

Table I.

Classes.	Presented.	Absent.	Excepted.	Failed.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.
						Yrs. m.
Above Standard VI. ...	51	...	...	...	...	...
Standard VI. ...	237	7	12	39	179	14 4
" V. ...	600	25	50	175	350	13 8
" IV. ...	1,051	42	81	220	708	12 7
" III. ...	1,333	58	103	309	863	11 5
" II. ...	1,220	36	39	74	1,071	10 3
" I. ...	1,223	37	19	67	1,100	9 3
Preparatory ...	3,184	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ...	8,899	205	304	884	4,271	*

* Mean of average age, 11 years 11 months.

The total number of children presented for examination is substantially the same as last year, the apparent increase being explained by the fact already mentioned, that twelve schools were examined twice during the year. Of the 5,664 pupils entered for examination in standards, 4,271 were successful, 884 failed, 304 were excepted, and 205 were absent. If excepted scholars and absentees are omitted from the calculation, the percentage of failures is 17. The average percentage of marks for class-subjects is 55, and the average additional marks 57.

EFFICIENCY.—The Board may be congratulated on the general efficiency of the schools under its jurisdiction. Not more than four or five can be cited as being inefficiently managed, and these not so much from want of effort and will on the part of the teachers as from want of ability. A goodly number are under first-class management, and, while there are all grades, in happily diminishing numbers towards the bottom of the scale of efficiency, no case of absolute neglect has come under our observation during the last twelve months. Suggestions pertaining to improved methods and management are cordially received by teachers, though they are not always readily and persistently acted on. For example, the mistress of an important school being advised at a visit of inspection to teach her classes the simple turnings, at the next appearance of the Inspector gave the order, "Children, face the window." There are three windows in the class-room!

The frequent and absolute collapse of Standard I. classes at examination calls for special remark. There is no good reason why every child presented for examination in Standard I. should not pass; the only requirement is thoroughness. It is to be feared that parents, eager to see their children pass the First Standard, and forgetful of the handicap they are thereby putting on their children and on the teacher at future examinations, do not leave the teacher free to act where his judgment should be frankly accepted.

METHODS.—Progress in this direction, though conspicuous in the case of a few teachers only, is steady, and in a measure general. In not a few schools, however, the teaching is characterised by a certain aimlessness of purpose and fruitlessness of result, which arise from an evident want of conscious method such as is evolved from the studied apprehension of the best means for securing given ends. The necessity for an ever-recurring appeal to the first principles of their art, to the maxims regulating the selection of effective examples and illustrations, to all that gives tone and colour to their life's work cannot be too strongly urged on all engaged in the cause of education. Books on method and management supply many useful hints, which become valuable in proportion as they are successfully carried into practice; but these, good as far as they go, are but poor substitutes for a systematic study of logic, of mental science, and of the history of education. The time cannot be far distant when a knowledge of these subjects will be demanded by the Education Department at the examination for teachers' certificates, which, as issued at present, are a guarantee for a certain amount of knowledge, but next to none for adequate ideas of the foundation of knowledge, and for the most improved modes of imparting it.

MANAGEMENT.—What with teaching, supervision and correction of work, register-keeping, and supervision of pupils during recess, teachers have a very busy day of it. In a well-conducted school each of these demands on the teacher's time follows the other with unvarying regularity. We notice, however, with some anxiety, a tendency to cut out the morning and the afternoon recess, which tendency we consider a grave mistake, for experience has shown us over and over again that what is lost in time is gained in intensity of work. There is an endless demand on the energies of the teacher, especially when he conducts, single-handed, a school of five or six standards, with infant classes. The infants, as a matter of course, receive the smallest share of attention; and this we hold to be an open sore in our public-school system. The evil fruits of this almost enforced neglect become painfully apparent in the standard classes, into which the children often import a pernicious legacy of inattention and idle habits. The hand of the infant trainer is often distinctly traceable for good or for evil not only in the First and Second Standards, but even in the Third and Fourth. As a pleasing contrast to this state of affairs, we note the establishment and efficient management of kindergarten classes in both the South and Middle schools. Many country teachers also, knowing that in proportion as they cherish or neglect their infant classes they will make or mar their school, supply their pupils with a variety of interesting object-work calculated to train the intellect through the senses.

CLASS AND ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS.—These cannot be said to receive adequate treatment in the schools of this district, being frequently handled by makeshift methods, and relegated to odd corners in the time-table. Science and object-lessons are so often taken up in a half-hearted manner by unaided teachers that we sometimes wish we could recommend their withdrawal from the list of subjects taught. From teachers of better-staffed schools, however, a more ardent and exhaustive handling may reasonably be expected; and, hereafter, the distribution of subjects over a