

SUMMARY of RESULTS for the whole District.

Standard Classes.			Presented.	Absent.	Excepted.	Failed.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.	
								Years	months.
S 7	...	...	70	...	...	...	...	...	...
S 6	...	...	202	5	3	35	159	14	3
S 5	...	...	427	15	16	46	351	13	1
S 4	...	...	627	28	39	188	372	12	0
S 3	...	...	652	34	31	103	484	10	11
S 2	...	...	773	14	41	113	606	9	7
S 1	...	...	616	22	22	49	521	8	7
P.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals			3,367	118	152	534	2,493	*	

\* Mean of average age, 11·5.

GREY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Greymouth, 12th April, 1887.

I have the honour to present my first annual report upon the schools of the Grey District, with some account of my work since my appointment as Secretary and Inspector.

I received my appointment to the combined offices in May of last year, and pressure of office work prevented the completion of my visits of inspection until October. Early in November I began the examination of the schools, which, with short intervals for attention to office duties, occupied until the 24th December, on which day I examined the school at Kynnersley, or Seventeen-mile Beach. My plans were considerably disarranged by an outbreak of measles at the latter end of the year, and I was compelled thereby to defer the examination of the Greymouth and Paroa Schools until February and March of this year.

For all the smaller schools I was able to hand the schedule of results to the teacher immediately after the examination. Since the beginning of this year I have ascertained the results for six of the larger schools examined at the end of last year, prepared and examined the papers for Scholarships A and B, ascertained the results of the examination of pupil-teachers, prepared and examined the papers for the Watkins Medal, and have examined the Greymouth and Paroa Schools. In addition to the foregoing, a considerable amount of office work has required attention.

The postponement of the examination of the largest school in the district, and of another important school, to this year, has caused much inconvenience, the duties of the Secretary being most onerous in the early months of the year, owing to the yearly audit, and the requirements of the department in the way of returns, &c. I have therefore been obliged to employ clerical aid, it being impossible for me to deal satisfactorily with all the subjects requiring attention. There was the more necessity for this as the department is very much inconvenienced by the delay in sending forward the returns necessary for the Minister's yearly statement, and urgent appeals have been made by the Secretary for promptness in their despatch.

As the new regulations for standards of education and inspection of schools came into operation last year, it may be as well that I should give some particulars concerning them, and show the principal points of difference between them and the regulations superseded by them.

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Setting the concessions in the subjects of geography and history, and in the matter of "exceptions," against the introduction of a new pass subject—viz., drawing—with the greater strictness of the regulations generally, it cannot be said that there has been much relief to the teacher. To what extent relief may be given depends very much upon the Inspector's reading of the regulations. I imagine that the purpose of making history and geography class subjects is to take them out of the category of those subjects in which text-books are used, especially for memory work and the acquisition of stores of detail, and to make them what may be called reading subjects, to be tested by oral examination. This view is, I think, most likely to furnish relief, and to lead to more satisfactory methods of teaching, particularly in the direction of combining the two relief subjects, as they may be called. I shall have more to say upon this subject under the head of "Reading."

As to the mode of examining class subjects, always in class, and, in the case of geography, before a blank map, is, in my opinion, the most desirable. This manner of examination allows of a wider range of questioning; and the nervous or timid child who would ponder helplessly over a cord of questions, only getting more confused as the time allowed drew to a close, would, by the play allowed to the spirit of competition, and the possibility of meeting with a question it could answer satisfactorily, be cheered and encouraged, especially if the examiner prefaced the examination with a few kindly words.

As the most considerable change under the new regulations may be said to be in the manner of calculating percentages, it is necessary, to prevent misconception on the part of Committees, parents, &c., that I should give some explanation of the new process. I am inclined to think that, as a means of preventing a too implicit belief in the oracular powers of percentages, and a too literal translation of them, the change effected will be beneficial. This being my first essay in the art of inspection, it has come upon me with some degree of surprise that a hankering for large percentages has grown up in this district, the results, in my belief, being anything but favourable