

The proportion of scholars learning drawing and singing was somewhat larger than in the previous year. The number of those on the roll not learning writing was 1,060; the number not engaged in arithmetic was 1,678. The corresponding figures for 1883 were 997 and 1,999. Auckland, Hawke's Bay, Westland, and Otago are the only districts in which all the children on the rolls are returned as being taught writing and arithmetic as well as reading. In Taranaki, Wellington, and Marlborough all attending the schools were receiving instruction in writing as well as in reading. The number of girls on the books was 46,850, or 48·18 per cent. of the whole attendance; of these, 34,504, or 73·7 of the whole, were taught sewing.

NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

The number of public schools returned as being in operation at the end of 1884 was 987, being an increase of 44 over that of the previous year. A return of the schools in the several education districts, including a statement of the expenditure on each for the year, and of the names, status, and rates of emolument of the teachers employed in them during the last quarter, is given in the Appendix, Table No. 11, pp. 13–50. The following table shows the distribution of large and small schools in the several districts, and supplies other information concerning them:—

TABLE D.—NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OPEN AT THE END OF 1884.

(In this enumeration every two half-time schools are reckoned as one school, except in the column for number of such schools.)

EDUCATION DISTRICTS.	Number of Schools open at End of Year.	Average Attendance for Last Quarter.	Mean Average at each School in each Education District for Last Quarter.	Number of Schools in which the Attendance for the Quarter was—										Number of Half-time Schools open at End of Year.	Number of Aided or Subsidised Schools at End of Year.	Number of Small Schools closed permanently in 1884.
				Under 15 Pupils.	15 and under 20 Pupils.	20 and under 21 Pupils.	25 and under 50 Pupils.	50 and under 75 Pupils.	75 and under 100 Pupils.	100 and under 150 Pupils.	150 and under 300 Pupils.	300 and under 500 Pupils.	500 Pupils and Upwards.			
Auckland.. ..	201	14,686	73·0	13	20	23	79	24	11	13	9	5	4	46	6	4
Taranaki	36	1,548	43·0	2	5	4	16	7	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	5
Wanganui	74	4,278	57·8	7	10	6	23	6	3	7	6	1	..	..	3	..
Wellington	57	5,678	99·6	3	6	4	18	5	5	6	3	7	..	..	1	..
Hawke's Bay	37	3,281	88·7	1	4	1	13	4	5	4	3	1	1	..	1	..
Marlborough	29	1,106	38·2	6	6	3	4	6	3	..	1	..	..	..	11	1
Nelson	82	3,641	44·4	13	12	6	23	10	7	4	2	..	..	..	13	1
North Canterbury.. ..	146	14,210	97·3	4	12	12	50	23	12	14	9	5	5	..	3	..
South Canterbury.. ..	45	3,220	71·5	5	3	3	22	4	1	3	2	1	1	..	15	..
Westland.. ..	35	2,373	67·8	6	4	4	10	3	2	2	2	..	..	..	..	..
Otago	166	17,915	108·3	..	8	20	64	19	14	12	10	11	8	6	2	..
Southland	79	4,896	62·0	4	3	9	37	13	4	3	4	1	1	..	4	..
Totals for 1884	987	76,832	77·8	64	93	95	369	124	68	68	51	35	20	52	70	11
Totals for 1883	943	72,214	76·6	55	86	96	350	126	56	75	52	28	19	56	48	6

The proportional increase in the number of schools during the year was somewhat less than the increase in the average attendance; for, while in 1883 the mean average attendance at each school for the last quarter was 76·6, it had risen to 77·8 in 1884. The number of half-time schools is reduced by four. This class of school is maintained in Auckland and Otago only, all but six of them being in the former district. The sparseness of the population in many parts of the Auckland District has necessitated the establishment of half-time schools in order to afford the means of school instruction to the children in those localities. The report of the Auckland Board supplies interesting information as to its efforts on behalf of the settlers in the outlying districts. The number of schools aided under the provisions of section 88 of the Act has increased from 48 to 70 during the year. The increase in the number of such schools has been mainly in Marlborough, Nelson, South Canterbury, and Wanganui.

Eleven small schools were closed in 1884, as compared with six in the previous year. The closing of small schools is usually owing to such causes as the following: A weak school has been closed, and a strong school established in another part of the district where a larger number can attend; two weak half-