

(well known to your Board), the results would compare favourably with those of the previous year. I regret, in consequence, to have to report that the proportionate number of successes has fallen from 76 to 67 per cent. The proportion of failures to successes is much too large, and it appears to me to be needful to specially report that in future I shall increase the difficulty of the requirements necessary to secure a pass in Standard III. It is satisfactory, however, to note that in our efficient schools those who succeeded in getting a pass have done so with credit, and of those who failed to pass a considerable number failed by only a few marks.—*Fifth*: As compared with the previous year, the number of candidates has increased from 94 to 196 (or 108 per cent.), and the number of passes from 85 to 136 (or 60 per cent.). The number of successes is quite satisfactory, but the quality is not what it should be. It must improve. Judging from the written papers, some of the children are well taught, though many of them are ill taught, and, in consequence, I find stupid errors running through the papers of a whole school. The fault, obviously, rests with the teacher, or possibly with some text-book used by the children. Rote learning is very evident.—*Sixth*: The number of those presented has risen from 31 to 63 (or 103 per cent.), and the successes from 28 to 49 (or 77 per cent.). The quality and number of the successes are altogether satisfactory. I have pleasure in noting that there is a marked improvement in the directness and straightforwardness of the answering, though there is still room for further advance. More intelligent oral teaching, instead of mere "book drill," will secure definiteness in the answers.

REMARKS ON THE THIRD STANDARD AND THOSE BELOW IT.—*Third*: I cannot express anything like satisfaction with the results of this standard. So great, indeed, is the deficiency of passes that it seems to me impossible to escape the conviction that either the demands are too numerous and heavy, or that the teaching is bad. The results in arithmetic are poor. The absence of intelligent method in dealing with it is very apparent. An extra cypher or two in a multiplier or a dividend is enough to vitiate a child's working beyond the hope of securing a pass. The lessons in arithmetical notation are deficient in systematic arrangement and clearness. I cannot speak favourably of the scholars' ability to solve the simplest arithmetical problem. The results in geography are of a very unsatisfactory character. There are more failures in this subject than in any other, though this might not be expected. My conviction is that the fault lies more in the teaching than in the subject itself. When geography is efficiently taught the scholars acquire habits of accurate observation and definite statement, which will be handy for the intelligent conduct of life. If vivifying methods of teaching the subject were followed, I would have great faith in the possibility of better results being obtained, and greater hopes of substantial progress being made.—*Second*: I cannot speak in terms of satisfaction of the results in this standard. The number and quality of the passes in it as a whole are not satisfactory. This is due in great measure, I have no doubt, to faultiness in the teaching of geography. Beyond the rote repetition of the definitions little is known of the subject. But if I have to accuse myself of anything, it is of leniency with respect to the geography in this standard.—*First*: On the composition of this standard depends in large measure future success. It is not conducive to good schoolkeeping to place scholars in it that are not well up in its subjects. Too early presentation must be resisted, for when it is made difficulties of no slight kind will be experienced in getting up the work necessary to secure a pass in the Second; and when the Third is reached the work becomes intolerable. In future no scholar will be allowed to pass that may fail in any subject prescribed for this standard.

DISCIPLINE.—I observe with great pleasure that the well-trained children of our best schools are distinguished by habits of orderliness, punctuality, and obedience. There is scarcely such a thing as the tardily obeyed command or the sullen countenance. The finer sensibilities of the children are not now torn to pieces by calling them "dunces" and "blockheads."

I have, &c.,

R. FOULIS, F.E.I.S.,
Inspector of Schools.

The Chairman, Education Board.

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Wellington, 31st March, 1883.

I beg to present my ninth annual report on the work of the primary schools in the Wellington Education District. In the early part of the year I inspected all schools in operation, with the exception of the small schools at Kaitoke and Tenui; and, in the latter part of the year, all the schools—fifty in number—were examined in the work of the standards.

STANDARD PASSES.—Since the introduction of the standard system the effective work of schools has been everywhere measured by the number of passes or failures in the standards; and, in most districts, the practice has grown up of determining the issue of an examination by the percentage of passes made on the number of children presented—that is to say, broadly speaking, on the number taught. But, although examination by standards has been in force for nine years in the district, the successful work of a particular school has not been, at any time, wholly gauged by such a percentage, nor have the passes been considered of equal value. It constantly happens that there is a wide difference of value between the highest and lowest passes in the same class of a school, and the number of strong candidates in one school often far exceeds that in another, irrespective of numbers attending. Also the quality and neatness of work in one school may be in advance of those of another, which may have produced approximate percentage results. An examiner, having determined what is the minimum of work required to constitute a pass, will evenly apply the test to all schools; and he must also accept the minimum degree of the quality of the work. It is then contended that a percentage of actual passes, struck on the number of expected passes, will fairly indicate how far the teacher has overtaken his work in obtaining a minimum result; for it must constantly be borne in mind, in this estimate of results, that a standard pass is not all that an examiner looks for.

But a difficulty arises in determining the number of expected passes. It should include all in the classes who are over eight years of age. But, as many children attend badly, others are deficient in mental ability, and some may be absent from examination on account of illness, it would evidently be