

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR THE WHOLE DISTRICT.

Classes.	Presented.	Absent.	Excepted.	Failed.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.
						Yrs. mos.
Above Standard VI. ...	86	...	...	...	...	...
Standard VI. ...	633	35	32	184	382	14 3
" V. ...	1,547	104	99	527	817	13 3
" IV. ...	2,624	178	154	624	1,668	12 5
" III. ...	3,124	168	198	611	2,147	11 6
" II. ...	3,201	160	179	352	2,510	10 4
" I. ...	3,012	117	85	202	2,608	9 2
Preparatory... ..	8,176	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ...	22,403	762	747	2,500	10,132	*

* Mean of average age, 11 years 10 months.

TARANAKI.

SIR,—

Education Office, New Plymouth, 9th February, 1891.

I have the honour to submit my report on the schools of the district for the year ending the 31st December, 1890.

I have again to report that the schools have been inspected and examined as required by the regulations. It has been the practice to begin the examinations as late as the beginning of October in order to give the fullest time for preparation. Now, however, owing to the increasing number of schools and the time required in travelling to overtake them, it is imperative that this work must be begun at a much earlier date. In doing so, I purpose making a change in the order of each school's examination, experience having conclusively shown me that it will be a very beneficial one, though it will to some slight extent lessen the time for preparation of a few schools during the present year. In bush schools, under present arrangements, the eldest scholars, being required at home for farm or dairy work, attend very irregularly for a time before the examination, and are, as a rule, withdrawn from school after it takes place for the remaining portion of the quarter. A reference to the quarterly returns for December in past years will show this to be the case. I trust the change will lessen the irregularity. Bad weather and sickness in several parts of the district delayed the examinations, and I was compelled to carry on the work at Tarata, Tariki Road, and Kaimata Road after the date on which the schools closed for the holidays, that the whole might be completed. On a previous attempt to visit these schools I had to return to town, as the weather was bad and the roads blocked by landslips.

I again refer to the disadvantages under which the staff at the Central School labours, arising from the school being conducted in two separate buildings at a distance from each other. If economy in working and the best results from the organization of the school are considered, then provision should be made for accommodating all the classes at the larger building. The allocation of this year's building grant will provide for increased space at Okato, where the enlargement made about three years ago has been found insufficient for the present attendance. This has been the most pressing want. Several residences, also, are urgently wanted in districts where a difficulty exists in providing lodgings for the teacher. In one case the teacher travels daily about fourteen miles between his home and the school. Four of the largest school buildings are badly in need of painting.

Several of the residences, gardens, and grounds about the school buildings are exceedingly well looked after. Lepperton, Inglewood, Tikorangi, Oakura, and Tataraimaka are worthy of mention. The schools also at these and several other places are not overlooked. A little personal effort from some teachers is, however, needed in arranging and keeping the apparatus of the school in order, cleaning out their school cupboards, fireplaces, and mantelshelves, which at inspection visit were in a number of cases neither presentable nor creditable.

At the pupil-teachers' examination, twenty were examined in their classified grades. Three completed their period of apprenticeship, two of whom have been promoted; the other, a promising and trustworthy teacher, received an appointment in the Wanganui District, where the better monetary inducement is likely to draw the best of our young teachers, if the Board does not give them greater encouragement to remain. Very few males offer as candidates; at present there are only three engaged in the district. The scale of payments is not liberal enough to induce them to enter the profession. The total allowance for a course of four years is but a trifle better than that of a telegraph messenger for the like period.

Considerable trouble and interruption of the school work arises yearly from the frequent changes of teachers, chiefly among those in charge of schools. No less than twenty-one changes of this class have taken place during the past year. The smaller schools are mostly affected. The worst case is that of the Upper Mangorei School, which has had no less than seven teachers within the past seven years. What results can be expected from such a school? The settlers, generally, are opposed to the schools being kept closed when a change takes place; consequently a temporary appointment, which in some cases has become permanent in character, has to be made. From several of such, the scholars have suffered by the bad methods of instruction, and the indifferent