

## [3. MR. GOYEN'S REPORT.

SIR,—

Education Office, Dunedin, 31st March, 1887.

I have the honour to present my general report for the year 1886.

During the year I inspected sixty-six and examined sixty-five schools. Many of these were large ones, and occupied me from one to several days. I also examined a portion of the work of the five district high schools, and made several visits to districts and schools to report upon applications for new schools and to select pupil-teachers. Most of the rest of my time was taken up in examining the papers of scholarship competitors and of pupil-teachers. In the discharge of my duties I travelled 3,630 miles, and worked 1,951 hours, an average of nearly nine hours a day for the school days of the year. But the school days are not an Inspector's days. I need hardly say that an Inspector gets but few holidays, and still fewer Saturdays. I worked 300 days during the year, and hence the average length of my working day was six and a half hours. It is a popular myth that an Inspector enjoys a kind of perennial holiday, spending most of his time in travelling leisurely from school to school, where he pillories the unfortunate children for an hour or two, then issues his fiat of passes and failures, and writes a report the character of which is determined more by the condition of his liver than by the quality of the pupils' answering. Popular myths possess a wonderful amount of vitality and invariably die hard; still, they do die, and to give this particular one a speedy quietus we now invite members of School Committees to be present during the examination of their schools, that they may see for themselves how it is conducted. These gentlemen invariably express their surprise at the vast quantity of work the Inspector has to do, and their appreciation of his kindly treatment of the children, and of his manifest effort to give them the fullest credit for what they do.

A year is too short a time for any very sensible improvement to manifest itself, so that I have very little to add to my former reports respecting the management of the Board's schools. Many of them are well conducted, and in most respects well taught, and not many deserve to be stigmatised as "cram-shops." To apply this term to all, or to most of them, as is often done, is a gross abuse of language; and I confess I have but little respect for the opinions of those who so describe them. In this district, at any rate, the teacher that adopts the cramming process is sure to come to grief; for no child can pass our tests who has not had at least a fair training in most of the subjects of examination. In resolutely setting their faces against everything that savours of "cram" Inspectors not infrequently incur a good deal of odium; but it is better that there should be complaints against us about the searching character of our questions than that the teaching should be allowed to degenerate into mere mechanical routine and "cram." It is an instruction to Inspectors "to bear always in mind the importance of discouraging what is merely mechanical and superficial, and fostering all that shows enthusiasm for real education and tends to the increase of mental activity;"—and this is the spirit in which we conduct our examinations and inspections. It would be easy to make things pleasant all round, and to live in a kind of fools' paradise; but it is our duty to see to it that the children get, at the lowest, a fair training for the enormous amount of money their parents are spending annually to have them educated.

Our methods of teaching are every year improving, not by leaps and bounds, it is true, but slowly and surely, nevertheless. I seldom revisit a school without finding some improvement effected in the quality of the instruction; and, though highly conscious that a good deal yet remains to be done to bring the methods up to one's ideal of what is excellent, I think that there is a very fair amount of good work being accomplished in the bulk of our schools. In a large service like the Board's there are sure to be found some indolent, incompetent, and dissatisfied teachers; but the majority of them are as eager to improve their methods and management and to impart a sound intellectual training to their pupils as the Board is desirous that they should do so. I refrain from particularising the faults in methods observed during the year. On the whole not much good is done by giving them great prominence in every general report; but I have endeavoured to remedy them wherever and whenever I have observed them. I have frequently had to complain of the untidiness of the schools and the school-grounds, and the condition of the out-offices. Even many of the teachers that give lessons in sanitary science daily violate the cardinal precepts thereof. The tone of the schools continues to be good, but the manners of the children are susceptible of large improvement.

The Secretary, Otago Education Board.

I have, &c.,

P. GOYEN, Inspector.

## AUCKLAND.

## 1. MR. O'SULLIVAN'S REPORT.

SIR,—

Auckland, March, 1887.

I have the honour to submit this report for the year ended 31st December, 1886. The number of primary schools in the education district, and the attendance of pupils, are given in the following table:—

Quarter ending	Number of Schools.	Roll Number.			Average Attendance.		
		M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
March ... ..	233	10,629	10,033	20,662	8,652	8,075	16,727
June ... ..	236	10,566	9,919	20,485	8,636	7,907	16,343
September ... ..	241	10,529	9,866	20,395	8,554	7,808	16,362
December ... ..	239	10,561	9,908	20,469	8,565	7,866	16,431