

teachers were instructed in the mode of application. The arrangements made for the medical and physical inspection of the district are gradually becoming more systematic, and we hope to see the advantages of the system extended to every school. Though our experience of this important branch of instruction has been but brief, we cannot refrain from extolling the advantages conferred on the rising generation by the inauguration of such a system.

We have, &c.,

The Director of Education, Wellington.

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

CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 16th March, 1917.

We have the honour to present our annual report on the schools of the Canterbury Education District, formed during the year by the amalgamation of the former districts of Grey, Westland, North and South Canterbury.

The new district embraces a very large area, and will entail upon the Board and its officers the solution of many problems of management. Upon the efforts of those administering educational affairs will depend the success or failure of the experiment which is being made. Theoretically there should be no question on the score of cost of administration, for one central Board should be able to work far more economically than four Boards working within the same boundaries. So far as the teachers are concerned, there is no doubt that amalgamation will give a brighter outlook; promotion will be more certain, and it is the hope of promotion that furnishes one of the greatest incentives to good work. The cause of education in the smaller districts must be materially benefited, for the closer relationship with large centres should conduce to a wider range of vision, and give room for a higher standard of achievement. We have every reason to anticipate that the efforts of those engaged in the cause of education in the enlarged district will meet with even greater success than has been achieved in its several parts in the past.

Visits paid.—The number of schools open at the close of the year was 385. To each of these, with very few exceptions, two visits were paid. Similar visits were also paid to forty-one private schools. In addition to the ordinary work of inspection, examinations for the purpose of awarding certificates of proficiency were held at a great many centres during the year, the method of procedure being that, as far as possible, candidates should be examined in their own schools. Where this was impracticable examinations were conducted in convenient centres at which pupils of neighbouring schools assembled. In the case of schools in outlying districts, proficiency candidates were taken at the time of the annual visit to the school. All examinations were personally supervised by one or other of the Inspectors. The following is a summary of the results of examinations for Standard VI certificates:—

	Number examined.	Proficiency Certificates.	Competency Certificates.
Public schools	2,236	1,377	419
Private schools	225	131	42
Special examinations	203	99	65

Government.—The children, on the whole, are quiet, orderly, obedient, and well-mannered, and the general atmosphere in our schools furnishes abundant evidence that, with few exceptions, our pupils are wisely governed. The majority of our teachers are sincere and consistent, unreservedly giving of their best to those under their charge, between whom and the teachers good relations almost invariably prevail. When present conditions with respect to the tone of our schools are compared with those which existed some thirty years ago there is a striking evidence of moral development. Honesty in school work, politeness, respectful demeanour, and consideration for the feelings of others stand on a much higher plane than formerly. We have again to congratulate the teachers upon the very fine work done by their pupils in connection with the Red Cross and other organizations.

Schools and Grounds.—The interiors of a great many of the schools are bright and cheerful, with material and apparatus under careful supervision. Still, however, there are teachers who see nothing wrong in untidy cupboards, badly hung maps, and neglected material. The room and grounds are mainly the direct expression of the personality of the teacher, and if those responsible show good taste, and by the force of example inculcate desirable habits, the general surroundings soon present an improved appearance. The excellence of the gardens attached to some of the schools is a just cause for pride, and we cannot too highly praise those teachers who have made their playgrounds the beauty-spots of their immediate neighbourhood. There is still room for improvement as regards some of the rooms in which the junior divisions are receiving instruction. To spend an hour or two in a well-equipped room is a delightful experience. The brighter the atmosphere for the little ones, the easier is the educational training. Indirectly, too, this may be an important means of securing regular attendance. The condition of the buildings, with the exception of those in one or two parts of the district, is mainly satisfactory. There are some, however, which have outlived the natural term of their existence, and it will be incumbent upon the Board in the near future to replace these ancient structures by new buildings of modern design. It will also be necessary to divide some of the existing rooms so as to obtain more comfortable teaching-conditions. Where graded floors still exist level floors should be substituted, in order to give opportunity for rearrangement of desks, and thus secure improved lighting-conditions where these are defective.

District High Schools.—[See E.—6, Report on Secondary Education.]

Medical Inspection.—The most important fact in connection with medical inspection has been the starting of corrective classes. These have been carried out during the year, and the results are most satisfactory, even exceeding expectations. The Medical Inspector has discharged