

influenced accordingly. In one or two schools a branch of science has been taken up with moderate success. The Science Readers published by Thomas Hughes are to be introduced, and are admirably adapted for use in our primary schools. In a few schools object lessons have been given, the best results being observable at the Greymouth School, the observation and interest of the children having been enlisted. Recitation is very well done in some schools; in others the memory work is good, but style very defective. Mrs. Greenwood kindly undertook the examination of the sewing, and her report speaks favourably of the work. Drill is attended to. A few schools only practise anything like an extended method, the majority confining the work to the simplest movements. Taylorville School still maintains pre-eminence as attempting the whole programme. In that school singing is well taught, and the time passed in listening to the rendering by the combined standards of some pieces from the "Blackbird Series" furnished a pleasant experience; and the same can be said of the action songs by the lower classes in the Greymouth School. In both schools much skill is shown in the teaching of this subject. Unfortunately, the subject is too seldom attempted. Considering the discouragements experienced by our teachers during the year by reduction of staffs and salaries, they are to be complimented upon the proofs of earnest and painstaking effort supplied by the examination.

Of the discipline of the schools and the behaviour of the scholars there is not much complaint to be made. The weakest in these respects is the largest and most important school in the district, as evidenced by the amount of wanton mischief to the school property which has been committed. The Totara Flat School deserves honourable mention not only in these particulars, but for the general quality of the work and the position it occupied at the scholarship examination. It is hardly necessary to say that good work is impossible without thorough discipline; but I may point out that in a school where the classes are composed of mixed sexes the discipline has an important bearing upon its morality. I had in only one or two cases to exercise a very strict watchfulness during the progress of the examination, and that I had only once to insist upon the repetition of a lesson—on account of liberty taken during my absence—may be taken as proof of the generally good tone which prevails. Our teachers evidently recognise that their responsibility is not limited to the proper performance of the requirements of the syllabus, but that they have also the higher duty of moral training to attend to. In connection with this I may point out that example is more powerful than preaching.

Reports are attached upon the scholarship, pupil-teachers', and Watkins's medal examinations, and it must be admitted that little pleasure is derivable from their perusal. Several reasons can be found for this result. I must take my share of blame in the matter, in that I allowed the dispute which arose two years ago in connection with the Greymouth School to influence me in relaxing my requirements for the upper standards. That a person high in authority at the time adopted the views expressed by the malcontents may be accepted as some palliation of my error. Concerning the pupil-teachers, I hope that the new Education Bill, if it become law, will lead to some provision being made for giving pupil-teachers a wider and more liberal training. At present the narrowness of the groove in which they move must act injuriously upon the youth of the colony. I am of opinion that to make the system a success it will be found necessary to shorten their working time, and allow more time for study with less jaded faculties. It is almost too much to expect young people to do a hard day's teaching and then proceed to their own studies. The matter is one which cannot be successfully dealt with under the present system of administration. I would advise the Board to dispense with pupil-teachers so far as the country schools are concerned, and substitute monitors. The Greymouth School properly managed and conducted can alone furnish the instruction necessary to enable pupil-teachers to meet the requirements of the Government programme. To insure the obtaining of the best possible material I would recommend the Board to throw open to the whole district the position of pupil-teacher in the Greymouth School, fitness to be decided by the marks obtained at the Sixth Standard examination, coupled with the Inspector's report as to the suitability of the candidate in other respects. Such a provision would, I feel sure, prevent any after revision of the pupil-teacher lists, and would obviate the injury sustained by those who have been induced to enter a profession for which they have no special aptitude. It would also prevent the disappointment and mortification experienced by the diligent teacher who has expended his trouble upon hopeless material.

I am glad to be able to record the success of the Board's attempt to establish a District High School in Greymouth. It is barely two years since the change took place, and already good work has been done and satisfactory results achieved, as reference to the special report attached hereto will show. I hope that an improved financial position will enable the Board to give the teachers a substantial token of appreciation of their efforts in the shape of an amended schedule of salaries. It is matter for surprise and congratulation that, with the very inefficient payment given in many cases, such satisfactory results should be produced. I acknowledge with pleasure the assistance I have generally received from Committees in any efforts I may have made for the improvement of the schools. At the same time I must express the opinion that the passing of the Bill proposed by the present Minister of Education would be productive of a purer administration of educational affairs. At present, if an Inspector finds it necessary to report unfavourably of the management of a school, either Committee or Board takes up the cause of the teacher, with, in some cases, calamitous results to the scholars, whose interest, I need hardly say, should be paramount to all other considerations.

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EDWARD T. ROBINSON, Inspector.

The Chairman, Education Board, Greymouth.