

In eight schools singing is not taught. In some of the others the singing is not very pleasant to listen to, but even in these credit is due for the attempt to brighten the school day with a song. In a large proportion of the schools fairly good singing is heard, and in all the large schools the upper classes give part-songs with very good effect. Even where the singing is best, we fear sight-reading of simple pieces is not one of the accomplishments the scholars have acquired, and yet it would not be too much to expect that they should have attained to this degree of skill before their school days are over.

In our last report we called attention to the regulation that requires the head teacher to draw up schemes of work for all the classes in his school, to examine the classes at fixed periods, and to keep a record of the nature and results of these examinations. The part of this regulation that apparently gives most trouble is the drawing-up of the schemes of work. The syllabus of instruction was purposely made wide to cover the needs of all grades of schools, and it is each teacher's business to draw up his programme within the limits of the syllabus to suit his own particular school. To do this well requires time and forethought, and the suitability of his programme may well be taken as one of the best tests of the teacher's skill in managing his school. There are still a fairly large number of teachers who must feel that they have not given us much chance of appraising their skill at any high value when this standard of measurement is applied.

We desire to place on record our appreciation of the efforts that have been made by certain uncertificated teachers to gain their certificates, and to congratulate many of our certificated teachers on the success they have achieved in examinations entitling them to a higher grade of certificate. Themselves learners, they will assuredly have more sympathy with those they are teaching, and running streams are ever more wholesome than stagnant pools.

We have, &c.,

JAS. GIBSON GOW, M.A.,
A. BELL, M.A., } Inspectors.

The Chairman, Education Board, South Canterbury.

OTAGO.

SIR,—

Education Office, Dunedin, 8th February, 1908.

We have the honour to present our general report for the year 1907.

The following table shows the number of pupils on the roll, the number present at the annual visit, and the average age of each class.

Classes.							Number on Roll.	Present at Inspector's Annual Visit.	Average Age of Pupils in each Class.
									Yrs. mos.
Standard VII	...	...	...	...	...	...	343	321	15 1
" VI	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,466	1,439	13 9
" V	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,025	1,941	12 11
" IV	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,218	2,153	12 0
" III	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,337	2,267	11 2
" II	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,190	2,145	9 11
" I	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,192	2,130	8 11
Preparatory	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,478	5,876	6 10
Totals	...	...	...	...	...	...	19,249	18,272	11 4*

* Mean of average ages.

The table shows a decrease in the roll-number of nearly 0·9 per cent., more than a third of it being in Standard VII.

Of the pupils who were present in Standard VI, 66 per cent. obtained the certificate of proficiency.

We group the schools according to efficiency as follows: Good to very good, 43 per cent.; satisfactory, 47 per cent.; fair, 9 per cent.; weak or very weak, 1 per cent. Compared with that of 1906, this grouping shows a decline of 7 per cent. in the first grade, and a rise of 5 per cent. in the second, and of 2 per cent. in the third. The percentage in the last grade is the same as that of 1906. The results indicate in a general way the extent to which the schools suffered from the epidemics that prevailed during a large part of the first half of the year, when a large number of schools were closed for several weeks, and both before and after closing suffered from poor attendance for some weeks more. In most cases the majority of the pupils were unaffected by the epidemics, and the schools were closed mainly because the absence of a large proportion of the children for several weeks would, it was thought, operate adversely on the staffing and the revenues of the schools. It is a thousand pities that it should be possible for the invasion of an epidemic to deprive of any of their education those who are able to attend school.

The efficiency of some of the schools was no doubt affected by the circumstance that to keep them open the Board had to employ a large number of uncertificated teachers.

Mean Efficiency Marks in Subjects.—Compulsory subjects: English—Reading and history, satisfactory; composition, fair; spelling, good; writing, good; recitation, satisfactory; mean of