

1888.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION.

STATEMENT RELATIVE TO AMOUNT EXPENDED UPON SCHOOL BUILDINGS SINCE THE COMING INTO OPERATION OF "THE EDUCATION ACT, 1877."

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

THE following tables have been prepared expressly to demonstrate the exact basis upon which our education system rests, speaking of the system only in relation to the number of children to be educated, and the future financial provision necessary to be made for providing building accommodation for all children of school-age. For this purpose, and for the present for this purpose only, I have subjected the system to a searching analysis, in order to discover (1) how far in that respect the system has met the requirements of the past; and (2) what financial provision is required to meet future building requirements.

The figures relating to the number of children of school-age, and their distribution, are furnished by the Registrar-General's Department. The figures relating to the distribution of the building grant are furnished by the Education Department.

Office of the Department of Education,
Wellington, May, 1888.

GEO. FISHER.

I. AS TO THE BUILDING REQUIREMENTS OF THE PAST.

The tables themselves explain the extremely satisfactory development of the education system since the coming into operation of "The Education Act, 1877." Notwithstanding the great financial strain which the general increase of population has imposed upon the building resources of the Education Department since the year 1877, it is gratifying to learn, from a perusal of the statistics bearing upon the subject, that the department has well kept pace with the steady demand for increased building accommodation, and has built up a State-school system (speaking of it purely in the building sense) which, if it has not as yet reached the point of perfect and sufficient equipment, is at least sufficiently so to justify the reasonable and natural pride with which the people of the colony regard it.

II. WHAT FINANCIAL PROVISION IS REQUIRED TO MEET FUTURE BUILDING REQUIREMENTS.

To discuss this, the only branch of the question necessary now to be considered, must be opened out the analysis to which reference has just been made.

First had to be ascertained the proportion of natural increase, so as to determine the percentage of children of school-age for whom building accommodation must be annually provided as population increased; for it should at this point be stated, by way of explanation, that the chief complaint of some of the Education Boards, if not all, was that there was not sufficient school accommodation for the children who were "coming on." Comment upon the tables is not intended to form part of this analysis. The facts are given as they stand. As bearing upon the supposed greatly-increasing number of children who were expected to be ready annually to enter the education machine, the following table was prepared:—

Table A.

SHOWING the NUMBER of CHILDREN under FIVE YEARS of AGE as on the 31st December of the Years 1877 to 1887; also the NUMERICAL and CENTESIMAL INCREASES from Year to Year.

Years.	Number of Children under Five Years of Age on 31st Dec.	Numerical Increase.	Increase per cent.	Years.	Number of Children under Five Years of Age on 31st Dec.	Numerical Increase.	Increase per cent.
1877	70,661	1883	86,463	1,592	1·87
1878	73,095	2,434	3·44	1884	87,990	1,527	1·77
1879	78,277	5,182	7·09	1885	88,412	422	0·48
1880	81,748	3,471	4·43	1886	88,466	54	0·06
1881	84,191	2,443	2·99	1887	88,392	-74*	-0·08*
1882	84,871	680	0·81				

* Decrease.