

the percentage of failures—that is, a decrease in the percentage of passes in every standard but the First and Second Standards, in which there is an improvement of 1·8 and 3·3 respectively. The falling-off varies from 7·1 in Standard IV. to 14·5 in Standard VI. In the Inspector's report for 1889 it was pointed out that, judging from results for some years, the upper standards of the majority of small schools would show really good results only every second year. The past year's results now appear to tend to strengthen that opinion. At the same time it should be mentioned that there was a great deal of illness during the months in which the examinations were held, influenza being particularly prevalent. During October and November we frequently had to allow children to leave a school before their examination was finished, owing to their being suddenly prostrated by this epidemic. Also, several children sat through examination who were really physically unfit to do so, as they had not completely recovered from an attack of influenza. While we could not but sympathize with the very evident disappointment of these children, we were pleased to find such commendable eagerness on their part to attend the examination and to get through their work successfully. Notwithstanding the epidemic, the number of children examined in Standards I. to VI. inclusive was at the rate of 93·6 out of every hundred presented in those standards.

Last year the great decrease in the number presented in standards above Standard III. was pointed out; this year a similar decrease is very noticeable, as will be seen by looking at Table B. Thus the numbers in Standard I., Standard II., and Standard III. are in each class just over 1,000; the number in Standard IV. is 82·2 of the number in Standard III.; and then comes a remarkable drop, the number in Standard V. being only 51·3 of the number in Standard VI., while the number in Standard VI. falls to 48·5 of the number in Standard V. Another calculation will be of interest: In 1887 there were 1,059 children in Standard I., while this year there are only 443 in Standard V. Now, as the latter expressed as a percentage of the former reads only 42, this means that 58 per cent. of the pupils originally enrolled in Standard I. in 1887 did not reach Standard V. A similar calculation with regard to the highest standard shows that 80 per cent. of those enrolled in Standard I. in 1886 did not reach Standard VI. Against this we are glad to find that the proportionate number of pupils remaining at school after passing Standard VI. has gradually increased year by year, and by 12 per cent. in five years.

A general idea of how the eighty-one schools fared at examination, as far as percentages are concerned, may be gathered from the following: No failures, 3 schools; below 10 per cent. of failures, 9 schools; 10 per cent. of failures, but below 15 per cent., 11 schools; 15 per cent. of failures, but below 20 per cent., 11 schools; 20 per cent. of failures, but below 30 per cent., 26 schools; 30 per cent. of failures, but below 40 per cent., 13 schools; 40 per cent. of failures, but below 50 per cent., 4 schools; 50 per cent. of failures, but below 60 per cent., 2 schools; 60 per cent. of failures, but below 70 per cent., 2 schools: total, 81 schools.

That percentages are misleading goes without saying. In the foregoing list the work was not always equally good in schools with similar percentages, nor was it always best in the schools with no failures, or in those with very few failures.

INSTRUCTION.—Table D, which follows, shows for each standard the percentage of pupils that passed in each of the pass-subjects. Excepted pupils were not excluded, but, nevertheless, a general idea of how these subjects were taught may be obtained from the table.

TABLE D.

Classes.		Reading.		Dictation and Spelling.		Writing.		Arithmetic.		Grammar and Composition.		Geography.		Drawing.	
		Number examined.	Per Cent. passed.	Number examined.	Per Cent. passed.	Number examined.	Per Cent. passed.	Number examined.	Per Cent. passed.	Number examined.	Per Cent. passed.	Number examined.	Per Cent. passed.	Number examined.	Per Cent. passed.
Standard VI.	...	196	96·9	196	83·6	196	97·2	196	59·6	196	58·6	196	62·7	196	95·4
" V.	...	414	92·7	414	71·5	414	92·7	414	68·8	414	65·4	414	52·4	414	93·4
" IV.	...	791	86·1	791	59·8	791	87·7	791	58·2	791	61·9	...	...	791	85·5
" III.	...	971	83·1	971	66·6	971	87·1	971	72·9	971	67·3	966	80·0	971	91·8
" II.	...	1,016	85·9	1,016	91·1	1,016	88·7	1,016	85·0	...	...	...	...	1,016	88·8
" I.	...	1,046	83·5	1,046	91·5	1,046	91·7	1,046	90·2	...	...	...	...	1,046	91·6
Totals	1891	4,434	85·9	4,434	78·1	4,434	89·7	4,434	76·2	2,372	64·5	1,576	78·7	4,434	90·7
	1890	4,443	87·2	4,443	80·2	4,443	96·7	4,443	79·4	2,391	67·6	1,637	80·2	4,276	94·4

Reading.—The percentage of passes in this subject was considerably the highest in Standard VI.—96·9—and lowest in Standard I.—83·5. On the whole, the reading should have been much better at very many schools in the lower standards. In Standard I. we sometimes found pupils unfamiliar even with the words of the text, though only one little book had been used during the school-year. It must again be pointed out that many failures in this important subject result from the fact that teachers do not train their pupils to read in a sufficiently loud tone, and to enunciate distinctly. If muttering were not passed over during the year, there would be no trouble on that score on examination-day. Also, during a reading-lesson a teacher should not, by engaging in other work, lose command over his pupils. Provincialisms, misuse of the aspirate, and the dropping of