

TABLE C.—AGE AND SEX OF PUPILS, DECEMBER, 1892.

(See Table No. 1, Appendix, p. 1.)

Ages.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Percentages for Five Years.					
				1892.	1891.	1890.	1889.	1888.	
Five and under six years ..	4,973	4,605	9,578	7·8	7·6	7·3	18·0	18·44	17·80
Six and under seven years ..	6,552	5,982	12,534	10·2	10·2	10·7			
Seven and under eight years ..	7,171	6,868	14,039	11·4	11·7	11·8	35·6	36·11	36·69
Eight and under nine years ..	7,554	6,873	14,427	11·8	11·9	11·8			
Nine and under ten years ..	7,593	6,956	14,549	11·9	11·7	12·0	33·2	32·68	33·03
Ten and under eleven years ..	7,207	6,849	14,056	11·5	11·7	12·2			
Eleven and under twelve years	6,931	6,539	13,470	11·0	11·5	11·1	9·9	10·91	10·56
Twelve and under thirteen years	6,557	6,095	12,652	10·3	10·1	9·9			
Thirteen and under fourteen years	4,899	4,420	9,319	7·6	7·4	7·2	11·3	1·86	1·92
Fourteen and under fifteen years	2,710	2,598	5,308	4·3	4·2	4·1			
Over fifteen years ..	1,236	1,452	2,688	2·2	2·0	1·9			
Totals	63,383	59,237	122,620	100·0	100·0	100·0	100·00	100·00	100·00

The average position of the children with respect to standards appears (from an investigation of Table D) to be about a quarter of a standard below the Second Standard. In arriving at this conclusion it is assumed that there are two preparatory classes, and that they contain equal numbers of children; and, further, that on an average the children in a standard class have been in the class six months. Comparing this status—of about a quarter of a standard below Standard II.—with the average age of the children (nine years and ten months), we have reason to assume that the average age of passing the Second Standard is about ten years and one month. The returns summarised in Table E agree perfectly with this result.

TABLE D.—CLASSIFICATION BY STANDARDS, DECEMBER, 1892.

(See Table No. 2, Appendix, p. 2.)

Standards.	Boys.	Girls.	Totals.	Percentages for Five Years.				
				1892.	1891.	1890.	1889.	1888.
Preparatory classes	16,712	14,812	31,524	25·71	27·05	27·48	27·75	26·90
Class for Standard I.	9,170	8,321	17,491	14·26	13·99	14·06	14·70	15·53
" " II.	8,891	8,401	17,292	14·10	13·68	14·59	14·73	15·19
" " III.	9,181	8,780	17,961	14·65	13·19	15·04	15·42	15·63
" " IV.	8,167	7,908	16,075	13·11	13·10	12·95	12·42	12·23
" " V.	5,976	5,788	11,764	9·60	9·44	9·01	8·48	8·46
" " VI.	3,644	3,532	7,176	5·85	5·34	4·80	4·52	4·35
Passed Standard VI.	1,642	1,695	3,337	2·72	2·21	2·07	1·98	1·71
Totals	63,383	59,237	122,620	100·00	100·00	100·00	100·00	100·00

It is gratifying to observe that the proportionate number of children in preparatory classes is declining, and that this is not accounted for by any change in the proportionate number of children at the lowest ages. On this subject the Otago Inspectors say, "No fewer than 1,217 pupils over eight years of age were not presented for Standard I., but in most cases what appeared to be sufficient reasons were assigned for their being withheld from examination. The reasons most commonly given were lateness in entering school, irregularity of attendance, and dulness. Of the validity of these reasons it is very difficult for us to form a trustworthy opinion; but we cannot but feel disappointed that the age at which Standard I. is on the average passed should continue to be so high as nine years and one month." The Westland Inspector says, "The ratio appears to me excessive, and hardly excused by the reasons given by the head-teachers, such as 'irregular attendance' and 'hopeless laziness'; but I believe that, the matter having now been brought prominently under notice, an immediate attempt will be made by the teachers to secure improvement." The Auckland Inspectors report, "There were presented in preparatory classes 1,702 children more than eight years old. We do not consider this number excessive. . . . Irregular attendance and short time at school" are the chief causes. "There are also . . . many Maori and half-caste children." The Taranaki Inspector says, "The instructions to Inspectors now require from them a statement of the number of children over eight years of age who have not been presented in