

passing Standard VI. is of importance at the present time in consequence of the discussion that is taking place with respect to the limit of age imposed by the regulations for free admission to secondary schools in the case of those whose only qualification is the holding of Standard VI. certificates of proficiency. The condition is that the candidate for a free place shall not be over fourteen on the 31st December preceding the date of his admission to the secondary school. The average age for passing this standard ranges from 13 years and 6 months in Auckland to 14 years and 2 months in Marlborough, the average age for the colony being, as it was last year, 13 years and 9 months, and there is therefore ground for the belief that competent children, for whom the privilege is mainly intended, are not likely to find the restriction interfere with their promotion to the secondary schools." Further reference to this question is made in the separate paper on Secondary Education (E.-12). The range in 1904 was the same, being from 13 years and 6 months in Auckland to 14 years and 2 months in Hawke's Bay, the average age for the whole colony being also the same—namely, 13 years and 9 months.

TABLE C3.—AVERAGE AGE OF PUPILS IN 1904 AT THE TIME OF ANNUAL VISIT.

Education Districts.	Average Ages of the Pupils in each Class.									Mean of Ages.	
	P. Yrs. mos.	I. Yrs. mos.	II. Yrs. mos.	III. Yrs. mos.	IV. Yrs. mos.	V. Yrs. mos.	VI. Yrs. mos.	VII. Yrs. mos.	1904. Yrs. mos.	1903. Yrs. mos.	
Auckland	7 3	9 0	9 11	10 11	11 11	12 8	13 6	14 5	11 2	11 3	
Taranaki	7 1	9 3	10 3	11 3	12 5	13 3	13 11	14 5	11 6	11 6	
Wanganui	6 11	8 10	9 11	11 0	12 1	12 11	13 10	14 6	11 3	11 4	
Wellington	6 11	8 11	9 10	10 10	11 11	12 10	13 9	14 4	11 2	11 2	
Hawke's Bay	7 8	8 9	9 10	10 11	12 3	13 2	14 2	15 0	11 6	11 5	
Marlborough	7 0	8 8	9 8	11 0	12 0	12 9	13 9	14 10	11 3	11 3	
Nelson	6 11	8 9	9 11	11 0	12 0	12 11	13 9	14 11	11 3	11 4	
Grey	7 0	8 10	9 11	11 1	12 2	13 0	14 0	14 10	11 4	11 4	
Westland	7 2	8 5	10 7	11 0	12 7	13 3	13 9	15 1	11 6	11 4	
North Canterbury	6 11	8 9	9 10	11 0	12 1	12 11	13 9	15 1	11 3	11 4	
South Canterbury	6 11	8 9	9 10	10 9	11 10	12 9	13 8	15 1	11 2	11 2	
Otago	6 10	8 11	9 11	10 11	12 0	12 10	13 9	15 5	11 4	11 3	
Southland	7 0	8 11	9 10	10 11	11 11	12 9	13 8	14 8	11 3	11 2	
Average for Colony ..	7 1	8 11	9 11	10 11	12 0	12 10	13 9	14 10	11 3	11 3	
Range (difference between highest and lowest)	0 10	0 10	0 11	0 6	0 9	0 7	0 8	1 1	0 4	0 4	

In Table D is given the number of pupils receiving instruction in each subject of the syllabus. The most noticeable features are the further large increases in the numbers learning handwork, singing, and drill, the large increase in those learning composition, and the falling-off in those learning grammar, these changes being due to some extent to the new syllabus.

TABLE D.—NUMBER OF PUPILS INSTRUCTED IN EACH SUBJECT, DECEMBER, 1904.

Education Districts.	Numbers be- longing at End of Year.	Reading.	Spelling and Dictation.	Writing.	Composition.	Arithmetic.	Geography.	Drawing.	Grammar.
Auckland ..	30,207	30,207	30,207	30,207	20,563	30,162	16,931	29,935	10,466
Taranaki ..	4,834	4,834	4,834	4,834	3,536	4,834	2,799	4,622	1,582
Wanganui ..	12,201	12,201	12,006	12,199	9,347	12,180	7,553	11,552	5,620
Wellington ..	15,831	15,831	15,679	15,831	11,417	15,531	10,233	15,492	6,870
Hawke's Bay ..	8,765	8,765	8,765	8,765	6,512	8,717	5,819	8,687	3,911
Marlborough ..	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,943	1,448	1,943	1,263	1,918	856
Nelson ..	5,522	5,522	5,522	5,522	4,342	5,522	5,397	5,234	1,811
Grey ..	1,667	1,667	1,667	1,667	823	1,667	974	1,489	837
Westland ..	1,036	1,036	1,036	1,036	1,036	1,036	612	705	498
North Canterbury ..	19,378	19,378	19,378	19,378	12,814	19,130	11,923	18,915	8,531
South Canterbury ..	5,114	5,114	5,114	5,114	3,251	5,114	3,251	5,114	2,626
Otago ..	19,372	19,372	19,372	19,372	13,080	19,372	11,975	18,924	10,590
Southland ..	9,605	9,605	9,605	9,605	6,030	9,505	5,896	9,389	4,353
Totals for 1904	135,475	135,475	135,128	135,473	94,199	135,013	84,626	131,976	58,541
Totals for 1903	133,568	133,568	133,542	133,568	70,885	133,406	81,787	127,795	66,625
Difference ..	1,907	1,907	1,586	1,905	23,314	1,607	2,839	4,181	-8,084

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