examination of premises, appointments, registers, schemes of work, and so forth.

Between the 4th October and the 18th December I was able to visit all the schools in operation in the district—viz., thirty-two public and four private (Roman Catholic) schools. Practically every class was examined in all subjects, as only by this means was any approximately satisfactory estimate of the nature of the instruction to be arrived at in the circumstances. So close a scrutiny of individual pupil's work at the annual visit will not, it is hoped, be necessary in future, as I expect to have opportunities for observing teachers' methods, and noting their results from time to time.

The schemes of work were by no means uniformly satisfactory. In some schools they were entered in the examination registers on the pages that are better reserved for memoranda concerning the successive periodical examinations. The schemes should be fully set out in detail in a work-book, and then in the memoranda reference to these may be made where necessary. A portion of the work-book should be set apart for standing schemes for such subjects as geography B, nature-study, history, &c., where selection is largely in the hands of the head teacher. By reference to these the Inspector is able to see at a glance how the particular subject is to be dealt with so far as concerns the grouping of the classes, and the number of years over which the work is spread. In some cases there was given for certain subjects a mere copy of the syllabus, without any indication of the method of treatment. A very large proportion of the schools altogether omitted from their schemes any reference to certain subjects, such as health and moral instruction, which, though not necessarily receiving a place on the time-table, are nevertheless expected to be dealt with in the course of each year's work. Frequently it was found that other subjects, for some reason looked upon as unimportant, had been very superficially treated, or entirely neglected; hence some schools that have gained the mark "very good" or "excellent" in a number of subjects are shown in the general result as only "satisfactory" on all the subjects taken together.