

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR THE WHOLE DISTRICT.

Standard Classes.	Presented.	Absent.	Excepted.	Failed.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.	Percentage of Failures for each Standard.	
						Yrs. mos.	1892.	1891.
Above Standard VI.	51	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Standard VI. ...	76	7	0	21	48	14 4	30·4	51·2
" V. ...	150	9	6	45	90	13 7	33·3	60·6
" IV. ...	178	3	5	47	123	12 7	27·6	34·5
" III. ...	264	11	12	69	172	11 10	28·6	31·6
" II. ...	185	7	3	26	149	10 2	14·8	10·9
" I. ...	209	6	3	33	167	9 2	16·5	17·5
Preparatory ...	520	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total ...	1,633	43	29	241	749	11 11	...	...

NORTH CANTERBURY.

SIR,—Christchurch, 17th February, 1893.

We have the honour to present for the year 1892 the annual return which it is our duty to make as Inspectors of the North Canterbury Education District.

The record we have to submit is again, we regret to say, almost exclusively a record of examination results, and must necessarily continue to be so until the Board sees its way to provide an adequate inspecting staff to carry out the requirements of the regulations. For the past four years our functions have been becoming more and more the functions of mere examiners, until now, after subtracting the time spent in preparing statistics, and the month's annual vacation which the Board has recently been pleased to grant us, the work of examining, or work connected with it, leaves us little opportunity of fulfilling other equally important duties prescribed by the regulations, or duties which, though not specially demanded, Inspectors who have an earnest desire to improve the state of education in their district must still regard as equally incumbent on them. That the lament is not without just cause must be evident from the comparison of other education districts—Otago, with substantially the same number of children in standard classes, with fifty fewer persons employed whose work has to be estimated, and with only twenty-five more schools, maintaining, as it has done for years, three Inspectors and an assistant examiner, and yet suggesting (*vide* Inspectors' Report, 1891) further assistance as a "great relief," which would enable inspecting work to be fully carried out; Wellington, with little more than half, and Wanganui and Southland, with considerably less than half the number of children in North Canterbury, having each two Inspectors, while districts with one Inspector each show a similar or even greater disproportion.

There are now in operation in the district 175 schools, reckoning the Model School separately. Of these, two falling due at the end of the year were closed on account of illness, and could not therefore be examined. One new school not a full year in operation it was found convenient to group with next year's series; and one aided school in an outlying position, invited to send its children for examination to a convenient place, omitted to do so. The remaining 171 schools were examined during the year in accordance with the standard regulations, and one of them received in addition an interim examination to determine the progress made.

In the schools examined there were presented in the schedules 20,497 children, of whom 6,156, or 30·03 per cent. of the whole, were included in the preparatory classes, and 144 in the class above Standard VI. Of the 14,197 in the Standard Classes I.—VI., 13,746 were present, and were examined in subjects of the "pass" group individually, and with reference to "class" estimates in other subjects. Of this number, 11,404, or 55·64 per cent. of the total roll-number, satisfied their respective standard tests, and 1,917, or 14·39 per cent. of those examined in the Standard Classes I.—VI. (excluding exceptions) failed. The 6,156 children below Standard I. were examined as usual in classes with more or less detail, and the instruction they gave evidence of receiving was reported on in general terms. A majority of the children presented in the class above Standard VI. were examined again in the work of the Sixth Standard simply, superior proficiency being taken as a fair equivalent for the extra time spent in school; but in a considerable number of cases a special programme was submitted of work done in English, Latin, Euclid, or algebra, of which such an examination was made as the Inspector found time to give. The usual tabular statements of the summarised results in "pass," "class," and additional subjects respectively, and the required return from each school, form the appendices to this report.

In comparing the figures contained in these tables with the corresponding figures of the previous year, a considerable increase in the number of children presented in the upper classes is again the first thing to be noted, the totals for the classes Sv, Svi, and Svii being 284 above the total for 1891, which was itself an advance of 297 on the total for the previous year. In the preparatory division and Standard I. the tendency is in the other direction, the total for 1892 being 450 below that of 1891, while the latter is 532 below the total of 1890. In the preparatory classes themselves, the movement for many years has been steadily downwards, until from 1882, when, as far as we can make out from the returns available, 45 per cent. of the roll-number were included in this part of the schools at the time of examination, the proportion now reaches its lowest point, 30 per cent.—a very remarkable difference, which can be attributed only to the increased efficiency of our infant departments.