

the syllabus you will no doubt fully consider whether we are aiming at too much in endeavouring to carry out the requirements of the present code of instruction.

PRESENTATION IN THE STANDARDS.

The standard regulations originally provided that all those pupils who were in "fair attendance" during the year were to be presented annually for examination in a higher standard. The indefinite expression "fair attendance" immediately gave rise to difficulties. Who were to be the judges of what was a "fair attendance?" In some provinces it was fixed at 250 attendances, in others at 300, and in one or two provinces there was no rule whatever. In Otago there was a strict rule that all pupils who were in attendance during the six weeks immediately preceding the inspection must be presented for a higher examination than the one they had passed. When such a state of things existed, comparison of the percentage of passes obtained in the districts was of little or no value. The Institute pointed out, some years ago, the desirability of having some definite and recognized rule in the matter.

It was evident that some authoritative regulation from the department was necessary, and we have had the recently issued Order in Council respecting classification and presentation. This regulation permits the teacher to rearrange the pupils three months previous to inspection. Should a teacher think that a number of pupils, from any cause whatever, are unfit to be presented in a higher standard, then he may reclassify, and have those that are turned back re-examined in the standard passed at their last examination. The teacher has large discretionary powers, and altogether the regulation is of a most liberal character. As a rule of guidance, however, it is almost as indefinite as the original "fair attendance." A teacher, in acting under this regulation, might, by repeatedly reclassifying, come into frequent collision with parents, Committees, and Inspectors. Inspectors will be continually challenging the propriety of putting pupils back. Parents would, naturally enough, be loud in their complaints.

It is open to further objections. Three months previous to inspection it is often difficult to say that the pupil will be unable to pass the standard. Again, to put a pupil back for three months for the purpose of being examined in a standard which he had already passed would be most discouraging in its effect. Non-presentation in a higher standard, on the recommendation of the teacher, will be, as already stated, a source of great dissatisfaction to parents, and a ground of suspicion on the part of Inspectors.

On the whole, I am convinced it will yet be found that the proposal of the Institute will best meet conflicting interests. It lays down a clear rule of guidance, and there is no uncertainty about its application. Indirectly it would be the means of securing better attendance. Parents will know that, unless the number of attendances has been secured, the pupil will not be presented, and thus the responsibility of non-presentation rest with them, and they will be induced to see that the pupil is present during the specified number of attendances.

The resolution of the Institute does not state that the teacher *shall* withhold all from examination who have not made the specified number of attendances, but *may* withhold, if he is of opinion that they will fail. The resolution has been discussed by all the district Institutes, and everywhere is looked upon as the best way of providing for that special section of pupils known as "irregulars."

THE INSPECTORATE.

Under this heading I need only state that the methods of inspection adopted in the various provinces often differ, and a very great difference is sometimes made in the standard papers. In the absence of periodic conferences of Inspectors for the purpose of comparing and arranging work this is inevitable.

TEACHERS' CERTIFICATES.

I am glad to see that you have already brought this matter under the notice of the Senate of the New Zealand University. I have no doubt that, when the matter has been more fully considered, the Senate will see the wisdom of complying with your request.

THE EDUCATIONAL EXHIBITION.

I believe that at the forthcoming Industrial Exhibition, to be held at Wellington, it is intended to have an educational section. We were not aware that the Institute was supposed to take any initiative steps in the matter, and hence have been awaiting instructions from those carrying out the Exhibition. The Institute will do what it can by way of assistance, as promised in the attached resolutions.

I am, &c.,

D. WHITE,

Secretary, New Zealand Educational Institute.

The Hon. R. Stout, Minister of Education.

No. 3.

MEMORANDUM BY THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF SCHOOLS WITH REFERENCE TO THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE NEW ZEALAND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE, 1885.

I.—SYLLABUS OF INSTRUCTION.

(1.) *History and Geography to be Class Subjects.*

I HAVE discussed this in former minutes, and the Inspectors have been asked to advise. The proposal would reduce the "pass-subjects" to reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, and (for Standards III. to VI.) grammar.