

SCHOOL-SURROUNDINGS.—In but few schools do we find that a real pride is taken in beautifying the ground with shrubs, trees, flowers, &c. Pupils, to a great extent, are moulded by their environment, and neatness and tidiness in their surroundings must play an important part in inculcating in them careful and methodical habits.

In future, we intend to report specially on the tidiness of the playground, and the means taken to make the school bright and attractive, and on all of those things that tend to create a good and healthy tone in the school.

Gardens, outbuildings, &c., should be kept in such a condition that they should have a refining influence on the children.

We have, &c.,

W. A. BALLANTYNE, B.A.,
R. G. WHETTER, M.A., } Inspectors.

The Chairman, Education Board, Taranaki.

WANGANUI.

SIR,—

Education Office, Wanganui, 31st March, 1908.

We have the honour to present our report for the year ended 31st December, 1907.

Annual visits were paid to 186 schools, the following being in summary the statistics for year for the whole district:—

Classes.						Number on Roll.	Present at Inspector's Annual Visit.	Average Age of Pupils in each Class.
								Yrs. mos.
Standard VII	...	...	...	...	...	255	233	14 11
" VI	...	...	...	...	...	912	862	13 11
" V	...	...	...	...	...	1,249	1,162	13 0
" IV	...	...	...	...	...	1,461	1,390	12 1
" III	...	...	...	...	...	1,552	1,442	11 2
" II	...	...	...	...	...	1,619	1,529	9 11
" I	...	...	...	...	...	1,618	1,500	8 11
Preparatory	...	...	...	...	...	4,348	3,561	7 0
Totals	...	...	...	...	...	13,014	11,679	11 4*

* Mean of average age.

Though the number of children on the roll at the annual visit shows a substantial increase, the number present was considerably lower than in the two previous years. This is accounted for by the prevalence of sickness in the district during the latter part of last year.

The average age in the Dominion for Standard VI in 1906 was 13 years 9 months. In this district it was 13 years 8 months, but is now 13 years 11 months. The three-months increase in age is probably accounted for by the fact that many of the pupils failed to pass Standard VI in 1906 owing to the increased percentage of marks required, and were therefore, in 1907, spending their second year in the class.

As regards the infant classes, the average age in the Dominion for 1906 was 6 years 9 months. In our own district it is 7 years. The following table shows the age of preparatory class and Standard VI pupils in some of the largest schools in our district, and also the proportion of pupils in the preparatory classes. The table to some extent indicates the different rates of progress made by the pupils of the several schools through the preparatory classes and through the standards.

School.						Percentage of School in Preparatory Classes.		Average.	
								Preparatory.	Standard VI.
								Yrs. mos.	Yrs. mos.
Eltham District High	...	...	...	...	...	32.5		7 0	14 1
Hawera	...	...	...	...	...	30.2		7 5	14 7
Queen's Park	...	...	...	...	...	33.5		7 2	13 6
Marton District High	...	...	...	...	...	35.1		7 0	13 6
Feilding District High	...	...	...	...	...	29.8		7 2	14 1
Campbell Street	...	...	...	...	...	36.5		6 6	13 10
Foxton	...	...	...	...	...	45.7		7 9	15 7
The Dominion	...	...	...	...	...	29.3		6 9	13 9
Wanganui District	...	...	...	...	...	33.4		7 0	13 11

NOTE.—In the case of the District High Schools, Standard VII has not been included.