

examined eighty-seven schools and presented sixty-seven inspection reports. In some cases, where the schools were small or remotely situated, I examined and inspected on the same day.

The following table shows, in addition to the particulars required by section 13 of the "Standards," the percentage of failures in each standard. The other particulars required with respect to each school in this division will be found in the returns prepared for the whole district:—

Standard Classes.			Presented.	Absent.	Excepted.	Failed.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.	Percentage of Failures in Standards.
								Yrs. mos.	
S 7	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...
S 6	...	...	74	1	2	31	40	15 6	43·6
S 5	...	...	189	13	13	78	85	14 10	47·8
S 4	...	...	356	20	22	87	227	12 2	27·7
S 3	...	...	478	34	35	116	293	11 9	28·3
S 2	...	...	514	34	34	140	306	11 0	31·3
S 1	...	...	511	28	26	72	385	9 0	15·7
P.	...	...	1,199	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	...	...	3,325	130	132	524	1,336	*	28·1

* Mean of average age, 13 years 4 months.

An examination of this table will show that the highest percentages of failure were in Standards III., V., and VI. In the other standards the work done was on the whole fair.

Most of the schools north of Auckland are small, only five having more than one hundred scholars on the roll. In a large number the attendance does not justify the employment of more than one teacher. Of the eighty-seven to which this report relates thirty-four were half-time schools. In many of these schools all the standard classes were represented.

Taking into consideration these circumstances, the irregular attendance of the children, and their frequent absence from school on the plea of home duties, it is not surprising that the results of the teaching are somewhat inferior to those obtained in schools conducted under more favourable conditions. In saying this I do not intend to offer any excuse for negligent or incompetent teachers. I have during the year specially reported fourteen schools as "unsatisfactory." In some cases the teachers were able to show cause why they should not be held accountable for the bad results; as, for instance, where they had been but a short time in charge, and were not therefore responsible for the year's work. In applying the tests prescribed by the "Standards" I have not, I believe, erred on the side of leniency, but I have endeavoured to keep strictly within the programme.

I have brought no pressure to bear upon teachers to induce them to present children for the First Standard. I have always been of opinion that no child should be presented in that standard unless fit to pass with ease. Under existing regulations, Standard I. once passed presentment becomes compulsory in the succeeding standards, and, although the regulation as to exceptions may prevent a school from being credited with failures due to absolutely bad attendance, still a pupil may attend very irregularly and yet not come under that head.

I have already, in a memorandum to the Board, stated my opinion that the syllabus is not excessive in schools where more than one teacher is employed; but, from what I have observed in the smaller schools, I think the character of the work would be much improved if some of the class and additional subjects were omitted.

I will now make a few brief remarks on the several subjects of instruction.

READING AND SPELLING.—These subjects require much more attention: the former, though not positively bad, was in many cases characterized by want of expression, hurry, or a dull monotonous style; the latter shows great lack of vigilance on the part of the teachers in the frequent mistakes made in simple words. I am convinced that this proceeds from the careless correction, or, rather, want of correction, of the transcription exercises. I have known children to make mistakes in copying the printed questions set before them on the day of examination.

ARITHMETIC.—I consider that, on the whole, arithmetic is very fairly taught: it is weakest in Standards II. and V. I have noticed that in many schools the P. classes are able to do the arithmetic of Standard I., though much below that class in other work.

WRITING.—In the higher standards I have had to call attention to want of care and disregard of the head lines in the copy books. There is great room for improvement in Standard II. The writing on slates in Standard I. was in most cases very good.

GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION.—There were a good many failures in these subjects in Standards V. and VI.; in the lower standards fair work was done, but more lessons in composition should be given. There is plenty of practice, but too little teaching.

GEOGRAPHY.—In many schools good marks were awarded for the geography of Standard II. In Standard IV. the knowledge of this subject was often very meagre; but in Standards III., V., and VI., where it is a pass subject, I found better work. Some very good specimens of map-drawing were shown.

HISTORY.—This is not required for a pass in any standard, and, possibly as a consequence, has received but little attention.

DRAWING.—I find that in many instances direct instruction is not given in drawing or the proper use of the drawing book. The distinction between the teaching and the practising lesson in this, in other subjects, seems not to be understood. Frequently the lesson consists in placing a copy