

Inspector.				Time employed.	Distance travelled.	Inspection Visits.	Schools examined.*
				Hours.	Miles.		
Mr. Petrie	..	...	...	1,928	4,034	92	75
Mr. Taylor	...	...	...	1,952	4,286	78	74
Mr. Goyen	...	...	...	1,994	3,976	81	84

Of the pupils examined, 85 per cent. passed the standards for which they were presented—a better result than has been attained in any previous year. The percentage of failures for the whole district was 12, a result considerably more favourable than that of recent years. There is also considerable improvement in the marks given for “class”-subjects, and in those for additional subjects. As usual, very few children were absent from the examinations, and the absences were nearly all owing to sickness. The proportion of pupils excepted is still low and does not show any increase. The percentage of failures at a school may be taken as a rough measure of its efficiency. No fewer than 37 per cent. of the schools of the district show a percentage of failures of 10 or less, thus reaching a high level of efficiency; and 29 per cent. of them have a percentage of failures ranging from 11 to 20, which shows a very fair level of efficiency. In two-thirds of the remaining schools the percentage varies from 21 to 30. There is little change in the ages at which the various standards are passed; but it may be noted that the average age at which Standard I. was passed is one month higher than it was last year. No fewer than 1,217 pupils over eight years of age were not presented in Standard I. The reasons assigned for the withholding of these children from examination in the standard appeared to the Inspectors to be in most cases quite satisfactory. The permission to group classes for instruction in geography, history, and grammar, granted by the revised regulations, has proved a great boon to the teachers of the smaller schools. It has proved advantageous in the higher classes of some of the larger schools also. Considerable complaint is made by teachers about the weight of the drawing course in several of the classes, and the Inspectors are of opinion that the time required for teaching drawing has led to hurtful curtailment of the time available for teaching writing, more especially in the large number of schools taught by single teachers.

DRAWING DEPARTMENT.—The report of the headmaster of the Drawing Department is appended. The classes were attended during the year by 404 students—viz., 86 teachers and pupil-teachers, 54 students in training, 103 pupils in the afternoon classes, and 161 artisans and other pupils in the evening. The expenditure on the department for the year was—Salaries, £550; incidental expenses, £75 11s. 6d.; amount received from fees, &c., £278 5s.: net cost, £347 6s. 6d.

TRAINING COLLEGE.—The report of the Rector of the Training College is attached. The attendance of students during the year was,—

Students in 1892—	M.	F.	Total.	Left during 1892—	M.	F.	Total.
Remaining from 1891 ...	31	42	73	Teaching in public schools	9	22	31
Admitted during 1892 ...	16	27	43	Awaiting appointment ...	1	6	7
Left during 1892 ...	12	32	44	On leave—at the University	1	3	4
On books, December, 1892	35	37	72	Left the service ...	1	1	2

The cost of the institution for the year was—Salaries, £1,057 10s.; allowances to students, £1,351 11s. 1d.; incidentals, £9 8s. 2d.: total, £2,418 9s. 3d.

The Board desires to acknowledge the liberality of the Government in securing to it the sum of £500 as a grant in aid of the Training College expenditure. The Board, however, strongly presses upon Government the necessity of an adequate grant being made in future.

ARBOR DAY, AND THE PLANTING OF SCHOOL GROUNDS.—Arbor Day was observed in this district for the first time on the 4th August. The reports concerning the observance of the day show that the movement was heartily approved by teachers, Committees, and the general public. In some districts all other business was suspended for the afternoon, the schools vying with one another in making the day pleasant and successful. According to reports several thousand trees were planted throughout the district.

A large proportion of the teachers in the Board’s service failed to realise the double responsibility of their positions, as occupants in charge of valuable properties and as instructors bound to set their pupils an example of industry, order, cleanliness, and all that tends to educate and refine. With a view to remedy this serious defect and to rouse some interest in the important matter of tree and flower culture, and to induce teachers to take greater care of the valuable properties intrusted to them, the Board issued the following circular, the good effects of which are already making themselves apparent in many parts of the district:—

The Education Board has had its attention directed to the fact that throughout the Otago District a number of the public-school buildings and their surroundings still present a cheerless and untidy appearance, and the Board regrets very much that in a number of instances no attempts have been made to enclose the school grounds with live fences, or to plant them with trees and shrubs, and that there are still many school gardens unworthy of the name. It may be urged by the teachers as an excuse for this state of matters, so far as they are concerned, that there is no absolute security for the repayment to them, in the event of their leaving, of any outlay made by them on the improvement of the school property. The School Committee and the settlers, who have also a considerable interest in this matter, could no doubt do very much to encourage and substantially assist the teacher to improve the appearance of the school-buildings and grounds by the planting of trees, shrubs, and live fences for shelter and ornament, and by the formation of a fruit, flower, and kitchen garden. But a very great deal might be done in this direction by the teacher himself, by the putting-forth of a moderate amount of personal effort. Because of the fitness of the thing, and because of the benefit he would himself derive from the exercise, the Board would urge upon every

* Thirty-five of the schools in this column are reckoned twice over, as two Inspectors worked together in examining them.