

each school; for I think that the practice of so doing may be productive of a great deal of harm, especially when it is the unpleasant duty of the Inspector to find fault with anything in connection with the schools. I have, as a rule, given only general results, and I have refrained from mentioning by name backward and badly-managed schools. Unsatisfactory results and any irregularities must of course be reported, but the reports should be of a confidential nature, and not be made public property at the risk of lowering the teacher in the eyes of his pupils. If any teacher is unfit for his position, he should be removed at any cost; but as long as he retains office his authority should be upheld. Immediately after the examination of each school I wrote an exhaustive report thereon, in which all shortcomings were noticed. These reports were written in duplicate, at the cost of much time, and forwarded to the Committees and to the Board. To them, then, I would refer the Board for any information with regard to individual schools. The practice of selecting favourable portions of the reports to the exclusion of what was unfavourable, and publishing them in the newspaper circulating in the district, as was done in some schools, is much to be censured. I do not think that the "remarks" in such reports, of whatever nature they might be, should be published. It was interesting to notice how mildly some successful teachers bore their honours as compared with others who must have taken such pains to blazon them abroad. I can call to mind one school in the case of which, in less than twelve hours after my report was written, I saw the *favourable* portions in three newspapers—a performance very creditable indeed to the newspapers, but not so to those immediately affected by the report. Teachers, above all professional men, would do well to remember that "Good wine needs no bush." Owing to the precocity of colonial children, I doubt, too, the wisdom of publishing the names of those successful in passing their standards. "Why was not my child's name in the papers?"—not, be it remarked, "Why did not my child pass?"—is a question I have heard asked. And here I may mention that the work of schools ought not to be interrupted upon the entrance of visitors, for the purpose of trotting out and flaunting certain attainments of the pupils. By the earnestness of its every-day work should a school be judged; and I know of no excuse for suspending a time-table.

I have alluded occasionally to outside pressure. Several teachers have informed me that parents have interfered with them in the classification of their pupils. Weakly yielding to such illegitimate pressure, some of these teachers, against their own judgment, have promoted children, with the natural result—failure at the examination. It is astonishing how many there still are who believe that the progress of their children is satisfactory when they are frequently reading in new books. Again, I find that teachers often shrink from punishing children for unpunctuality, bad conduct, &c., because they know that their action will be resented by the parents of the offenders. By these means not only is the reputation of a school damaged, but also the character of the children. If a teacher is to successfully cultivate the moral and intellectual faculties of those under his care, it is necessary that he should have, not only absolute control in his school, but also the sympathy and support of the parents of his charges. He it is who must be the best judge of matters relative to classification and promotion; and if, in maintaining that discipline in his school which he knows is essential to its progress, he err on the side of severity, the remedy is not far to seek.

And now I must apologise for the length of this report. Under the circumstances, I thought it best to treat of all matters in any way connected with the schools, and because, as I take it, an Inspector's report should contain something more than a mass of confusing and misleading statistics. As there are many inexperienced teachers in the service of the Board, I also have written some suggestions with regard to the class-management of the subjects.

My thanks are due to both teachers and settlers in the country districts for the hospitality and kindness shown to me, a stranger.

I have, &c.,

W. H. VEREKER-BINDON, M.A.,

Inspector of Schools.

The Chairman, Education Board, Wanganui.

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Wellington, 25th February, 1885.

I have the honour to present my eleventh annual report on the working condition of the primary schools in the Wellington District, being the report for the calendar year 1884.

ATTENDANCE.—During the year 1884 I examined all the schools in operation in the Wellington District, fifty-five in number; and I also paid a visit of inspection only to all but four, three of them being temporarily closed at the time set apart for visiting them.

The total number of children on the books at the examination was 7,299, showing an increase of 249 on last year's returns. Of this number 4,636 are returned as being over eight years of age; and the total number of those entered on the schedules for standard examination, from whom a pass could be looked for, was 3,918. The difference of these two numbers—718—represents the number unrepresentable in standard work. After making due allowance for general increase, this number is larger than it was last year (634), a result which I am disappointed to find, inasmuch as it represents numerically a class of uncaring and uncared-for children of good age, whose early education is being neglected, and, whilst it includes absentees from examinations, it consists in a great measure of children attending school so irregularly that teachers cannot be held responsible for their backward condition.

The actual attendance at the examinations is even more satisfactory than it was last year, the numbers for 1883 and 1884 being respectively 6,226 and 6,640. It is interesting to notice how well the children of some schools attend. In twenty-six schools every child was present, and in this list is included three of the larger schools. And in a school with over three hundred standard candidates, only one was absent; and nine was the highest number of expected passes absent in any one school. The total number of standard candidates absent from whom a pass could have been expected was