

present in standards, 954; total promoted to a higher class, 826. Similar figures for 1900 were 1,598, 1,045, 1,028, and 946 respectively.

The total number of infants is 521, and the total number of infants over eight years of age not presented for Standard I. is eighty-four. Similar figures for the previous year were 492 and seventy-three respectively.

The increase in the number of pupils of over eight years of age and the decrease in the percentage of pupils promoted to a higher class may, I think, be fairly accounted for by the prevalence of sickness throughout the district. The general quality of the work as gauged by my efficiency marks is only slightly lower than last year.

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

Classes.					Presented.	Present.	Passed.	Average Age of the Pupils in each Class.
								Yrs. mos.
Secondary class and class above Standard VI. ...					53	...	...	...
Standard VI. ...					114	111	93	13 11
" V. ...					168	162	134	12 11
" IV. ...					179	176	140	12 3
" III. ...					170	168	147	10 8
" II. ...					179	172	162	9 3
" I. ...					172	165	150	9 0
Preparatory ...					521	...	...	...
Totals ...					1,556	954	826	11 4*

* Mean of average age.

Speaking generally, the progress previously noted has been well maintained, and each year sees the work of the different schools becoming more uniform. Reading has made some improvement, which is to be attributed partly to the fact of our having new Readers this year, and partly to the fact that promotion to a higher class mainly depends on proficiency in this subject. The establishment of small school libraries is well worth the consideration of our teachers, especially in the country, where suitable reading-matter for our children is scarce. In one or two instances where libraries have been formed I have found improved reading, and with it improved intelligence. One book for reading is altogether insufficient for our requirements, and until we can devise some means of obtaining more varied reading-material I do not see how any great improvement is to be effected. Spelling is well done, with few exceptions. An erroneous impression appears to have got into the minds of some of our teachers regarding this subject—viz., that the pupils are expected to be able to spell every word contained in their reading-books. A reference to the syllabus will show that such is not the case, and that they have been unduly severe in their demands. Writing is not as good as I should like to see it. Some teachers are quite indifferent as regards the position in which the pupils sit, and also as regards the holding of the pen. Teachers in our country schools have not a great deal of time to devote to the actual teaching of this subject, but I feel satisfied that better work could be done, and would be done, if they would constantly bear in mind the above points, and always insist, no matter what work is being done, on having it neatly and carefully written. Arithmetic is a fairly satisfactory subject, and the setting-out is generally good. Composition is by no means a strong subject, but is making satisfactory progress, the work being much less mechanical than in former years. Here, again, a school library would be of immense benefit. Paraphrasing is poorly done—that is, if it is attempted at all; and, whilst sentences are usually well corrected, the reasons given for the corrections made are just as often incorrect. The teaching of grammar, which is one of the weakest subjects we have, is mainly responsible for this. Grammar, in our country schools, is certainly at least one standard below what it should be. In most of our schools history is taught according to the syllabus—so many dates and so many events. I do not place much value on it except as a memory exercise, and much prefer treating it by reading-lessons from some historical Reader. Political geography is fairly taught. It is, however, hardly up to the standard it was before being relegated to the class group of subjects in Standards III. to V.; but the training of physical geography is very indifferent. Physical drill is now being taught in four schools. This is some improvement, but it could with advantage become more general. As regards discipline and the manners of the pupils, these are highly satisfactory, and the schools are usually clean and tidy. There have been occasions when I have had to complain of a want of tidiness regarding the school surroundings, and also a want of cleanliness regarding the offices; but these, I am glad to say, are exceptional cases. Whilst touching on sanitary conditions I should like to point out that more care might well be exercised regarding the lavatories. These are almost invariably in a bad state, and cause serious damage to the buildings. Another point I wish to mention is the necessity for having the school tanks cleaned out periodically. I believe I am correct in stating that in many cases they have not been cleaned out since erection.

The 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. Appended are tables similar to those dealing with our own schools: Total presented for examination, including infants and pupils above Standard VI., 270; total presented in standards, 169; total present in standards, 161; total promoted to a higher class, 160; total number of infants, 92; total number of infants over eight years of age not presented for Standard I., 5.