

TABLE A.—SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

EDUCATION DISTRICTS.	On School Rolls.				Average Daily Attendance.						Year's Average Attendance as Percentage of the Mean of the Average Weekly Roll for the Four Quarters.	
	Number of Scholars belonging at Beginning of Year.	Number admitted during the Year.	Number who left during the Year.	Number belonging at End of Year.	Strict Average.		Working Average.					
					Fourth Quarter.	Whole Year.	Fourth Quarter.			Whole Year.		
							Boys.	Girls.	Total.			
Auckland	16,996	11,660	8,753	19,903	15,567	15,504	8,265	7,630	15,895	15,861	79.5	78.1
Taranaki	1,932	1,336	1,007	2,261	1,566	1,527	869	763	1,632	1,611	72.5	73.0
Wanganui	5,172	2,854	2,127	5,899	4,319	4,371	2,390	2,043	4,433	4,475	74.7	75.7
Wellington	6,822	4,902	3,685	8,039	6,168	6,034	3,347	2,942	6,289	6,187	78.3	76.6
Hawke's Bay	3,902	2,821	2,069	4,654	3,634	3,508	1,958	1,775	3,733	3,624	78.8	77.2
Marlborough	1,431	785	630	1,586	1,149	1,139	645	530	1,175	1,177	76.8	75.2
Nelson	4,548	2,041	1,637	4,952	3,759	3,635	2,007	1,837	3,844	3,736	76.5	75.8
North Canterbury	17,160	9,472	7,544	19,088	14,642	13,952	7,812	7,051	14,863	14,397	75.5	76.4
South Canterbury	3,849	1,727	1,373	4,203	3,253	3,121	1,737	1,603	3,340	3,225	77.4	77.0
Westland	1,751	559	406	1,904	1,481	1,425	759	757	1,516	1,467	77.4	76.2
Grey	1,209	648	484	1,373	1,080	1,062	558	555	1,113	1,084	77.0	76.2
Otago	19,928	8,623	6,890	21,661	18,362	18,047	9,652	8,831	18,483	18,265	83.4	82.2
Southland	5,970	3,200	2,286	6,884	5,203	5,002	2,849	2,498	5,347	5,191	76.7	75.5
Totals for 1885	90,670	50,628	38,891	102,407	80,183	78,327	42,848	38,815	81,663	80,302	78.5	..
Totals for 1884	84,883	49,315	36,960	97,238	74,650	72,657	40,385	36,447	76,832	75,391	77.9	77.9
Increase in year	5,787	1,313	1,931	5,169	5,533	5,670	2,463	2,368	4,831	4,911	0.6	..

It is worthy of note that the number admitted during the year (50,628) is nearly one-half of the number (102,407) on the books at the end of the year. A reference to the corresponding figures of former years shows that this is by no means extraordinary; that, in fact, the irregularity and fitfulness thus disclosed are diminishing rather than increasing. It seems strange, however, that the average continuance of the name of a child on the books of any one school should not exceed two years. It cannot be supposed that the period of two years represents anything like the average duration of the school-life of a child. It may be that frequency of removal from one home to another—a conspicuous feature of colonial life—accounts for the high proportion which the entrances and dismissions bear to the whole number of pupils at any time enrolled. It is probable, however, that this is due in a great measure to great irregularity of attendance. The regulations relating to the quarterly returns of attendance require the teacher to remove from the roll at the end of a quarter the name of any pupil who, although enrolled, has not attended during the quarter; and any such pupil on returning to the school must be entered on the roll as newly admitted. It seems to be impracticable to institute such minute inquiry into the personal questions involved in this problem as could result in a certain knowledge of the relative degrees in which migration, late entrance upon school-life, early withdrawal, and gross irregularity—involving absence during many consecutive months—affect the total numbers that come out year by year in the compilation of the statistics. The facts for the year under review are—that the year 1884 ended with a roll of 97,238 names; that 50,628 names were enrolled in 1885; and that, of the total of 147,866 names, only 102,407 remained at the end of the year; so that the number of pupils removed from the roll in twelve months was 45,459, and the actual increase of 5,169 names on the roll represents simply the difference between 50,628 admissions and 45,459 withdrawals. There can be no doubt that the unsteadiness of the attendance militates against the efficiency of the schools.

The districts in which the number on the roll at the end of the year is less than twice the number of admissions are Auckland, Taranaki, Wellington, and Hawke's Bay; and the districts in which it is noticeably greater are Nelson, South Canterbury, Westland (where it is very much greater), Otago, and Southland. It is remarkable that in the Wellington and Grey Districts the sum of the numbers on the rolls of the several schools at the times of their several inspections exceeds the number on the rolls at the end of the year; in every other case the number at the more recent date is, as might have been expected, the larger.

It will be observed that there is great disparity in the numbers of children under the charge of the several Boards. For example, the average attendance