

The following summaries are taken from the Inspector's annual return to the Education Department :—

Classes.					Number on Roll.	Present at the Annual Examination.	Average Age of Pupils in each Class.
BOARD SCHOOLS.							Yrs. mos.
Standard VII	...	...	...	...	40	39	14 9
" VI	...	...	...	...	126	125	13 11
" V	...	...	...	...	165	164	13 0
" IV	...	...	...	...	213	208	11 7
" III	...	...	...	...	212	206	11 2
" II	...	...	...	...	247	240	9 11
" I	...	...	...	...	254	253	9 0
Preparatory	...	...	...	...	751	700	6 10
Totals	...	...	...	...	2,008	1,935	9 7*
Totals for 1912	...	...	...	...	1,947	1,857	9 6*
Increase	...	...	...	...	61	78	...
ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.							
Standard VII	...	...	...	...	2	2	13 7
" VI	...	...	...	...	40	39	14 1
" V	...	...	...	...	44	43	12 7
" IV	...	...	...	...	34	33	12 1
" III	...	...	...	...	60	58	11 5
" II	...	...	...	...	62	61	10 3
" I	...	...	...	...	46	46	9 3
Preparatory	...	...	...	...	248	241	6 4
Totals	...	...	...	...	536	523	9 1*
Totals for 1912	...	...	...	...	424	416	8 9*
Increase	...	...	...	...	112	107	...

* Mean of average age.

Certificates.—Of Sixth Standard pupils, about 60 per cent. gained proficiency certificates, and 15 per cent. were awarded competency certificates. The percentages for 1912 were 42 and 19 respectively. There has been a considerable advance in the work of Standard VI, but the improvement has not been so great as would appear from the figures. The proficiency certificate is a passport to higher scholastic and technical education, and, as such, it should not be within the reach of those who are unwilling to put forth considerable effort to secure it. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that it is not merely the work done in the highest class, but also the grounding received in those below, that prepares for the gaining of this prize, and it is probable that an unsatisfactory return from a Sixth Standard is generally the outcome of a too-easy promotion.

Of the candidates from the Catholic schools, 59 per cent. gained proficiency and 26 per cent. competency certificates.

Schemes of Work.—Much improvement was noticeable in the schemes of work presented, but in a few schools they are still somewhat unsatisfactory. Where the work is clearly defined and amply set out in the syllabus it is sufficient to show how it is dealt with in the three or four periods; but where the teacher is allowed latitude in selection and arrangement, as, for example, in geography and history, it is necessary to give the full scheme, with an indication of how the work is spread over the two, three, or four years, and of how the classes are grouped for the subject. This was not always done, and it was frequently necessary to ask for an explanation of what should be self-explanatory. In nearly every case what might be termed the minor subjects, such as health and moral instruction, are now receiving due attention in the preparation of schemes of work.

Generally speaking, the instruction has been more in accordance with the spirit of the regulations than in the previous year, and though it was not so thorough as I had expected, I believe the year upon which we have entered will witness a very considerable advance in this respect.

Reading.—Reading was, on the whole, satisfactory. In the higher standards comprehension and fluency have greatly improved. Attention is again drawn to the need in the lower classes for more systematic drill in the use of consonants and for more careful instruction in phrasing. In some schools the preparatory classes are using the little illustrated story readers with very good results. The children of such classes read with ease, and in their case the Inspector is not in doubt as to whether he is listening to reading or to repetition. There is very little improvement to report in the matter of the selection or treatment of passages for recitation, and I do not remember any instance of prose being taken for this work.

Composition.—As in 1912, composition was good in the lower classes, fair in the middle division, and weak in the upper standards. The greatest weakness was shown in punctuation, the teaching of which presents many difficulties. These, however, would to a large extent be overcome if