

of insufficient numbers, is often merely nominal. In the larger schools, where its influence on the order and discipline is of more importance, it is almost invariably good. Singing is taught in nearly half the schools, and generally consists of the practice of a few songs with or without modulator exercises. The teachers of sewing deserve great credit for their general success. The quality of the work is quite as high as last year, a greater variety of operations is exemplified, and a close approximation to a perfect fulfilment of the instructions is no longer a rarity.

*Registers.*—Great improvement has taken place during the year in the keeping of the registers of admission, progress, and withdrawal. These important records are, with few exceptions, found fully and carefully posted up with all the necessary entries, and reasonable efforts to obtain accurate information of the dates of birth are general. There has been no reason to doubt that the registers of daily attendance are kept with scrupulous fidelity; but my visits revealed more than an occasional carelessness in respect of the times of marking, the insertion of marks for absence, and, in especial, the immediate entry of the totals.

*Appliances.*—Numerous useful additions to the good supply of maps already existing have been made, and most of the schools are now provided with a good globe. Diagrams of physiology and physics, and illustrations of natural history, are in course of distribution; but the cost will scarcely permit of the Board's supplying all schools with similar aids to instruction. Other desirable things, for the supply of which our teachers must live in hope, are suitable drawing models, illustrations of manufacturing processes for Standards II. and III., specimens of minerals and other substances, and scientific sets. It would be a great boon if a small grant from the public funds were made by way of subsidising local effort in providing such adjuncts, and, I may be permitted to add, in establishing school libraries for the use of teachers and children. The fair success of the Board's practice in providing half the cost of gymnastic apparatus, and the readiness with which considerable sums of money are raised locally for the purchase of books as school prizes, ought to afford sufficient encouragement for the application of the principle to the purposes indicated.

Appendices I. and II. attached to this report give the classification and examination results of each school. Appendix III. deals with the secondary subjects in the District High Schools of Waimate and Temuka. [Appendices are not reprinted.]

I have, &c.,

W. J. ANDERSON, M.A., LL.D., Inspector.

The Chairman, Education Board, South Canterbury.

GREY.

SIR,—

Timaru, 24th March, 1886.

I have the honour to submit a general report on the examination of the schools in the Education District of Grey for the year 1885.

The examinations were personally conducted by Mr. E. T. Robinson, your Secretary and Inspector, who judged the work of the lower classes (Standards I. and II., and for the greater part the grammar of Standard III.), made notes on the subjects not necessary for a standard pass, and forwarded for my judgment the papers worked by the higher classes in answer to printed questions previously furnished. Seventeen schools were examined in detail. In these there were on the rolls at the date of examination 1,383 children—680 boys and 703 girls—of whom fourteen, or 1·01 per cent., had already passed through the standard course; 872, or 63·05 per cent., were within the standard classification; and 497, or 35·93 per cent., were grouped in the infant division. Those who had already passed Standard VI. were examined in the work of that standard; the infants were examined briefly in classes. Of the 872 enrolled in standard classes, 828, or nearly 95 per cent., were present; 775 were examined for promotion, and fifty-three in a standard already passed. The number promoted to a higher standard was 579, which shows a percentage of promotions of (a) 41·87 on the roll number of the schools examined, a percentage of (b) 66·4 on the roll number of the standard classes (excluding Ex. VI.), a percentage of (c) 69·93 on the number present in standard classes (excluding Ex. VI.), and a percentage of (d) 74·71 on the number examined for promotion—that is, excluding pupils re-presented in the same standard. I am unaware whether these figures will be deemed satisfactory when placed alongside the results of previous years or of other districts; but it is to be observed that, in contradistinction to the practice in some cases prior to June, 1884, no children have been withheld from presentation or excluded from this calculation on the ground of insufficient attendance or for any other reason. In the South Canterbury District, where the same examination papers were used and the same standard applied in the higher classes, the corresponding percentages are (a) 42·19, (b) 66·41, (c) 73·2, and (d) 73·83.

By the new regulations dealing with "Inspection of Schools and Standards of Education," which came into force on the 1st January, 1886, the term "percentage of passes" there recognised is made to refer to the number on the school roll, and a new term, "percentage of failures," is introduced to express the proportion between the failures and the passes and failures taken together, the failures referred to being the net result obtained by excluding from the calculation those pupils (to be termed "exceptions") who do not pass and have made fewer than half attendances during the three preceding quarters. With the object of preparing the way for the new order of things I have thought it desirable to give both a "percentage of passes" and a "percentage of failures" according to these definitions for every school, in addition to a percentage of passes on the number examined in standards. The "percentage of failures" for the district is 28·69, as against 24·03 in the South Canterbury District, and the total number of children excluded in making this calculation, and termed by me "proposed exceptions," is only sixteen. In this connection I should explain that, as the regulation of June, 1884, enabling a teacher to re-present children in a standard already passed, is not included in the new scheme, and as no teacher would re-present children who had any chance of passing a higher standard, the net failures on which the "percentage of failures"