

standard, pointing out defects, suggesting remedies, &c. The reports were written in duplicate, and forwarded to the head teachers through their Committees, and also to your Board, within from one to five days of the examination, together with a tabular statement of results. The amount of writing thus entailed, coupled with the examination and the fact of there being no off-days, necessitated from twelve to even twenty hours' work on every day of the week for nearly four months. As I cannot hope to again keep up such a strain, and as the one day allotted to some schools, such as Stoney Creek and Karere, and the two days to others, such as Marton, Bulls, and Waverley, did not give me sufficient time to allow pupils to go home as early as I would wish, and also as I purpose inquiring thoroughly into the management of the class subjects during the year, it will be necessary that I should start at least a month earlier than last time on my next examination tour. Fortunately, during the one just completed, notwithstanding the pressure and a great deal of very bad weather, not the slightest hitch occurred.

In all sixty-nine schools were examined, or seven more than during the year 1883. On the days appointed for the examination, out of 5,510 children on the school-rolls, 4,727 or 85·7 per cent., were present. Considering that wet weather prevailed for the greater part of the tour, and that some of the tracks were almost impassable, the mud being up to the saddle-girths, this percentage is fairly high. It would, however, be higher, were it not for a few large schools where pupils evidently shirked their examination. As will presently be seen, many of the absentees were children below the First Standard and re-presented pupils. But the attendance altogether was higher by 10 per cent. on the examination-days than on ordinary school-days, and the question here arises, Why cannot such influences be brought to bear throughout the school-year as evidently are about the time of the Inspector's visit? It is pleasing to find that the examination-day holds no great terrors for children, and bright, eager faces, in rooms ornamented with flowers and ferns, were the rule and not the exception. The late Order in Council with regard to re-presentation gave rise to a great deal of annoyance, and it is worthy of note that of 224 re-presented pupils only 136 put in an appearance on the day of examination. The work of many of these pupils in the lower standards in which they were examined was too bad to admit of a pass if it was required. At several of the schools I was interviewed by parents who complained of their children being put back in their work. Of the large schools in the district, Feilding, Palmerston, Waverley, and Patea took no advantage of the Order, as well as several smaller schools; while Mosstown re-presented no less than 39 per cent., Aramoho 24 per cent., Manaia 20 per cent., Karere 16 per cent., and Wanganui Girls' and Mount View 15 per cent. of the children taught in standards. In all forty-one schools re-presented pupils.

Of the 5,510 children on the rolls at the time of my visits, 3,243, or 58·8 per cent., were presented for examination in standards. Of the remaining 2,267, the majority, of course—1,988, or 36 per cent. of the roll-number—were below Standard I., 25 had passed Standard VI., and 254 were re-presented in standards already passed. Of those presented, 2,989, or 92·1 per cent., attended; 1,953, or 65·3 per cent., passed the requirements, and 1,936 failed to do so. A few schools, again, were responsible for a large proportion of the 254 pupils absent, Wanganui Girls' School claiming no less than 32. All were present at Mosstown, Warrengate, Riverton, South Makirikiri, Crofton, Mount View, Beaconsfield, Manchester, Ashurst, Moutoa, Kohi, Whenuakura, Upokongaro, Oroua Bridge, Turakina Valley, and Greatford; while at several schools only one was absent. The number of children below Standard I. appears very large, and yet many pupils far too young—some below six and a half years—were presented. The explanation, perhaps, lies in the fact that many of the children in the country schools, especially in those which have been recently established, are under seven years of age.

I append to this report a table (Table A)\* which gives every information with regard to the examination in standards in each school, and which was compiled from the schedules sent to the Committees. The following table (Table B) gives much the same information, but in a condensed form, while Table C shows, with regard to each standard, the number of schools examined, the average age of pupils, the number of pupils presented, examined, passed, and failed, and the percentage of passes on the number presented and on the number examined :—

TABLE B.

Number on Rolls on Days of Examination.			Not presented in Standards.				Presented.	Examined.	Absent, though presented.	Passed.	Failed.	Percentage of Passes on Number presented.	Percentage of Passes on Number examined.	Percentage of Passes on Number on Roll.	Percentage of Roll- number presented.
M.	F.	Totl.	Below Standard I.	Re- presented.	Passed Standard VI.	Ttl.									
2,877	2,633	5,510	1,988	254	25	2,267	3,243	2,989	254	1,953	1,036	60·1	65·3	35·4	† 59·1

\* Not reprinted.

† The twenty-five passed Sixth Standard pupils are omitted in making this calculation.