

parted to the children, and it is not unusual to find them able to express themselves well in answering questions on what they have learned. So far this is very good. But the main purpose of the lesson—the cultivation of the perceptive powers—is often entirely overlooked.

Additional Subjects.—Under the head of additional subjects are included recitation, disciplinary exercises and drill, singing, needlework, and knowledge of the subject matter of the reading-books. In thirty-eight schools the children were presented for examination in all these subjects; drill was omitted in eight schools, singing in seventeen schools, and needlework in nine schools. As there are so many small schools in our district, I think our teachers are to be congratulated on the efforts they have put forth to overtake the work entailed by attention to these subjects. It is laid down in the regulations that “any good work under this head done in small schools will be accepted as evidence of praiseworthy zeal and efficiency.” Very few of our schools have failed to give evidence of such good work.

The past year will long be memorable for its measles, mumps, and mud. Parents in this district take an intense interest in the examinations, and they were indulging in gloomy forecasts as to the condition in which the schools would be found. Teachers, too, had more than their usual anxiety about the fruits of their labours. Fortunately most of the school work had been overtaken before the epidemics swept over our districts, the examinations, however, taking place while matters were nearly at their worst. It speaks well for the thoroughness with which the foundations of the work had been laid in most of our schools that in spite of all disadvantages disaster was exceptional. Where disaster did come, I wish the chances of its recurrence were as little to be dreaded as a fresh outbreak of measles.

I have, &c.,

JAMES GIBSON GOW, M.A., Inspector.

The Chairman, Education Board, South Canterbury.

OTAGO.

SIR,—

We have the honour to submit the following report on the schools of the Otago District for the year 1893. During the year all the schools except two were examined, and nearly all were visited for inspection. The two that were not examined were closed during the last weeks of the year through the prevalence of illness among the pupils, and their examination was omitted at the request of the School Committee, and with the consent of the Chairman of the Board. The few schools that were not inspected were closed when the Inspector was visiting the district in which they are situated. The following table shows the chief statistics of examination for the year:—

Classes.	Presented.	Absent.	Excepted.	Failed.	Passed.	Percentage of Passes in Standards.	Average Age.
							Yrs. mos.
Infants ...	7,433	...	...	...	...	...	...
Standard I. ...	2,775	102	39	109	2,525	91	9 0
" II. ...	2,837	138	71	130	2,498	88	10 2
" III. ...	2,895	125	94	479	2,197	76	11 3
" IV. ...	2,723	131	102	621	1,869	69	12 3
" V. ...	1,954	84	61	390	1,419	73	13 1
" VI. ...	1,241	30	24	87	1,100	89	14 1
Above Standard VI. ...	434	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ...	22,292	610	391	1,816	11,608	...	11 7·7*

* Mean of average age.

There were presented for examination 22,292 pupils, of whom 14,425 were entered for examination in one or other of the standards. In all, 13,815 were present and were examined in the standards, and 11,608 passed the standard for which they were presented—in other words, 84 per cent. of the pupils examined in standards passed. This result is 1 per cent. below that for last year, but is as good as the percentage of passes in standards for any previous year; and it is a better result than we had ventured to expect, as the work of most of the schools was interrupted by an epidemic of measles that broke out shortly before the examinations were due, and gradually spread from Dunedin to the most remote rural districts.

The percentage of failures (the exceptions being omitted for this computation) was 14, a lower percentage than that of any previous year except 1892.

The average percentage of marks for class-subjects was 54; last year it was 58. The subjects of instruction grouped under this head are: Grammar (in three standards), geography (in two standards), history, and science and object lessons.

The average marks for additional subjects were 70, the total marks attainable under this head being 100.

Out of a total of 14,425 pupils, 610 were absent on the day of examination. This number is nearly double what it has been in recent years. The increase is no doubt entirely due to the prevalence of sickness shortly before the examinations were held, and we see no reason for thinking that it will continue. The number of exceptions has not increased.

On the whole, the examination results for the year, in spite of specially unfavourable circumstances, compare very favourably with those of last year and of previous years. In some