

day is the day of terrors to young children; but such is clearly a mistake, as there were 15 per cent. more children at the examinations than attended school on any ordinary school-day during the year. It may be that an extra effort is made by teachers and Committees to bring together as many of their pupils as possible on examination-day, but this only makes the contrast between the possible attendance results, as seen at my examinations, and the actual or every-day results so much the greater and it further points out what can be accomplished when proper influences are brought to bear upon parents and young children in the matter of school attendance.

CHILDREN PRESENTED.—The number of pupils who were presented for examination and the number who succeeded in passing the standard tests compare very favourably with those of former years. Altogether 2,085 pupils were presented for examination, 1,793 were examined, and 1,599, or 81 per cent. of the number examined, passed the requirements. In 1882 the numbers were—Presented, 1,927 examined, 1,550; passed, 1,314 showing a difference of 285 standard passes in favour of the past year.

The following table shows the number presented, examined, and passed in each standard. The average age of the pupils is also given, and, for the purpose of comparison, I have added the average age of the pupils throughout New Zealand who passed the standards in 1882:—

Average Age, New Zealand.	—	Average Age, Hawke's Bay.	Number presented.			Number examined.			Number passed.			Percentage of Passes of examined in each Standard.	Percentage of Marks obtained in each Standard.
			M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.		
Y. M.		Y. M.											
8 6	Standard I.	9 2	373	332	705	353	318	671	298	264	562	83·7	72·7
9 9	Standard II.	10 3	299	233	532	280	231	511	225	196	421	82·4	76·0
11 0	Standard III.	11 3	226	183	409	213	172	385	159	140	299	77·6	69·2
12 3	Standard IV.	12 5	164	125	289	159	117	276	121	89	210	76·1	66·5
13 3	Standard V.	13 3	63	49	112	57	37	94	44	28	72	76·6	66·4
14 2	Standard VI.	14 2	23	15	38	22	14	36	22	12	34	94·4	72·4
			1,148	937	2,085	1,084	889	1,973	869	729	1,598	81·0	71·0

AGES OF PUPILS.—It will be seen from the table here given that the average age of the pupils presented for examination and passed in the lower standards is somewhat higher than the average for the rest of New Zealand, but I do not think that the passing of children in Standards I. and II. at a very early age is of much assistance after all, nor do I think any educational advantage is to be gained by requiring young children under seven years of age to attend schools, unless special arrangements can be made for their training. It is the passing of Standards V. and VI., where the work to be done is of an advanced character, which constitutes the true age and education test, and I find that those standards are passed in this district at thirteen years three months for Standard V., and fourteen years two months for Standard VI., or as low as the average for New Zealand. Some of the pupils pass at a much earlier age than this, as, for example, at Gisborne, Annie Hall, age eleven years six months, and Alfred Steele, age eleven years eight months, have both passed Standard VI. in a very creditable manner, and George Millar age nine years nine months, a pupil at the same school, has passed Standard V. but such cases of early passing are altogether exceptional.

EXAMINATION RESULTS.—Of every 100 pupils examined in standards, 87 passed in reading, 89·1 in writing, and 70·4 in arithmetic. Standard VI. obtained the largest number of passes in proportion to the number of pupils examined, and Standard IV. the least. I have not stated the percentage of passes in history, geography, dictation, and grammar, for the reason that these subjects are not common to all standards. Although the percentage of passes compared with the number examined is a little lower than last year, the improvement in the character of the work done, as compared with former years, is very marked. The criterion of progress is to be found by comparing the number of marks obtained with the number actually obtainable. A pass in any standard is recorded if a pupil obtains 60 per cent. of the marks obtainable in that standard, and I find that actually 71 per cent. of the total marks obtainable were gained by those pupils who passed my standard examinations last year, or a result for the whole between "very fair" and "good." The changes made in the mode of examining the upper standards has enabled me to carry out all my examinations with much greater detail than formerly, and I am able to say that very commendable progress has been made in not a few of the schools. Faults in organization and discipline are disappearing slowly yet surely before the wider experience of the more capable teachers, and almost without exception the class-registers of attendance were well and neatly kept. In some instances too little attention was paid to the keeping of the admission and summary registers, and I have found that the standard clearance cards, containing the standards passed by children admitted from other schools, have been mostly disregarded by teachers in the classification of new pupils. These defects in school registration will receive special attention from me during the current year.

QUALITY OF WORK.—At the synchronous examination of Standards V. and VI., held on the 8th November, ninety-four pupils in Standard V., and thirty-six in Standard VI., presented themselves and took the necessary papers. In the highest standard only two failures were recorded, but in Standard V. the failures numbered twenty-three, or nearly 24 per cent. of the whole number examined. The year's work, however, for a pupil in Standard V. is much harder, relatively, than that required for one in Standard VI., because in the former much new ground has to be traversed, and the foundation is then really laid for a Standard VI. pass in the following year. On the whole, both standards, but more especially the Sixth, have done some very creditable work, and in nothing is the progress of these standards better seen than in the excellent exercise-books and paper work of the pupils attending the Gisborne, Napier, Waipawa, Port Ahuriri, and Wairoa district schools. In the preparation of the lower standards some of the schools have done very well, and nowhere