

The following table gives a summary of results for each class :—

Classes.	Presented.	Present in Standards.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.	Averages of Passes for New Zealand in 1899.
Secondary class and class above Stan- dard VI.	61	...	...	Yrs. mos.	Yrs. mos.
Standard VI.	126	126	105	14 1	14 0
" V.	173	170	150	13 3	13 1
" IV.	210	203	202	12 9	12 2
" III.	193	192	172	11 1	11 0
" II.	169	166	161	9 8	9 11
" I.	174	171	156	8 7	8 9
Preparatory	492	...	...	...	...
Totals	1,598	1,028	946	11 7*	11 6*

* Mean of average age.

Without going further into details, I may state that in general our schools, so far as staff are concerned, are in good working order, and the subjects of instruction, for the most part, are fairly and intelligently treated. Many of our schools are, however, inadequately provided with the most necessary materials, such as maps, globes, charts, &c., while extra reading-books are scarcely found in any of them. Reading is by far the most important subject of instruction in our schools, and this view is brought prominently before us in the new regulations. Every pupil is now required to pass his standard in this subject (the only concession granted being a slight one to pupils of Standard VI.), and I think rightly so: if a child can read easily and intelligently he is then in a position to gain information for himself, and to increase his store of knowledge. But do our children read easily and intelligently? I am afraid the majority do not. No doubt most of them read their one wretched book fluently enough, but that is purely mechanical—they know it by heart. Give them a strange book of equal difficulty to read, and how do they acquit themselves? Why, they are simply at sea. The chief reason for this is that our children have not a sufficiently wide training in the subject. We go on year after year with one reading-book for each standard per year, and we expect that the getting through this one book is going to make intelligent readers of our children. It is simply absurd. Next year we have a new reading-book, and no doubt improvement will be effected, but the improvement will be of a temporary nature. To become permanent we must have more reading material. Is it reasonable to suppose that our children will do with about one-third of what is considered indispensable by almost every other district and country? Several other subjects, such as geography, drawing, &c., are suffering through lack of material. In writing I can record some improvement, the introduction of the correspondence style of the vertical system being mainly responsible for this. I do not propose to offer more remarks on the subjects taught in our schools. That our teachers do their work honestly and well, though sometimes working under adverse circumstances, of this I am satisfied. What I wish more especially to emphasize is the absolute necessity for giving them the materials to work with.

In the matter of drill, this is carried out with fair results wherever male teachers are employed. One cadet corps has been formed in the district, and has done excellent work.

Roman Catholic Schools.—Reports, &c., were prepared and furnished to these schools in every respect similar to those supplied to schools directly under the Board.

Classes.	Presented.	Present in Standards.	Passed.
Secondary class and class above Standard VI. ...	14	...	...
Standard VI.	16	15	15
" V.	30	30	30
" IV.	39	39	39
" III.	25	23	23
" II.	31	21	21
" I.	35	35	35
Preparatory	72	...	...
Totals	262	163	163

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM L. F. FETCH, M.A., Inspector.

The Chairman and Members, Grey Education Board, Greymouth.