

larger than that of the previous year, which was 45·77 per cent. The proportion of the scholars not considered ready to begin preparation for Standard I. is a good deal larger than it was the previous year. The proportion judged to be beyond Standard IV. has increased during the year from 8·82 to 9·74 per cent. The corresponding proportions in 1880 were 7·42 per cent., and 6·77 in 1879, thus showing an increase each year. The number of scholars on the school rolls in the last quarter of 1882 and the three previous years that had passed Standard VI. was as follows: In 1882 there were 782 scholars, or 0·89 per cent. of the whole; in 1881 there were 591, or 0·71 per cent.; in 1880 there were 439, or 0·53 per cent.; and in 1879 there were 0·36 per cent.

The following table compiled from returns furnished by the Inspectors shows the number of scholars that were presented, and the number that passed the several standards, during the year in each of the Board districts:—

TABLE N.—NUMBERS AND PROPORTIONS OF PASSES IN STANDARDS.

EDUCATION DISTRICTS.	Roll (Dec., 1882).	Presented.	Passed.	Passed Standards						
				I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	Total.
All ...	87,179	48·6 p.c. of roll number	72·3 p.c. of number presented	10·6	9·4	7·3	4·6	2·3	1	35·1
Per cent. of Roll Number.										
Per cent. of Number presented in each Standard.										
Auckland ...	16,101	7,574	4,998	77·9	63·6	56·5	65·6	61·1	52·9	65·9
Taranaki ...	1,985	874	533	58·7	72·1	56·1	50·7	61·1	91·7	61
Wanganui ...	5,004	2,640	1,921	81·1	79·8	59·9	67·8	69·4	77·8	72·8
Wellington ...	6,271	3,511	2,864	93	93	74	73	67	65	81·6
Hawke's Bay ...	3,363	1,827	1,314	76	67·4	78·8	65·3	60·4	84	71·9
Marlborough ...	1,414	678	534	86·1	76·8	83·9	75	62	80	78·8
Nelson ...	4,213	1,962	1,457	87·4	72·7	71·5	68·9	68·1	70·8	74·3
North Canterbury ...	16,907	7,724	5,758	92	85	60	56	50	64	74
South Canterbury ...	3,853	1,941	1,460	87·1	84·6	77·1	55·5	57·8	44·2	75·2
Westland ...	2,923	1,370	946	76	65	60	69·4	76·2	93	69
Otago ...	19,665	10,274	7,473	94	76	62	56	62	83	73
Southland ...	5,480	2,013	1,381	84·2	72·7	61·1	53·5	39·1	54·5	68·6
Totals ...	87,179	42,388	30,639	86·3	76·1	63·6	61·5	61·2	72·1	72·3
Totals for 1881 ...	83,587	42,635	31,248	82·1	77·9	64·5	64·3	68·6	74·7	73·4

Table M shows that 46,668 out of the 87,179 scholars on the rolls in the last quarter of the year, or 53·53 per cent., are classified by their teachers as having passed either Standard I. or some higher standard, while it appears from Table N that only 42,388 of these, or 48·6 per cent. of the roll-number, presented themselves for examination by the Inspectors. This difference (4,280) may be explained to some extent by the fact that the roll was larger at the end of the year, when the teachers' classifications were made, than at any other time during its currency, while the examinations were held at various times throughout the year; but it is to be feared that a good many children are permitted to absent themselves from the Inspectors' examinations without sufficient reason. Messrs. Edge and Cumming, North Canterbury, report as follows: "We have taken some trouble to find out the cause of so many children being absent on the examination days, and fear that it is attributable to the fact that in these schools the backward children are not only not encouraged, but, in some cases, actually forbidden, to be present. In a few instances the attendance was lowered by the state of the weather." In the report of Mr. Smith, Westland, the following passage occurs: "The absence of scholars on examination day, if passed over without notice, might open the door to a serious abuse. . . . Some endeavour should be made to arrest the progress of this evil, and one method of doing so would be to consider all absentees as having failed, unless good and sufficient reason could be given for such absence. In connection with this I may remark that when the teacher's own children are kept away from the examination he can hardly expect other parents to be scrupulous on the subject. Yet this has been done to my knowledge in several instances." Mr. Lee, Wellington, states that "owing to the prevalence of measles the number present at examination did not so nearly approach the total number on the books as it has done in past years."