

Compared with the return for 1913 the roll number shows an increase of 172, while there has also been an increase of 237 in the number present at the annual examination.

*Private Schools.*—The following is a summary of examination results for each of the Catholic schools examined and inspected by us. [Not printed. The table shows seven convent schools examined. Roll, 530; present at annual examination, 509; certificates of proficiency, 26; certificates of competency, 9.]

*Observation Schools or Schools of Method.*—For several years we have advocated the establishment of schools wherein untrained and inexperienced teachers could gain the necessary practical knowledge to enable them to carry on their work with some prospect of success, and thereby minimize the disabilities under which the children they are instructing now labour. During 1912 we submitted to the Education Department a scheme for the establishment of such schools. We are pleased to report that in the new Education Act provision is made whereby the Board, with the approval previously obtained of the Minister, may establish any public school as a model school for the observation of and practice in methods of teaching and of school-management. It is to be hoped that the Board will take advantage of this as early as possible.

*Environment.*—It is evident from the marked improvement in the grounds and general surroundings of many of our schools that teachers continue to recognize the important part that environment plays in the education of the child. Teachers in many instances have thought out well-conceived plans for making the schoolrooms more attractive and pleasant to work in. The children are thus surrounded with objects, some to cultivate the sense of beauty, pictures chiefly, and others which may be used for intellectual advancement. Some teachers, however, err in displaying a superabundance of pictures on the walls instead of making a selection of a few good ones. In this connection we might point out that the Minister in charge of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts has instructed the General Manager of the Department to supply schools making application with whole-plate photographs, in sets of six, of New Zealand scenery free of charge, with the one condition that they must be suitably framed and permanently hung in the school.

Oftentimes the only adornment on the walls is the school maps, not infrequently dusty and dilapidated. The advice is good, "Roll up your maps and hang up your pictures." Placing on the walls creditable work in brushwork, drawing, &c., without any well-conceived plan has spoiled the appearance of some of the rooms. Such specimens, if exhibited, should be arranged tastefully in one place. Many teachers deserve the highest credit for the tasteful way in which they have planned and laid out the gardens surrounding the residences. It must be very disheartening to such teachers when transferred to other positions to find that their predecessors have been very negligent in this respect. The shield presented in 1909 by the late Mr. Tisch to encourage schools to improve their surroundings was this year secured by the Korito School.

*Training of Teachers.*—According to the Regulations for the Examination and Classification of Teachers, it is now imperative that a candidate for examination should produce a certificate that he has attended a course of practical lessons in science subjects under a competent instructor. In a district such as ours, where there is no training college or university, unless special provision is made it is now almost impossible for a teacher to obtain his certificate. In the past provision has been made by means of Saturday classes held at New Plymouth and Stratford to meet the needs of teachers within a convenient distance of these centres, but to cater for teachers who, unfortunately, are not so conveniently situated—and these comprise the majority of our uncertificated teachers—it was necessary to make further provision by means of a winter school. The classes were held during a period of three weeks, the course of instruction including hygiene, home science, botany, dairy science, and cardboard-work. As evidence of the felt need of such courses it may be mentioned that close on fifty teachers, drawn from all parts of the district, were in attendance. So keen was the enthusiasm and interest evinced that although the classes were carried on the whole day from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., the teachers put forward a request to have certain evening courses established to enable them to cover the practical work for the C certificate, and arrangements were accordingly made to meet their wish. In addition to the winter school the usual Saturday classes for the instruction of teachers were held during the year at New Plymouth and Stratford. Arrangements were made for the tuition of uncertificated teachers by correspondence.

*Agriculture and Dairy Work.*—[See E.-5, Report on Manual and Technical Instruction.]

*Rural Classes, Stratford.*—[See E.-5, Report on Manual and Technical Instruction.]

*Hygiene.*—Of late years a good deal of attention has been given to the teaching of hygiene in our schools, but, unfortunately, the formal lessons have not always been followed by practical work. Formal lessons on the care of the hands, skin, and teeth are not sufficient unless the teacher systematically insists that the children in their own persons put the teaching into practice. We do not suggest that such inspection should be carried out daily, but be made at regular intervals—say, once a week. Similarly, the teacher is largely responsible for the hygiene of the school environment—that is, the care of the class-room and the supervision of the school buildings generally.

The following extract from a paper by Dr. Jean Greig has our full support: "The teacher has no control of the construction of the school building, but its hygienic value often depends more on how the teacher uses the rooms than on their structure. Even the most modern class-room, perfect as to light and ventilation, can have its best points spoilt if the windows are unopened and the blinds constantly kept lowered. It is most important that attention should be given to the fresh-air supply. Not only must the ventilators be kept open, but in a temperate climate such as ours all the fresh air possible should be admitted through open windows and doors. Whatever necessity there may be for a minimum, no harm can come from an abundance of fresh air. Many teachers do better still by holding their classes in the open air whenever that is