

TABLE B.—PASS-SUBJECTS (Numbers reduced to Percentages).

Classes.	School-roll.		Class-roll.		Passed, 1898.		Passed, 1897.	
	Presented.	Present.	School-roll.	Present.	School-roll.	Class-roll.	School-roll.	Class-roll.
Above Standard VI.	1.5	62.4	...	...	...	...	...	...
Standard VI.	7.0	96.8	5.5	79.0	5.5	81.3	...	...
" V.	10.9	95.2	7.6	69.6	7.5	71.2	...	...
" IV.	14.3	95.0	10.5	72.9	10.1	70.6	...	...
" III.	14.3	95.8	10.6	73.7	11.7	77.8	...	...
" II.	12.2	97.0	11.0	90.4	11.4	90.8	...	...
" I.	11.4	97.4	10.8	95.1	10.9	95.6	...	...
Preparatory	28.3	89.0	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	100.0	93.5	56.0	79.8	57.1	80.9	...	...

The schools of the district now number 201, one of which was opened during the year. All the others were examined in due course. In the schools examined there were on the rolls, as may be seen in the foregoing table, 20,890 children, of whom 14,649 were included in the Standard Classes VI.—I. Of the latter number 14,068 (or 96 per cent.) of the class enrolment were present on the days of examination, and 11,691 passed their respective standards. These numbers are somewhat lower than the corresponding figures of the previous year, and the proportion passed is also somewhat less, but the difference in neither case is material. Of those who did not pass 320 in all would have been regarded as "excepted" under the old rule superseded by the existing regulations.

The pupils of the class above Standard VI. were for the greater part examined simply a second time in the Sixth Standard programme, in which they were expected to show special proficiency. In a number of cases an extra programme of work was submitted, which commonly included a little algebra and Euclid, or a little Latin. Not unfrequently sets of books in bookkeeping were shown, and in one instance a typewriter was in use. Of the 5,266 children examined in the preparatory division 832 were eight years of age or more. The discretion exercised in not presenting these children in the First Standard was generally such as we could not question.

CLASS AND ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS.

Class-subjects.						Additional Subjects.	
Degree of Proficiency.	Number of Schools.					Name of Subject.	Number of Schools represented.
	Grammar.	History.	Geography, Standard II. (only).	Science and Object-lessons.	Mental Arithmetic.		
Excellent	10	9	28	11	...	Repetition of poetry	200
Good	15	54	59	52	16	Drill	143
Satisfactory	36	57	58	52	23	Singing	153
Fair	50	50	27	45	59	Sewing	191
Moderate	13	7	9	11	28	Comprehension of reading-matter	200
Inferior	73	20	7	28	69		
Total schools included in estimate	197	197	188	199	195		

NOTE.—The above terms expressing degrees of proficiency are used in the sense in which they are directed to be used in Departmental Form No. 24.

To bring our returns more closely into accordance with the wishes of the Education Department and the practice of other Inspectors, we have this year abandoned numerical estimates for class-subjects in the general report and appendix, while retaining them in preference to verbal judgments in the individual reports on schools. For the preference a word or two of explanation may be necessary. In individual reports the numerical estimates have this merit: that they compel the Inspector to be as definite as possible where definiteness at the best can only be approximate; but their chief recommendation lies in the fact that they enable him to accept an indifferent or poor result in one or two of the subjects concerned (as the letter and the spirit of the regulations quite justify him in doing) without having to use any term implying reproach to the teacher. If mental arithmetic, for instance, in a small, single-handed school is poorly done, as it might well be under the best of teachers, a numerical estimate without comment is less likely to attract invidious attention than the appearance of the word "inferior" opposite the name of the subject. In the supposed