

instructing their pupil-teachers, the payment awarded being hardly earned. The head-teachers would then have more time out of school-hours for making up returns and attending to matters for which ordinary school-time cannot be sacrificed.

**SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATION.**—There are now in the schools 77 children passed in Standard VI., of whom 32 are pupils who passed last year. The examination for scholarships may be made not only useful for determining the prize-winners; it might also serve as a higher-standard pass. I should like to see, especially if Standard VI. is made lower, certificates issued to all who make half-marks in the scholarship examination. I think no examiner should be master in any school from which candidates are or may be sent; also that examiners should be men who are practically engaged in education, or else they are apt either to be too lenient or to expect to find men's heads on boys' shoulders. The late report is open to some criticism: it appears as the joint production of two gentlemen—it is really the joint production of the two acting as separate examiners in subjects chosen by each. Again, the report makes no mention of the fact that the competition was open to candidates from all schools in the district, pupils actually attending both from the Wellington College and from private schools; nor does the report state that all the eight scholarships were gained by pupils from the primary schools. Further, reading and writing were examined and reported on by one examiner only; and the report of that one examiner is strangely hypercritical, and contrasts unfavourably for the candidates with that of his coadjutor. Again, the conviction will force itself upon one's mind that in matters such as spelling and arithmetic, which are incontestably matters of fact, the candidates did well; but in subjects such as writing and reading, which are more dependent on the judgment, if not the taste, of the examiner, the candidates are considered to have done badly as a whole. I can assure the Board and the examiner that boys and girls form their letters and cross their *ts* in First Standard work, and that, in most schools, even infants sound the letter *h*. But is it fair to give marks for, and thus criticize, the fast writing of boys in grammar and history papers? Should not specimen writing have been asked for? The examiners have not made a single mark or note on the papers, so that I am unable to check their marking. I have looked through the papers and asked my clerk to count up the cases of *is* not dotted and *t's* not crossed. He finds that no candidate had failed to cross the *ts*, and only one had been remiss in dotting three *is*. I looked hurriedly through all the papers and could not see a single case of omission. I consider the writing as good as could fairly be expected. The rest of the report is equally unsatisfactory, but I have not time to go into it. Considering the low marks awarded by the examiner in reading and writing, it is, I think, surprising that eight candidates from the primary schools were found who succeeded in making more than two-thirds of the total maximum marks.

**CONCLUSION.**—I believe the state of education within the district is, on the whole, healthy. I was much pleased at a late visit to the College on the breaking-up day, to find that boys who had gained scholarships in the primary schools were well to the front. I have attached to this report a specimen of the papers given in arithmetic, geography, and history in the higher-standard work. They will be a guide to teachers, and will indicate the calibre of the work. There is a fear on the part of some that the brains of children are being unduly taxed. The matter must rest very much in the hands of the teachers, who are advised to exercise a wise discretion in presenting children for standards. Certainly many children are presented at a tender age, and sometimes they are unnecessarily pressed forward too soon for a pass in the First Standard. I have everywhere discouraged it. No pressure has been brought upon teachers to present children whose attendance or age does not admit of them becoming good candidates. Less and lighter home work might be given in some schools, and to children under nine none need be given. In future no child who is one year under age will be allowed to pass unless he is well up to the standard in all important subjects, and weak arithmetic or reading will in such cases be fatal. Owing to pressure of work, I must discontinue at my next examination the passing by marks in Standard IV.; the candidates will be passed by sections, as in the three lower standards. In Standards V. and VI. the system of marks in force will be retained. I will therefore ask the Board to allow the four prizes usually awarded in Standard IV. to be given as additional prizes in Standard V. next year. In concluding my report, I trust the rising generation, when grown up, will cherish in the future the institutions to which they will then be so much indebted; that the dull ignorance, which is still so common and so obstructive to national progress, will give place to universal intelligence and a love of the pursuit of knowledge as one of the highest aims of life; and that the development of our faculties and the exercise of them for useful purposes will give a return to the State, on any necessary outlay that education may cost, far greater than our legislators could expect.

The Hon. C. J. Pharazyn,  
Chairman, Education Board, Wellington.

I have, &c.,  
ROBERT LEE,  
Inspector of Schools.

#### HAWKE'S BAY.

SIR,—

Education Board, Napier, 31st December, 1879.

I have the honor to submit to you my general report upon the condition of education in this district for the year ending 31st December, 1879. I am pleased to be able to state that great activity has been manifested in supplying deficiencies of accommodation in most of the school districts under the Board. The old buildings called by way of respect schoolhouses have been replaced in a number of districts by airy and commodious buildings; and few schoolhouses now remain where the curtain-like cobwebs covering the windows and ceiling give evidence of neglect and decrepitude. The school-rooms are, on the whole, well provided with good and substantial apparatus; and the district begins to manifest signs of educational vitality. In addition to the number of school-buildings now in course of erection, the growing population at Patutahi, Waerengahika, Wainui, Wallingford, and at the Victoria and Heretaunga Settlements in the Forty-Mile Bush, will make it necessary to provide accommodation in these districts. Already applications for schools have been received from Wallingford, Wainui, and