

of journeying to some central place for the examination—a practice which, I believe, prevails in every other district. Several circumstances, however, have convinced me that it is desirable to revert to the former plan, and I intend to lay before the Board a proposal to this effect at the next monthly meeting. All the pupil-teachers in the district, with one exception, have passed. The credit passes, however, are not so numerous this year as they were last; and in the two upper classes this is, no doubt, owing to the introduction of three fresh subjects—namely, Euclid, European history, and science, at a somewhat late period of the year. It is with much regret that I have to report the dismissal of one pupil-teacher for referring to text-books whilst under examination. At the recent examination nearly all the pupil-teachers were required to give a lesson to a class on some prescribed subject in my presence. This is a most trying ordeal for very young teachers, and I am happy to say that, in the majority of cases, they acquitted themselves very well, displaying a considerable natural aptitude for the work, and familiarity with good methods. Nearly all of them were able to keep their classes in a satisfactory state of “order, attention, and activity.” In the case of some of the object-lessons a more minute acquaintance with the subject would have been an advantage; but, on the whole, considering their youth, and making allowance for natural nervousness and timidity, I am satisfied with the proficiency of most of the pupil-teachers in this respect.

The Chairman of the Education Board, Westland.

I have, &c.,
JOHN SMITH.

OTAGO.

1. MR. PETRIE'S REPORT.

SIR,—

Dunedin, March, 1881.

I have the honor to submit the following report for the year 1880:—

During the year I visited 52 schools situated in Dunedin and neighbourhood, and in the Counties of Waikouaiti and Waitaki, and I examined, according to the regulations of the Education Department, 71 schools, including the four Otago District High Schools. Mr. Taylor accompanied me at 20 of the largest schools, and undertook the examination of nearly the whole of the written answers. The remaining 51 schools were examined entirely by myself. Nearly all those examined by me were situated in Dunedin and suburbs, and in the Counties of Waikouaiti, Waitaki, Maniototo, and Vincent. Every school in the districts just named was examined, with the exception of the Blackstone Hill Public School, where, owing to heavy rain, only one pupil was present on the day of examination, and the George Street Public School, Dunedin, which had been but a short time in operation.

Considerably more than half the year was devoted to examination in the standards, and less than four months were available for surprise visits for observing methods and management. The number and size of the schools in the Otago District are now such that the annual examination of every school in the standards required by the regulations under the Education Act will occupy a larger proportion of my time and attention every year. This will involve a corresponding curtailment of the time available for checking the registration of attendances, for aiding in the organization of schools, and for assisting and advising such teachers as have had scanty experience of school management. This part of an inspector's duties is certainly not inferior in point of importance to the examinations that now form so large a proportion of his work, and any curtailment of the time he can devote to it is likely to tell on the efficiency of the schools. A proper balance between superintendence and examination can be restored only by increasing the staff of inspectors, or by a great simplification of the routine of examination in the standards.

Actuated by the conviction that superintendence of the schools was being unduly sacrificed for examination in the standards, I made application about the middle of the year for the appointment of an Assistant Inspector. Since the date of that application the attendance at the schools has increased considerably, and the need of assistance has become more urgent. For the last quarter of 1880 the average attendance at the Otago public schools was 16,047. In any other of the Australian Colonies three Inspectors at least would be allowed for so large a number of pupils. Any one acquainted with the routine of school inspection and the comprehensive requirements of the New Zealand system must recognize that two Inspectors cannot overtake in an efficient and satisfactory way the superintendence and examination of schools having so large an attendance. Under present circumstances one of two evils seems unavoidable: either a number of the schools must go unexamined, as happened in 1879, or a number of them will have to go unvisited, as happened in 1880. Great exertions were made during the past year to overtake as much of the work as possible, and I do not see how more can be done in any future year.

RESULTS FOR THE YEAR.—In the 71 schools examined by me (with Mr. Taylor's assistance at 20 of them) 6,745 pupils were examined in the standards. Of this number, 5,148 passed in the standard for which they were presented. The following table shows (1) the number of pupils examined in each standard, (2) the number of pupils who passed in each standard, (3) the number who failed in each standard, (4) the percentage of passes in each standard, (5) the average age of the pupils examined in each standard, and (6) the number of schools at which the different standards were represented:—

Standard	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	Presented.	Passed.	Failed.	Percentage.	Average Age.	Schools at
												Yrs. mos.	which Standards were represented.
	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,768	1,440	328	81	9 1.5	71
Standard	II.	...	...	...	...	...	1,738	1,438	300	82	10 5.4	71
Standard	III.	...	...	...	...	...	1,543	1,071	472	69	11 7.8	70
Standard	IV.	...	...	...	...	...	982	659	323	67	12 8.0	61
Standard	V.	...	...	...	...	...	531	387	144	73	13 6.9	43
Standard	VI.	...	...	...	...	...	183	153	30	84	14 4.0	21

In Standard I. the percentage of passes is somewhat higher than that for 1879. In Standard II. it is somewhat lower, chiefly in consequence of greater strictness in examining the reading and transcrip-