

standard was accepted. In reading, spelling, and writing the results agreed more closely. I find that the Inspectors in Otago report somewhat to the same effect. For the year ending 31st December, 1901, they state; "In our reports on the several schools we have generally been able to say that the headmasters' passes were justified; but to bring some of them within this description we had to exercise pressure, many of the passes assigned by the teacher seeming to us to have been given too easily. A large number of teachers took advantage of the regulation that allows them to pass pupils that fail in two subjects. We are convinced that this regulation makes a pass too easy. Arithmetic and composition are the subjects in which our marking most frequently differed from that of the teacher, and in the latter subject his marking was, we are bound to say, not infrequently very faulty. We assured ourselves of this by reading the papers on which the pupils had been passed. Under the present regulations the efficiency of a school should, in great measure, be judged by the work of the Sixth Standard, the finished product of the school; but unless teachers insist upon good work in the standards below it they must look in vain for good work in it." They, however, state that "a large number of teachers" passed pupils that failed in two subjects. It cannot be said that comparatively "a large number" of our teachers did so, but, at the same time, I noticed an increasing tendency in the direction indicated by the Otago Inspectors.

I have, &c.,

W. E. SPENCER, M.A., B.Sc., Inspector of Schools.

The Chairman, Taranaki Education Board.

WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Education Office, Wanganui, 1st March, 1903.

We have the honour to submit our report for the year ended the 31st December, 1902.

Congratulatory.—During the year, Dr. J. Smyth, M.A., who occupied the position of Chief Inspector of Schools for the district for some eighteen months, was appointed to the position of Principal of the Melbourne Training College. He has since also received the appointment of Lecturer on Education at the Melbourne University. Dr. Smyth's appointment was made from among candidates from all parts of Australasia; and we feel that the great honour conferred upon him is likewise an honour to our district and to New Zealand teachers, to whose ranks Dr. Smyth formerly belonged. While we regret that Dr. Smyth was thus compelled to sever his connection with us, we congratulate him on his promotion, and wish him all success in his new sphere.

Schools.—The number of schools in active operation during the past year was 155, an increase of three on the previous year. The new schools opened during the year were Watershed Road, Pohonui, Torere, Utuwai, Te Awa, and Awahou South. Owing to a rearrangement of the boundary between the Education Districts of Taranaki and Wanganui, three of our schools were placed in the former district.

Inspection and Examination.—Owing to a variety of causes our work during the early part of the year was greatly hindered, and on this account fewer schools than usual were inspected. We hope that at the close of the present year there will be very few schools that have not been inspected. All the schools were examined. Some of the schools are very inaccessible, notably those in the upper reaches of the Wanganui, Wangaehu, and Rangitikei Rivers, and it is scarcely possible at present to visit such more than once a year.

The following is a summary of the examination results for the whole district:—

Classes.	Number on Roll.	Present at Inspector's Annual Visit.	Absent.	Failed	Passed	Per Cent. of Passes on		Average Age of Pupils in Each Class.
						Number on Roll.	Number present.	
Standard VII. ...	353	340	13	...	...	...	...	Yrs. mos.
" VI. ...	699	671	28	101	570	81	84	15 2
" V. ...	1,091	1,045	46	162	883	80	84	13 11
" IV. ...	1,329	1,279	50	227	1,052	78	82	13 1
" III. ...	1,455	1,426	29	187	1,239	85	86	12 1
" II. ...	1,411	1,367	44	143	1,224	86	89	11 2
" I. ...	1,361	1,321	40	89	1,232	90	94	10 0
Preparatory ...	3,487	3,020	467	...	...	...	...	8 11
Totals ...	11,186	10,469	717	909	6,200	84	87	...

From the above table it will be seen that the number of children attending the schools in the district is still increasing. This year shows an advance of 342 on the previous year. The average age for the different standards is much the same as last year. We are pleased to note that that of Standard VI. is again below fourteen years.

Passes awarded by Head Teachers.—The great majority of teachers in awarding the passes in Standards I. to V. have maintained a high standard, and have based their awards not on one single examination, but on a series of examinations given at intervals throughout the year. This is as it should be. Those only deserve a pass who have worked hard and attended well throughout