

year In some schools, as the table in the appendix will show, there is much room for improvement in the number presented as compared with the number over eight years of age, but it is a matter for which parents and not teachers are responsible.

The passes show a falling-off of 6·6 per cent., the failures being principally in the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Standards. Most of this falling-off is fairly attributable to the increased difficulty met with in the examination work but, with better work in the middle classes of some of the larger schools, and with better general management and teaching in others, a higher percentage with a better quality of results is attainable and, now that the ideal of the standards is fairly reached, I confidently look forward to much improvement. To attain this, the teaching must be sound and well-directed and no head-teacher can afford to put up with ineffective teaching even in one class of his school.

CITY SCHOOLS.—The City of Wellington schools now comprise six graded schools and four infant schools, attended by 2,478 children in the former, and 1,413 infants, making a total of 3,891. The percentage of results has fallen in the Thorndon, Te Aro, and Terrace schools. The Mount Cook schools, whose percentages were low last year, show much higher results this year. And at the Newtown School, in which, for some years to come, there will probably be not many pupils remaining for higher-standard work, the good standing of last year is fully maintained. After making due allowance for the increased difficulty in the examination, the falling-off in the percentage of results in the Thorndon and Te Aro schools from the very high percentages made last year is mainly due to changes occasioned by the removal of class-teachers, and to the difficulties which the headmasters have had in sparing time to examine and strengthen the work of certain classes. In both schools the temporary substitutes supplied had little aptitude for teaching. The difficulty is now largely overcome, and, knowing the ability of the management, I can fairly hope for higher results next year. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, there was very good lower-standard work and excellent Sixth Standard work in both schools. At Thorndon few if any of the questions asked the Sixth Standard in geography and history were not answered. In the Terrace School the Third Standard class was again weak, and also the arithmetic of the Fifth and Sixth Standards. The work of the two lower standards was very good, and that of the Fourth Standard was generally satisfactory. In this school also there have been changes of teachers in the Fifth Standard class, and the present second master, who has been only a short time in charge, cannot be held responsible for results. The Terrace School is the only one in the city in which singing is not taught. The Mount Cook School showed improved work in many classes. The work was particularly commendable in the First, Second, Fourth, and Sixth Standards of the girls' school, and in the Sixth Standard of the boys' school. In all the city schools, the reading of most of the classes was expressive, and the paper work neatly done.

Of the infant schools I can still speak most favourably. The new one opened in Courtenay Place is fairly started, and promises to do satisfactory work. The work of the larger infant schools, as preparatory to that of the graded schools, is invaluable, and is a great feature in the school system. I suggest a little more variety in the class-lessons, and I especially recommend the reading or telling of stories, questions afterwards being asked on the subject-matter. Although 200 children have this year passed the First Standard in the infant schools, I hope it will not be the great aim of infant-school teachers to prepare for standard work. Infant schools should not neglect their main function, which is, by variety of exercises, drill and singing, and by lessons in form, colour, construction, and so forth, to cultivate habits of observation and develop intelligence. At present the infant schools are insufficiently supplied with the necessary "properties" for this work.

DISTRICT TOWN SCHOOLS.—There are now ten important schools in this class, and for the most part the work done in them is fairly good. The Masterton School takes the lead, having produced the highest percentage, and, on the whole, a class of results inferior to none in the district. This school was distinguished by good reading in all classes, good writing in nearly all, with excellent writing in the Third Standard, and strong arithmetic throughout. The Taita School is second in order of merit. This school showed much intelligent knowledge, and made full passes in the higher standards, the grammar being particularly good, and two candidates clearing the Sixth Standard arithmetic paper. Next in order of merit came the schools at Featherston, Clareville, Karori, Greytown, and Lower Hutt, all doing satisfactory work. In the Clareville School the strongest subjects were grammar and geography, all the written work was very neat and some exceedingly creditable work was done in the two higher standards, and especially by one or two of the best pupils. The work of the Karori School was again strong in most subjects, particularly in grammar, higher arithmetic, and in history. Except in Third Standard work, the Greytown School was much improved. The upper and lower classes at Featherston were generally strong in their work, and the school was well conducted. Considering that only nine months had elapsed since the last examination of the Lower Hutt School, the work in many sections was good, and, with changes in the staff, promises to be better. The percentage results at Kaiwara were very high last year. The examination was held seven weeks earlier this year, and the number of passes was less but the work continues in many respects equally neat and good. The Carterton School—one of the very best taught schools in the district—has suffered much this year from untoward causes. The master has been very ill, there has been a long period of severe sickness in the neighbourhood, and the school year has been shortened. Under these circumstances it cannot be a matter of surprise that the results are low. Although there was a great breakdown in the middle of the school, some excellent work was done in the First and Sixth Standards, especially in the latter, two boys clearing the arithmetic paper, and all work being exceedingly neat, full, and accurate. The Upper Hutt School showed considerable weakness. Moderate reading and grammar, poor arithmetic, and bad spelling were nearly common to all classes in which they were taught.