

The following table shows the progress that has been made since 1924 in the elimination of large classes :—

SIZE OF CLASSES OF SCHOOLS OF GRADE IV AND OVER.

Number of Children.	1924.		February, 1928.		February, 1929.	
	Number of Classes.	Per Cent.	Number of Classes.	Per Cent.	Number of Classes.	Per Cent.
Under 31	124	5	204	7	233	8
31-40	406	16	768	26	860	28
41-50	716	28	1,026	34	1,138	37
51-60	700	28	905	30	788	25
61-70	359	14	87	3	64	2
71-80	126	5	9	..	2	..
81-90	52	2	3	..	..	..
91 and over	36	2	1	..	..	..
Totals	2,519	100	3,003	100	3,085	100

It is admitted on all sides that the continuance of a policy of reduction in the size of classes is essential if New Zealand is to keep abreast of other countries in educational progress. In England the Board of Education has accepted the elimination of large classes as one of the cardinal objects of national policy in education. That this policy is being actively pursued will be apparent from the following statement of the position as to sizes of classes in 1927-28 in the public elementary schools in England and Wales :—

Number of Children.			Number of Classes.	Per Cent.
Under 31 .. ..	..	..	43,470	29
31-40 .. ..	..	..	44,686	30
41-50 .. ..	..	..	45,602	30
51-60 .. ..	..	..	16,517	11
Over 60 .. ..	..	..	169	..
			150,444	100

In comparing these figures with the figures shown above for New Zealand it must be remembered that the former are in respect to all schools, whereas the latter are only for schools of Grade IV and upwards.

In New Zealand, as in England, progress in reducing the size of classes has been materially hampered by the difficulty of providing adequate accommodation for the augmented staff. School buildings are, however, being enlarged and remodelled as rapidly as funds permit.

PUPILS LEAVING PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

In 1928, 23,742 pupils (12,313 boys and 11,429 girls) left public primary schools ; of these 18,508, or 78 per cent., had passed Standard VI, and 5,234, or 22 per cent., had not passed that standard. Amongst the 5,234 children who left without passing Standard VI were 745 children who had not attained the age of fourteen years. It is thought, however, that the greater portion of these will be children who, though not fourteen years of age when the schools closed in December, 1928, attained that age before the 1929 school year commenced. A number left the Dominion, and others transferred either to private schools or to lower departments of secondary schools. The few who are not thus accounted for will doubtless have been dealt with by the Education Boards for irregular attendance.