

The Class-subjects.—The class-subjects are grammar, history, geography (Standard II.,) elementary science and object-lessons, and mental arithmetic. The following table shows the results of the examinations in these subjects:—

Standard attained.	Number of Schools.
Excellent	2
Good	55
Satisfactory	42
Fair	29
Moderate	11
Inferior	2

The class-subjects make a somewhat formidable list, and we are of opinion that, in small schools at any rate, much time that should be given to the three Rs is spent by pupils in trifling over them. The list might be reduced in one of two ways—either (1) by the incorporation of history and science in the reading-books, and grammar in composition; or (2) by allowing teachers to choose, at their option, one of the three subjects—history, grammar, or science. Mental arithmetic might be taken along with arithmetic, and allowed to count towards a pass in doubtful cases. Elementary science—physics, chemistry, and agriculture—continues to be taught in many schools without either material or apparatus, the net result being the loading of the pupils' memories with a mass of undigested and undigestible verbiage. The only science-subject that receives anything like adequate treatment without apparatus is physiology, for here the subject-matter is at hand.

The Additional Subjects.—We may record the results of the year thus:—

Standard attained.	Number of Schools.
Excellent	7
Good	61
Satisfactory	46
Fair	25
Moderate	1
Inferior	1

If it may be said with some reason that the class-subjects should not find a separate place in the syllabus, it may be said, without qualification, that three at least of the additional subjects should. Drill, singing, and needlework are a distinct but entirely necessary addition to the standard subjects. Poetry and comprehension of language might very well be taken in connection with reading; indeed, we think there is a distinct disadvantage in not so taking them. A boy may read fluently and not understand what he reads, while another may read haltingly and understand every word he reads; and yet the latter may be in a worse position with respect to a standard pass than the former. The department recently issued what is practically a new sewing syllabus, which corresponds very closely with the syllabus recommended some time ago by the ladies of the local Institute and accepted by us as an alternative course.

A recent regulation requires that a special certificate, signed by the Inspector or the Secretary, be granted to each pupil that passes Standard VI. It is evidently intended that the certificate shall be something of the nature of what is known in Scotland as the "leaving certificate." Accordingly, we shall feel it incumbent upon us hereafter not to pass any pupil whose qualifications are in any degree doubtful. Young people who prepare privately for this certificate must sit for examination at a public school, and must be thoroughly well grounded in reading (including explanation), arithmetic (including mental, especially commercial sums and mensuration), composition (including spelling and writing), geography, and drawing.

Technical Education.—At the present time the question of technical education greatly exercises the public mind. It may accordingly not be inopportune to offer some remarks on what we believe to be its place in our primary schools. The foundation of all progress in the industrial arts is, without doubt, a sound general education; or, to speak more specifically, a thorough grounding in the three Rs. Whatever would tend to retard the advancement of the children in these subjects would, in the long-run, be detrimental to the material well-being of the community. But, at this time of the day, it goes without saying that a place should be found in our primary-school course for the training of hand and eye. If the senses of sight and touch are not developed in early youth they cannot be fully developed at all. But the training in question cannot be given by means of technical instruction, properly so called. The hand-and-eye training suitable to primary schools is not directed to specific ends. The position is finely put in a report on the subject by a Scotch Inspector of Schools, a copy of which was sent by the department to the teachers and Boards of the colony. "The hand-and-eye training suited to primary schools," says this Inspector, "should contribute to the general education of the pupils, developing the qualities of intelligence, practical judgment, exactness, perseverance, taste, power of initiative, individuality. It is to be valued not so much for its direct result as for the contribution it makes towards the development of character and intelligence." He goes on to state that a natural course of hand-and-eye training would be—first, kindergarten exercises; next, modelling in clay; then cardboard-work, and finally wood-work. Now, we have in this district, during the past few years, made marked progress in the introductory course, and we have further made a beginning in the final stage. The problem is to fill in the intermediate steps, and to organize the available talent for the final step. The training in contemplation is exactly what is known in Sweden as "sloyd," and, were all our pupils to undergo it, they would be able to use their hands as well as their heads—or, more correctly, to use them concurrently. We may point out that the demand for technical instruction in England is accompanied by a demand for commercial education—that is, for instruction in modern languages, in commercial geography, and in business principles. In view of the recent disturbance of the industrial centre