

In drawing, a satisfactory beginning has been made in the use of colour applied largely to copies illustrating nature-study. In other respects schemes of work were limited. Free drawing from objects and geometrical drawing sufficient to lead to practice in design and elementary solid geometry had in most cases received inadequate attention.

Other Subjects.—Of other subjects it may be briefly stated that the needlework, including a good deal of Red Cross work, is highly commendable; that in singing, while the tone was frequently satisfactory, little attention had been paid to notation and ear-training; and that in nature-study a satisfactory programme was usually presented. The institution of the new system of physical instruction has met with encouraging success. In a number of schools the drill was performed with smartness and enthusiasm. It is necessary to point out, however, that unless these qualities are present the exercises are of little advantage.

Handwork.—The handwork has not been adopted uniformly, either in amount or character. While uniformity in the latter is not necessary, the course should be planned so as to be progressive in each school. In the smaller schools the subject should appear in the scheme of work, at least in the preparatory division. Printing and other drawing in coloured chalks on blackboards, the use of sticks, of modelling, and of bricks and other blocks are very suitable, as they lend themselves easily to work connected with other subjects. Paper-folding may be included or may follow in the lower standards, succeeded by carton-work, all assisting in connection with drawing and arithmetic. The chief defect in the treatment of handwork is insufficient training in observation and oral expression. In some schools a scheme of the kind has been attempted, and a large proportion of the pupils in S5 and S6 have attended woodwork or cookery classes held in Greymouth.

Buildings.—Many of the school buildings of the district are old and unsuitable—one or two, indeed, require rebuilding. Those erected recently are, however, planned on more modern lines. The equipment leaves much to be desired. In nearly all schools neither dual nor single desks are in use, and the appliances are insufficient. The grounds of a number of schools afford little level area to provide for drill, games, and free play. The adverse climatic conditions afford the teachers little encouragement to undertake instruction based on the cultivation of school-gardens, and practically nothing is done in this direction.

Teachers' Classes.—Saturday classes were held during the year, the subjects of instruction being drawing and hygiene, with a course of first aid. In February the teachers, with those of the Westland District, were combined in classes in physical instruction under the direction of two instructors of the staff of the Education Department. The general result, as far as can be estimated in the subsequent work of the schools, was good. In consequence of this reduction of school-time a winter school was not held.

I have to acknowledge the uniform courtesy and consideration received from the Education Board, the ready assistance of its officers, and the hearty welcome and co-operation of the teachers of both public and private schools.

I have, &c.,

The Director of Education, Wellington.

A. J. MORTON, Senior Inspector.

WESTLAND.

SIR,—

Hokitika, 22nd January, 1916.

I have the honour to submit for the year 1915 the annual report on the primary schools of the Westland Education District and the private schools whose inspection was undertaken by the Board.

To the inspection of these schools for this year was added that of the schools of the Grey District. In the work of the two districts I was favoured during the month of November with the able assistance of Mr. J. A. Valentine, B.A.

The number of public schools in operation in the Westland District during the whole or part of the year was thirty-nine; in addition, five Roman Catholic schools were inspected. With the exception of five small schools in the extreme south of the district, all schools that were open throughout the year received two visits.

The following is a summary of the number of pupils at the time of the teachers' final examination:—

					Number on Roll.	Present at Annual Examination.
Standard VII	..	..	..	..	70	68
„ VI	..	..	..	..	93	90
„ V	..	..	..	..	115	111
„ IV	..	..	..	..	118	114
„ III	..	..	..	..	130	129
„ II	..	..	..	..	154	150
„ I	..	..	..	..	176	173
Preparatory	..	..	..	..	476	449
Totals	..	..	..	..	1,332	1,284

Conditions.—Of the public schools, nine have been open on less than 400 half-days and nine on more than 420 half-days. Although the school year was reduced by time taken for the teachers' class for physical instruction, 410 half-days should easily have been reached unless the attending circumstances were exceptional. Twenty schools, however, failed to complete even that moderate school year. The average attendance for the year was 89.1 per cent. of the average roll number. As the rainfall of the district reached 134 in. for the year, the regularity of the pupils may be accepted as good.