

unreasonable to expect every child to pass. It probably will be necessary, as the education of the colony advances, to define an expected pass more exactly. In my late examinations I did not expect any candidates to pass who came under any of the following disabilities: (a) Under seven and a half years of age; (b) attended less than 250 half-days; (c) absent from examination with sufficient reason; (d) more than one full year under the age for the standard in which he was presented (assuming eight as the age for Standard I.); (e) evidently of weak intellect. I should state that I have not refused to examine any candidates presented; but if, on examination, candidates failed who came under any one of the above conditions of exemption, their names were erased from the schedules. On the other hand, I added the names of any children over eight years of age who, having made 250 attendances, had not been entered for Standard I. It will thus be understood that, whereas there are 4,230 children on the books over eight years of age, the number of expected passes was only 3,511. But I do not think it is at all satisfactory to find so many as 719 children of standard age unrepresentable.

**EXAMINATION RESULTS.**—The number now on the books is 6,602, showing the increase of 333 on last year's return. Owing to the prevalence of measles the number present at examination did not so nearly approach the total number on the books as it has done in past years. The number passed in standards this year is 2,864, or 81·6 per cent. of the 3,511 expected passes. Last year 2,772 passed; but I cannot compare the percentage of results this year with that of last year, because the percentage of this year is struck on reduced numbers. I look upon the presentment (3,511) as a weak one, and for this the parents are responsible; but the percentage of results, representing the teachers' responsibilities, is fairly satisfactory. At the same time there is much weakness here and there; and, with more efficient teaching and management, a much higher quality of work is attainable. The appendix to this report will give the particular numerical results of each school in each standard; and the general condition of the schools will be also briefly described under the following classification of them—a classification necessary for purposes of comparison.

**CITY SCHOOLS.**—Of the six Wellington City graded schools, excluding infant schools, the Thorndon, Terrace, and Newtown Schools made a fair presentment of the children over eight years of age; but 94 boys and 87 girls in the Mount Cook Schools, and 147 children in the Te Aro School, were unrepresentable, chiefly on account of bad attendance. A serious outbreak of measles reduced the attendance in several of the city schools, but I do not think it increased the number of these bad cases of irregular attendance, which display a state of things calling for some action on the part of the Board and the School Committees. The examination results, as determined by standard passes, were good in the Thorndon, Te Aro, Newtown, and Terrace Schools, moderately good in the Mount Cook Girls' School, and, on the whole, weak in the Mount Cook Boys' School. The percentages of passes varied from 90 in the Thorndon to 67 in the Mount Cook Boys' School. The classes which showed the highest quality of work were the first four standards at Thorndon, Standards III. and V. at Te Aro, and Standard VI. boys at Mount Cook. The Thorndon School shows improved teaching in nearly all classes. The Te Aro School scarcely maintains the high standard of last year; but the work is generally sound. The Terrace School suffers much from being unnecessarily crowded, and from noisy discipline; and the work of Standard III. was weak in arithmetic, geography, and history. The Mount Cook Boys' School is unfortunate in retaining the services of teachers previously reported by me as being of poor teaching ability. The Mount Cook Girls' School is by no means so well managed as it was two or three years ago, its organization being defective, and the teaching-power distributed with poor judgment. The Newtown School is distinguished by good discipline, good numerical results, and fair all-round work. In the Thorndon School the headmaster gives thorough instruction in physical science and singing. The first assistant in the Terrace School is a skilful teacher of freehand drawing. Sewing is taught in all the schools in the city where girls attend; but the instruction given in the Thorndon School by the Normal Mistress, and in the Mount Cook Girls' School, is superior to that given in the others. The surrounding circumstances, which may be taken into account in an estimate of expected results in the city schools, tell most in favour of the Terrace School, and least in favour of the Mount Cook Boys'. The situation of the Terrace School, in the narrows of the city, remote from the poorer dwellings, attracts children from other districts. More pupils have been admitted than there are places for; and this has led to increased difficulties in the management. Taking the whole city into consideration, the overcrowding of the school was unnecessary, there being at the time empty classrooms in adjacent schools. The three infant schools are all under skilful management; and the interest of the teachers in their work is well sustained. The classes prepared for Standard I. came up strong in all sections of their work, and all passed as well as any First Standard candidates in the district. It is noticeable that a large number of children are returned as being over eight years of age in the Te Aro Infant School. As I now examine standard classes in these three infant schools twice a year, it is advisable that all children over eight years of age be drafted out after each half-yearly examination.

**DISTRICT TOWN SCHOOLS.**—Of seven schools, which come under the second classification, Featherston made the best presentment, 104 children qualifying for examination out of 108 on the books of standard age. Masterton, which has attained the size and importance of a large city school, this year produced the best percentage of passes made in this class of schools—90 per cent. The percentage results are also high at Clareville, Featherston, and Carterton. The standard passes at Greytown and the Lower Hutt fall much below the average, the work at Greytown being weak in all standards except the Second and Fourth, and that at the Lower Hutt in all except the First and Second. At Greytown the work of the Third Standard was almost a complete failure. In the upper classes of these two schools, taught by the headmasters, the results both in quantity and quality were far from good. The passes made at the Taita School were hardly so good as in previous years. The best taught classes brought up for examination in these schools were the first four standards at Masterton, Standards I. and VI. at Featherston, Standard IV. at Greytown, and Standards V. and VI. at Carterton. I must especially commend the Third Standard class at Masterton. Sewing is only fairly taught throughout these schools; and the instruction in drawing, though common to all, is by no means good. An effort is being put forth in most of them to teach, by means of experiments, the elements of physics; and they have lately obtained small sets of apparatus for the purpose. For general accuracy