

portion of pupils in the preparatory classes, which has for years past been showing a gradual increase, shows a still further increase for the year from 27·97 to 28·28. The proportions in Standards I, V, and VI have also increased; those in II, III, IV, and VII show a slight decrease.

TABLE C1.—CLASSIFICATION BY PUPILS, DECEMBER, 1905.

Classes.	Boys.	Girls.	Totals.	Percentages for Five Years.				
				1905.	1904.	1903.	1902.	1901.
Preparatory	20,708	18,212	38,920	28·28	27·97	27·56	26·87	26·78
Standard I	8,597	8,001	16,598	12·06	11·55	11·82	11·68	11·44
Standard II	8,609	7,839	16,448	11·95	12·49	12·30	12·05	12·11
Standard III	9,111	8,331	17,442	12·67	12·73	12·75	12·64	12·98
Standard IV	8,580	7,977	16,557	12·03	12·38	12·28	12·60	12·73
Standard V	7,666	7,045	14,711	10·69	10·68	10·98	11·13	11·37
Standard VI	5,943	5,570	11,513	8·37	8·17	8·08	8·52	8·35
Standard VII	2,736	2,693	5,434	3·95	4·03	4·23	4·51	4·24
Totals.. .. .	71,950	65,673	137,623	100·00	100·00	100·00	100·00	100·00

The tendency for the last few years has been for the number of children in preparatory classes to increase in undue proportion to the total number of children under eight years of age. The figures for 1905 indicate that this tendency has received a check, which there is reason to hope will not prove merely temporary. In the proportion of children enrolled in preparatory classes, a further increase of 0·31 per cent. is shown, but the returns record a much larger increase in the totals under eight years of age, in which an advance from 40,039 to 40,933 is to be noted, an increase of 2·19 per cent.

TABLE C2.—EXAMINATION STATISTICS FOR 1905.

Education Districts.	Number of Pupils.				Standard VI Certificates granted.		
	Total Rolls on Day of Annual Visit.	Present on Day of Annual Visit.	Present in Preparatory Classes.	Present in Standard VII Classes.	Proficiency.	Competency.	Total.
Auckland	31,613	30,019	10,979	150	1,512	171	1,683
Taranaki	4,984	4,704	1,475	72	150	45	195
Wanganui	12,295	11,752	3,760	240	537	140	677
Wellington	16,505	15,510	4,499	490	968	250	1,218
Hawke's Bay	8,865	8,238	2,516	139	319	142	461
Marlborough	1,913	1,833	453	33	99	18	111
Nelson	5,632	5,390	1,657	82	249	125	374
Grey	1,589	1,524	561	25	55	44	99
Westland	1,004	986	346	45	40	26	66
North Canterbury	19,590	18,556	5,641	374	705	433	1,138
South Canterbury	5,081	4,829	1,439	145	235	48	283
Otago	19,580	18,750	5,902	366	1,082	149	1,231
Southland	9,735	9,388	2,966	202	454	120	574
Totals	138,386	131,479	42,194	2,363	6,399	1,711	8,110

Table C2 gives the number of children on the rolls of the schools in each district and the number present at the time of the Inspector's annual visit, and also shows the number of certificates of proficiency and competency issued. It will be seen that the largest number of certificates has been issued by the Auckland, Otago, and Wellington Boards.

Table C3 shows the average ages of the children in the several standards at the time of the Inspector's annual visit, also the mean of the average ages in each case for the colony as a whole. The average age of those in Standard V, the "standard of exemption," was in Auckland and Westland 12 years and 7 months, and in Taranaki 13 years and 3 months, these being the lowest and highest respectively. For the colony, the average age of the children in this standard in 1905 was 12 years and 10 months, the same as that for the previous year.

The average age for the colony of the pupils in Standard VI at the time of the annual visit of the Inspector was 13 years 9 months, which is precisely the same as the average for the two preceding years. In range, the ages returned