

ful effect of desk life can be greatly reduced by bringing school life into harmony with the natural forces urging the child to action. It is the custom with many teachers to do everything possible, and even to attempt the impossible, in the desks, and to regard anything that cannot be done there as a disturbance of the orderly routine of the school. Desk work, with its drawbacks, must of necessity bulk largely in school life, and it behoves the teacher to be alert in preventing any evils arising from it, and in devising remedial measures to counteract those that cannot be removed. A long-continued sitting and writing attitude is an abuse of desk work, and injury arising from it can be prevented only by persistent watchfulness on the part of the teacher to secure such correctness of bodily attitude and such variety of position as will not lead to physical harm.

In the corporate life of our large schools a perceptible improvement is manifested in a closer approach towards continuity of method and in the greater interest and responsibility shown by teachers in everything pertaining to the advancement of the school, this "oneness" aiming at a substitution of an "organism" for the old idea of a number of classes taught under one roof, but in other respects isolated and independent. It was for this purpose that No. 49 of the Board's regulations was introduced. The worth of the staff conferences contemplated by that regulation depends largely on the guiding influence of the head-teacher, whose enthusiasm, tactful management, and definiteness of purpose should prevent perfunctoriness, and do much to secure continuity of method and improvement in school-tone. To enable us to form an estimate of the way in which this part of his duty is discharged we shall require a record of these conferences to be kept by the head-teacher, and to be available for the Inspectors during their visits.

Up to the present it has not been found practicable to introduce the departmental course of physical instruction into our schools, so that the course previously in operation had to be continued, with, on the whole, very satisfactory results.

Throughout the district the order, discipline, and tone of the schools are good, and the pupils are well-mannered and well-behaved.

[Paragraphs expressing gratitude to teachers, office staff, and Board not printed.]

We have, &c.,

C. R. RICHARDSON, }
C. R. BOSSENCE, } Inspectors.
J. R. DON, }
J. ROBERTSON, }

The Secretary, Otago Education Board.

SOUTHLAND.

SIR,—

Education Office, Invercargill, 31st March, 1915.

We have the honour to submit our report on the schools of the district for the year ended the 31st December, 1914.

The following table gives information as to number on the rolls, classification, and ages of the pupils in the schools of the district :—

Classes.					Number on Roll.	Present at the Annual Examination.	Average Age of the Pupils in each Class.
							Yrs. mos.
Standard VII	...	...	...	...	27	25	15 0
" VI	...	...	...	...	757	748	13 11
" V	...	...	...	...	1,063	1,041	13 0
" IV	...	...	...	...	1,299	1,267	12 2
" III	...	...	...	...	1,403	1,380	11 1
" II	...	...	...	...	1,408	1,375	10 1
" I	...	...	...	...	1,383	1,338	8 10
Preparatory	...	...	...	...	4,294	4,034	6 10
Totals	...	...	...	...	11,634	11,208	9 7*

* Mean of average age.

Of the 182 schools in the district all but two, Mount Aspiring and Ferdunlaw (the latter opened late in the year), were paid an announced visit during the year, and 112 an unannounced visit. The exigencies of travelling over a wide district have made it necessary to inspect some schools on Saturdays or during the vacation, and in some cases to inspect two schools in one day.

Organization.—A wise discretion has in general been exercised in the grouping of classes for instruction. The two-class group, with the two-year rotation of programmes of work in certain subjects, is the generally adopted and the most expedient system of grouping. The programmes in composition are usually so arranged that each grouped class shall cover the whole of the two-years course each year. By this arrangement every pupil revises his programme in composition in alternate