

high one I would like to say that if we are to improve in our life's work we must aim each year to reach a higher level. Let not the standard of "what we ought to be" be degraded to fit in with "what we are." Teachers and Inspectors have but one aim—to train the children that they may become good citizens, useful members of society, a credit to their teachers, who have laid the foundations well and truly.

I have, &c.,
H. SMITH, B.A., Inspector.

The Chairman, Grey Education Board.

WESTLAND.

SIR,— Education Office, Hokitika, 12th January, 1904.
In presenting the following reports on the results of the inspection and examination of the primary schools of the district, I beg to state that thirty-six public schools and four Catholic schools were examined during the year. Separate reports have been presented relating to the secondary class of the Hokitika District High School, the pupil-teachers, the candidates for scholarships, and the two classes in woodwork. Each of the public schools, apart from those of South Westland, was visited at least once for the purposes of inspection.

The following table presents information relating to the annual examination:—

Classes.				Number on Roll.	Percentage of Total Roll.	Present at Inspector's Annual Visit.	Present in Standards I. to VI.	Passed.	Average Age of the Pupils in each Class.
Standard VII.				37	3.5	35	Yrs. mos.
" VI.				81	7.7	78	78	57	14 7
" V.				102	9.7	96	96	75	13 10
" IV.				137	13.1	132	132	111	13 2
" III.				115	11.0	113	113	102	12 5
" II.				127	12.0	124	124	105	11 1
" I.				88	8.4	84	84	83	9 11
Preparatory				363	34.6	315	8 8
Totals ...				1,050	...	977	627	533	6 10
									11 4*

* Mean of average age.

In addition it may be stated that the number of pupils presented in regard to individual subjects in a lower class than the standard in which they had otherwise been placed was: in arithmetic twenty-one, in grammar three, in spelling three. On the other hand, three pupils were presented in a higher class in arithmetic. The number over eight years of age presented in the preparatory class was fifty-eight. The reasons given for the retention of these pupils in the division stated do not call for adverse comment.

One noticeable feature is the failure of a large majority of the schools to remain open during the year on a sufficient number of half-days. Only seven schools succeeded in maintaining a school year of 420 half-days, a number that allows holidays of a total duration of ten weeks. If the efficiency of the schools is to be maintained, a full school year is essential. It is true that in a few cases a satisfactory explanation of the reduction is available; but it is of great importance that School Committees may so arrange and control the allotment of holidays that time is allowed to accomplish the work for which the schools have been established. A second feature is the fact that only half of the schools under sole teachers reach a satisfactory standard in the class subjects. While the teachers concerned should endeavour to remove the defects referred to, the chief remedy called for is a modification of the amount of work required from these schools. The English subjects and arithmetic—especially as they are prescribed in the syllabus recently issued—all schools should be asked to attempt. For the smaller schools in other subjects a number of schemes should be prepared, varying in scope and in the subjects included; such schemes to be adopted on the authority of the local Board of Education according to the conditions existing in each district. All these schools have in common the difficulty of carrying on the work of so many different classes. Other conditions are not the same, however, and, as the teachers vary in attainments from the bare requirements of a Sixth Standard to what is represented by the possession of a full certificate, it is not to be expected that in every school the same course of instruction can even be attempted.

During the year a number of schools of the district have suffered—in some cases severely—through the prevalence of sickness. The two largest schools, however, have established or maintained commendable efficiency, and have presented a full course of instruction, which includes excellent physical training for both girls and boys, and military drill by their respective school cadet corps. Each of these schools devotes a considerable amount of attention to manual and technical instruction, including handwork, practical work in elementary science, and woodwork, instruction in the last being given to a special class held after the ordinary school hours.

The general result of the year's work in the remaining schools is satisfactory, the chief exception being supplied by schools that have maintained a short school year, and a few household schools where the teacher is a member of the family to which the pupils belong. In the latter