

TABLE C.

Number of Schools examined in Standards.	—	Average Ages.		Number presented.			Number examined.			Number passed.			Number failed.			Percentage of Passes on		
		M.	F.	M.	F.	Ttl.	M.	F.	Ttl.	M.	F.	Ttl.	M.	F.	Ttl.	Number presented	Number examined	
1883	1884																	
58	69	Standard I.	8	6	384	398	782	354	374	728	220	277	497	134	97	231	63·5	68·2
56	67	Standard II.	9	9	417	408	825	385	380	765	275	274	549	110	106	216	66·5	71·7
56	67	Standard III.	11	1	379	319	698	340	305	645	211	186	397	129	119	248	56·8	61·5
56	60	Standard IV.	12	4	261	254	515	242	232	474	153	115	268	89	117	206	52·0	56·5
43	55	Standard V.	13	3	141	141	282	128	121	249	72	72	144	56	49	105	51·0	57·8
27	38	Standard VI.	14	0	66	75	141	63	65	128	51	47	98	12	18	30	69·5	76·5
					1648	1595	3243	1512	1477	2989	982	971	1953	530	506	1036	60·2	65·3

Present on days of examination. M.—2,463. F.—2,264. Total—4,727.

Absent " " M.—414. F.—369. Total—783.

The absentees are accounted for as follows: Standard I., 54; Standard II., 60; Standard III., 53; Standard IV., 41; Standard V., 33; Standard VI., 13. The table of ages is somewhat deceptive, for it is materially raised by the few old and backward children that are generally to be found in new school districts. I frequently examined children in the First and Second Standards, and occasionally in the Third, under seven and eight years of age. It would be an advantage if the column for ages in the Government schedules required the calculations to be made to the month of the examination, and not to "July of the current year."

In Table C it will be noticed that I have calculated two percentages of passes, one being on the number presented, and the other on the number examined. The former is deserving of the more attention, for I have good reasons for saying that the majority of absentees shirked their examination through a knowledge of their inability to pass it. In classifying the schools I find the following: All pupils (24) failed, 1 school; under 10 per cent. of passes, 2 schools; 10 to 20 per cent., 3 schools; 30 to 40 per cent., 6 schools; 40 to 50 per cent., 4 schools; 50 to 60 per cent., 16 schools; 60 to 70 per cent., 15 schools; 70 to 80 per cent., 8 schools; 80 to 90 per cent., 7 schools; 90, but not 100 per cent., 6 schools; 100 per cent., 1 aided school with 9 pupils. I give these percentages, in accordance with custom, for what they are worth; but I would here guard the Board against judging of the efficiency of teachers and their schools by the ratio of their passes at standard examinations. Of course a school with a very high percentage of passes is in a more efficient state than a school with a very low one; but it by no means follows that the efficiency of all schools is in proportion to their percentage of passes. To have this so it would be necessary that all passes in standards should be of equal merit, and, perhaps, that all schools should have approximate roll-numbers. Thus, ten successful boys in Standard III. in one school might obtain 70 passes, ten in another school 60, ten in yet another school—if two failures are allowed—50. All boys pass their standards, yet surely there is no comparison in the work, though each class shows 100 per cent. of standard passes. With regard to the efficiency of the teacher many things have to be considered besides percentages—amongst others, how long he has been in the school, in what state he received it, the length of time the school has been established, the regularity of his pupils—though, *ceteris paribus*, regularity generally depends on the worth of the teacher—and the number of failures at the examination previous to the one in hand. As a matter of fact some of the best schools I examined—schools whose pupils passed well in most subjects and gave the clearest evidence of intelligent teaching—had from 70 to 85 per cent. of passes. I regret to find that the "demon percentage" is rampant in this district, and that most teachers seem to think of little else. They make everything subservient to cramming for a supposed line of examination, and forget that true intellectual training will bring the most success in the end.

QUALITY OF PASSES IN STANDARDS.—From whatever light I look upon the examination I must come to the conclusion that the result is bad, and that primary education is far from being in a satisfactory state throughout the district. Of the 1,953 passes not more than one-half were strong passes. This number would have been far less had I not taken a lenient view, both of the work of the pupils, and also of Regulation 8 with regard to passing in standards. Thus I frequently passed children with failures in two subjects. Again, it was no part of my duty to allow First and Second Standard pupils two attempts at their writing and arithmetic, or to explain the meaning of the terms in a multiplication sum to Third Standard pupils, to enable them to work such sum. Yet these and other concessions I granted, and I endeavoured by every means in my power to find out what pupils really did know. As I have taught the standards from their adoption my cards were strictly within the syllabus. Of these cards I prepared several sets, and I intended to use more difficult ones at the large schools than at the small country schools. This idea I was obliged to abandon, for the latter schools were often the best, except at Hawera, Manaia, Aramohe, and Wanganui, and the cards which were most in favour I most frequently used. In Standard I. too early presentation was responsible for a number of failures. Why several almost wholly unprepared children under seven years of age were presented I am at a loss to imagine, except on the explanation which was sometimes given me—that *outside pressure was brought to bear on the teachers*. Writing and arithmetic were in general weak, few of the passes being really good. In this standard teachers ought to feel quite confident of the ability of their pupils to go beyond the meagre requirements