

the general result may be regarded as commendable. The standard of efficiency in both the compulsory and additional groups of subjects has been maintained, but the defects previously recorded still require attention. It is hardly necessary, therefore, to refer to these in detail. A few special features may, however, receive notice.

Drawing.—In drawing the new syllabus requires more attention to free drawing from objects and to design. In connection with both the use of colour is demanded. On the other hand, geometrical drawing is somewhat reduced in amount, and is directed largely to the requirements of instruction in design. Instruction in a course to include these branches, covering both the school course and the requirements of the examination for teachers' certificates, was given to teachers during the year, and the effect of this and of special directions issued has been very evident. The quality of the pupils' work varies among the schools, but the general result is improvement in the freedom, taste, and intelligence shown in the exercises.

Physical Instruction.—In physical instruction the schools have to a large extent been marking time, waiting for the institution of the new course by the special instructors. In a few schools the teachers have acquired knowledge of some of the fresh requirements, and have anticipated their introduction. Arrangements have been made to enable the teachers early in the present year to acquire practice and receive direction in the uniform programme of physical instruction.

Handwork.—[See E.—5, Report on Manual and Technical Instruction.]

Needlework.—In needlework a number of teachers have made the necessary changes in the course. It is important to note that the younger pupils should not be required to include in their exercises fine sewing that may result in undue strain, and the new requirements should receive careful study.

Method of Expression.—An important feature in the education of the pupils is the need for the development of expression. No lesson is complete, and no course serves its purpose if the children are not able to reproduce readily, clearly, and intelligently the ideas, processes, and information involved. In reading, recitation, and oral statement, while the pronunciation is generally fairly accurate, there is, especially in the smaller schools, want of distinctness and readiness. The written exercises in composition are improving in freedom and arrangement, but in a number of instances there is need for increased practice and direction. In arithmetic the chief defect is in the presentation of the process of working the written exercises. Intimately connected with methods of expression is the necessity for strict testing and complete correction in connection with all the work of the pupils. It is sometimes evident that teachers fail to recognize that all tests should demand the independent work of the pupils, and that the correction can be used as a valuable aid in the instruction. This result should be evident by the advance shown in succeeding efforts.

The year to which this report relates is the last of twenty-one years of service directly under the Board. Although my connection with the educational work of the district will not for the present be severed, in some respects there will be a separation. I venture therefore to express appreciation of the support and consideration I have experienced during the whole period from the members of the Board, by whom great interest in the welfare of the schools has been uniformly manifested. I desire also to record my admiration of the loyalty and earnestness of the teaching staff of the district. The teachers have varied in ability and experience, but there has been little difference in their strenuous endeavour to use their opportunities to achieve efficiency.

I have, &c.,

The Chairman, Westland Education Board.

A. J. MORTON, Inspector.

NORTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Christchurch, 1st February, 1915.

We have the honour to present our annual report on the schools of the North Canterbury Educational District for the year 1914.

Visits paid.—The number of schools open at the close of the year was 222. To each of these, with the exception of four household schools, two visits were paid. Two visits also were paid to each of twenty-six private schools enumerated in the appendix to the report [not printed]. In addition to the work of inspection, examinations for the purpose of awarding certificates of proficiency were held at practically the same centres as in previous years. A special Standard VI examination was held early in the year, and from time to time opportunities of presenting themselves were given to candidates desirous of obtaining certificates of competency.

Age of Pupils.—With the exception of an increase of two months in Standard VII, one month in Standard I, and a decrease of one month in Standards V and III, the average age remains the same as the previous year.

Standard VI Certificates.—The following is a summary of the results of examinations held for the purpose of awarding certificates of proficiency and competency:—

				Number examined.	Proficiency Certificates.	Competency Certificates.
Public schools	..	..	..	1,460	1,001	340
Private schools	..	..	..	121	64	38
Special examinations	..	..	..	128	52	52
Totals	..	..	..	1,709	1,117	430