

Immediate employment was given to all the male candidates who passed. Of the forty-six girls who qualified, only twenty have yet found employment. The supply of female candidates is largely in excess of the demand. At the end of the year the number of pupil-teachers was 222—namely, 70 of the first year, 58 of the second year, and 94 of the third year. There is an increasing number of pupil-teachers who have completed their term of three years' service, and who are waiting promotion to the rank of assistants, for which some of them have qualified by passing the teachers' examination in Class E. They rank and are paid as third-year pupil-teachers, and their employment is continued indefinitely. Unless a limit is set to the period over which a pupil-teacher's engagement shall extend, the Board will be unable to bear the cost of maintaining so large a staff of the highest grade and pay. The vacancies in the staff of assistants are few and far between, and there is no longer a training college into which pupil-teachers can be drafted after passing through the usual course. The Board has delegated the instruction of pupil-teachers to the head teachers. Every head teacher is now required to devote an hour each school-day to this purpose. The Board has also determined that two failures to pass the same examination shall cancel the engagement of a pupil-teacher.

ATTENDANCES.—The following table shows the number of schools and the attendances of scholars during the December quarters of 1886 and 1887 respectively:—

Period.	Number of Schools.	Roll Number.			Working Average Attendance.		
		Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
December quarter, 1887	246	10,833	10,168	21,001	8,978	8,241	17,219
December quarter, 1886	239	10,561	9,908	20,469	8,565	7,866	16,431
Increase	7	272	260	532	413	375	788

The strict average for the December quarter, 1887, was 17,033. The number of scholars on the roll between five and six years of age was 1,279; and the number of those between six and seven years was 2,345. There were 584 scholars over school-age, and 228 scholars had passed the Sixth Standard. The "working average" attendance for the last quarter was 82 per cent. of the roll number; the average for the whole year was 78 per cent. of the roll number.

The employment of a truant officer for the city and suburbs of Auckland produced a marked increase in the regularity of attendance at the town schools. But in some country districts the attendance is most irregular even in fine weather—children are kept at home to work, their education is neglected, the teacher is disheartened, and the whole school suffers. The attendance at half-time schools is, speaking generally, fairly regular.

FREE NIGHT-SCHOOL.—An important work was undertaken by the Board in the opening of a free night-school in the Newton East school-building. The need of provision being made for the instruction of lads and young men employed at work in the day-time was represented to the Board by a deputation of clergymen and others; and the school was opened, as an experiment, in July with the voluntary help of a number of the town teachers. The experiment proved to be a success. A headmaster and assistants were appointed. The Governors of the Auckland College and Grammar School were invited to join in the work, and provided the services of a science master on two evenings in the week. The school, which opened with ninety pupils, now numbers 310; and the Board is satisfied that good and useful work is being done in it. The instruction is such as is adapted to the requirements of the pupils. The success of the school is largely due to the zeal and tact of the headmaster (Mr. W. H. Draffin) and of his assistants.

INSPECTION.—Owing to the illness of Mr. Fidler in the early part of the year, it became necessary to engage an Assistant Inspector for three months; and Mr. R. B. Heriot, Headmaster of the Waiotahi Creek School, Thames, was employed in this service. The number of schools visited during the year was 237 for examination and 180 for inspection. By the retirement of Mr. O'Sullivan from the office of senior Inspector of Schools, the Board loses the services of an able and experienced officer, whose practical knowledge and sound judgment have been of the greatest value to the interests of education in this district during the past twenty years.

SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION.—The visiting teachers of singing and drill at Auckland and at the Thames have been dispensed with, it being considered that there is now a sufficient number of teachers of the ordinary staff qualified to give instruction in these subjects. A visiting teacher of drawing is still employed, but owing to the reduction of income the Board is obliged to dispense with his services also. Apparatus for teaching science in the schools has been obtained from England, and is now distributed on loan to teachers, the arrangements for distribution being undertaken by Professor Brown, of the Auckland University College. The reading-books for Standards I. to IV. have been changed to the new readers published by Messrs. Longmans.

TRAINING COLLEGE.—The withdrawal of the yearly grant of £2,000 obliged the Board to close the Training College at the end of the year. There were forty students on the books during the year. Fourteen students left the College in order to fill appointments in the public schools; and at the 31st December there were twenty-six students awaiting appointment. Twenty of these have since obtained employment. Since the opening of the College seven years ago 109 students (thirty-seven males and seventy-two females) have been admitted to a course of training. Of this number, ninety-one are now engaged in teaching, six are awaiting appointments, three have died, and nine have left the service. The work of the College has not been limited to the students. During the whole period of seven years training-classes have been conducted by the Principal and his assistants