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Examination of Catholic Schools.

In many parts of the Colony the Education Boards have permitted their Inspectors to examine the Catholic schools. We make the following extracts from the reports of the Inspectors just presented to Parliament:

Twenty Catholic schools were examined in the Auckland district. The roll number was 1541; 929 pupils were examined, and 720 passed in one or other of the standards.

The Chief Inspector, Wellington, reports: 'In the eight Roman Catholic schools 1,112 children were presented in 1900, and 1,079 in 1901, showing a small decrease of 33. The number presented in standards in 1900 was 656, of whom 558 passed; and in the past year, 1901, the number of standard children was 644, of whom 566 passed. These results tend to show that the efficiency of the schools is maintained. Improvement is in evidence also in the extent and quality of both standard and class work. In several of these schools elementary science, drill, and kindergarten occupations received more attention than formerly; and the teaching of arithmetic is much more satisfactory than it was in former years. Good reading, composition, and needlework are features of these schools; and very commendable order and control are met with.'

Mr Hill, Inspector to the Hawke's Bay Education Board, says: 'I do not think, however, that it will be possible any longer to continue my examination of the Catholic schools, for, though very willing to do so, the increasing number of Board schools, and the additional calls upon my time through the working of the technical classes for teachers and the operation of the Manual and Technical Instruction Act, compel me to limit external work as much as possible. In my opinion, the examination of the Catholic schools has been of public benefit, and it will be a pity if arrangements cannot be made whereby such schools may have the benefit both of inspection and examination on the lines of the Education Act.' Of the 530 children presented 414 passed, the percentage of passes being 79.6.

Regarding the Catholic schools in the Marlborough district the Inspector reports: 'I was unable to examine these schools last year through press of work, and this year for the same reason I am compelled to limit my examination to the sixth standard classes. Ten girls and six boys were examined, and all passed but one girl. The nine girls who passed made an average of 69½ per cent. of the possible marks, four of them gaining 'credit passes'—that is, over 75 per cent. of the total marks. The boys averaged 62 per cent. of the maximum. The average of the girls was 14 years and six months, and that of the boys 13 years and seven months; and, though the girls gained the higher average of marks than the boys, they had the advantage of nearly a year in age and a very much more regular attendance, the boys averaging only 250 attendances, against 367 by the girls. Both schools did very good work, the only weak subject being arithmetic; and a few of the girls were not very successful with spelling. On the other hand, the composition of the girls was, on the whole, somewhat better than that of the boys; so that, taking one thing with another, I consider they were practically equal, and both can bear comparison with most of our larger schools. The standards below the sixth were examined, according to the regulations, by the teachers.'

The following is the report on the Catholic schools examined by the Inspector to the Education Board, Greymouth: 'Reports, etc., were prepared and furnished to these schools in every respect similar to those supplied to schools directly under the Board. Appended are tables similar to those dealing with our schools: Total presented for examination, including infants and pupils above Standard VI., 270; total presented in standards, 169; total present in standards, 161; total promoted to a higher class, 160; total number of infants, 92; total number of infants over eight years of age not presented for Standard I., five.'

'In the five Catholic schools in the district (says the Westland Education Board's Inspector) the staffs are numerically strong and the majority produce results in many respect commendable. In all, however, the attention of the teachers is confined too much to the pass-subjects. While these are often well prepared, the average result in the class-subjects is in no case satisfactory. The promotion of the pupils is left in the hands of the Inspector, and the task is rendered at times difficult, owing to the weakness in branches outside the pass group. Of a total of 162 in standards, 116 passed, and this result would be a matter of congratulation to the teachers if the instruction in some of the extra subjects had been more successful.'

The South Canterbury Inspectors say that they examined five Catholic schools, which had 454 pupils examined in standards, of whom 394 passed.

The numbers presented in the standard classes in the Southland Catholic schools during the Inspector's annual visit were 317, of whom 278 passed.

A Madonna in Tapestry.

A LADY whose home is in Dresden has executed a wonderful piece of embroidery, the subject being the Sistine Madonna. Indeed, she has with her needle copied the famous painting so perfectly that those who behold it are amazed when they are told that it is done with silken threads instead of oil colors. She was engaged upon the task for more than five years, using variously colored silk floss and a number of different stitches.

In this sort of work, which may be called tapestry painting, the eyes are the most difficult part to represent. Many persons have succeeded with the main portions of an embroidered picture and failed with that; but Fraulein Clara has kept to the very expression of the eyes of Our Lady.

As soon as this marvellous picture was completed the King and Queen of Saxony came to see it, and it was afterwards exhibited at St. Petersburg and London, finding its way eventually to the Paris Exposition, where it received a gold medal from the judges.

On August 14 an important sale of leasehold properties, cottage household furniture, timber, ironmongery, tools, etc., will be conducted at Patearoa by Messrs Samson and Co., who have been instructed by Mr Thomas Tate. Full particulars will be found in our advertising columns. The auctioneers are in a position to treat privately for Mr Tate's private residence and blacksmith's shop, together with a two-acre section...

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