

time occupied and the useful knowledge acquired in the study of these extras must compensate many scholars for remaining in a lower standard. Although "the extent of the knowledge indicated by the science programme is intended to be not greater than is covered by 'Science made Easy' and other primers," yet a much more ambitious aim is sometimes attempted. In some schools the science syllabus is far more pretentious than judicious; in others, where for instance one teacher has the charge of all standards, there is no opportunity for bringing the extra subjects within the time-table. Some teachers own that they have neither the time nor the ability for these extras.

In most schools the scholars profit by a judicious course comprising the mechanical powers, simple machines, and fundamental principles of physics; or they take also animal physiology, chiefly as to man and the larger animals. Mostly the scholars do not stay long enough for more than a first year's course; which is then repeated to their successors. With further reference to the failures in the higher standards, and to the failure to even find scholars presentable at all in them, I am convinced that this deficiency is in some instances less attributable to the many subjects to be taught, and the pupils' own difficulties, than to unskilful erroneous teaching, and downright incapacity to instruct scholars in these higher standards. In one school a very incompetent master having been appointed, his scholars failed year after year to pass the Fourth and Fifth Standards; and now, having no scholar fit for pupil-teachership, the residents find it necessary to raise funds for the payment of an adult assistant. No greater injury can be done to a school or a district than the continuance in office of an incompetent teacher, or one of low moral instincts. It is not only detrimental to the school, but incalculable evil is done to the scholars, and eventually to society, by their constant contact with an unprincipled person, defiant of local and central authority, and wasteful of the school time in abuse or ridicule of those set over him. The scholars not only fail to acquire useful knowledge, but they pick up unruly and untruthful ideas, demoralizing to themselves and to society for the rest of their lives.

I have known several instances, in and out of Canterbury, where an incompetent, an immoral, or an intemperate teacher could agitate his district and get retained in office for years, while his scholars suffered a loss from which they would never recover. The fact is that, from local or denominational patronage, some most unfortunate appointments have been made; and it hardly matters how incompetent a teacher may be, so only that he can keep on good terms with his neighbours and his Committee. On the other hand, an unpopular teacher may at once lose his appointment for one unfavourable report. I am glad, however, to speak highly of the tone and efficiency of the majority of the teachers and scholars in my district. There is one matter which calls for greater attention from many teachers, and this is the very necessary revision of the "age" column; some most palpable errors in this respect are of not unfrequent recurrence. I have much pleasure in reporting the efficiency, or the improving efficiency, of some of the teachers from the Normal School.

The Chairman of the Board of Education,
North Canterbury.

I have, &c.,
J. P. RESTELL,
Inspector of Schools.

Return of the total number of scholars passed from a lower to a higher standard during the year in Mr. Restell's district:—

Scholars on roll	...	...	8,002						
Number present	...	...	6,725	Standard VI.	...	...	52	...	24
Percentage of numbers presented in standards	...	...	63 $\frac{3}{4}$	" V.	...	...	203	...	113
Number presented	...	...	4,288	" IV.	...	...	527	...	230
Number passed	...	...	3,053	" III.	...	...	962	...	529
Percentage passed	...	...	71	" II.	...	...	1,468	...	1,211
				" I.	...	...	1,076	...	947
				Remaining below Standard I.	...	...		...	2,425

AVERAGE AGE PER STANDARD PASSED, 1880.

	Standard VI.	Standard V.	Standard IV.	Standard III.	Standard II.	Standard I.
General Averages, 1880	13·8	13·4	12·5	11·6	10·1	8·4
" " 1879	13·8	13·1	12·8	11·8	10·4	9·0

2.—MR. EDGE'S REPORT.

SIR,—

Education Office, Christchurch, March, 1881.

I have the honor to submit, for the information of the Board, the following general report on the schools in my district for the year 1880:—

During the year I paid one or more casual visits to the schools under my charge, and fully examined all those in operation. The results of the examinations have been in each case reported on separately, and lists of the names of the scholars who have passed their standards have been furnished to the Committees. From the tabulated forms herewith attached, in which the number of passes in each standard and the average age at which the scholars pass are given, a fairly accurate idea of the state of each school may be obtained. I think it, however, but right to state that, although each school must, in a great measure, be judged by the results, yet, as many circumstances have to be taken into consideration when reporting on such, it would be manifestly unfair to determine the efficiency of a teacher by a mere reference to the percentages of passes. In some instances, where the number of passes was very small, the teachers had lately been appointed, and were not, therefore, responsible. Again, certain teachers who failed to gain high percentages last year, performed their duties with as much energy and efficiency as in former years, and to the circumstance of irregular attendance alone I attribute their want of success in the higher grades. It is absurd to expect children who are practically half-time attendants to pass a standard each year under the present regulations. Children of ordinary intelligence receive little or no benefit from such attendance, and their occasional presence