

1889.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# EDUCATION:

## REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS.

[In continuation of E.-1B, 1888.]

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

[It has not been thought necessary in all cases to print the tables and those portions of the reports that relate only to particular schools.]

### AUCKLAND.

#### 1. MR. GOODWIN'S REPORT.

SIR,—

Auckland, 2nd March, 1889.

I have the honour to submit my report on the schools in the southern division of the Auckland Education District for the year 1888.

At the beginning of the year there were in operation ninety-one schools: three new ones have since been opened and one closed. I have examined eighty-eight schools in standards and presented forty-six inspection reports: ten of these reports relate to small schools which were examined and inspected on the same day. Fifteen schools have been specially reported as "unsatisfactory." I have not had time to visit the Whangamarino, Waibeke, Karaka, and Taupo schools. The following table gives a summary of the examination results:—

Standard Classes.	Presented.	Absent.	Excepted.	Failed.	Passed.	Average Age of those that passed.
						Yrs. mos.
S 7 ... ..	27	...	...	...	...	...
S 6 ... ..	168	13	4	43	108	14 10
S 5 ... ..	391	37	18	164	172	14 7
S 4 ... ..	697	35	39	189	434	12 6
S 3 ... ..	902	60	37	183	622	11 7
S 2 ... ..	999	39	47	186	727	9 11
S 1 ... ..	774	46	31	46	651	9 3
P. ... ..	2,178	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ...	6,136	230	176	811	2,714	*

\* Mean of average age, 12 years 1 month.

The schools in this division of the district afford a very fair means of judging the extent to which the syllabus of instruction prescribed by law can be efficiently carried out. I find that in the larger schools, and in those with more than one teacher, the demands made by the Inspector at the annual examination do not press heavily either on teachers or pupils in fair attendance; at the same time, I think that the number of attendances necessary to justify an "exception" should be increased, say, to two-thirds of those possible to be made between one examination and that following. At present it appears to be considered that a child can pass from one standard to a higher with about a hundred and fifty attendances—a feat seldom accomplished, but in the attempt much superficial cramming may be resorted to in order to save the credit of the school, as shown in the percentage of failures. I may here remark that in any estimate I form of the value of the work done at any examination I am not guided solely by numerical results: they cannot, of course, be disregarded, but the state of a school is, in my opinion, shown by the character of the work done in pass subjects, the proficiency and ground covered in the class and additional subjects, and the degree of intelligence shown in the answers given by the scholars. It is much to be regretted that parents and Committees do not see the matter in this light.

I find that there is a general tendency among teachers to rely too much on arithmetic, rather to the detriment of other branches. This subject is certainly well taught as far as regards the work done on slate or paper, but mental arithmetic has never received the attention which its importance merits: it is ridiculous that scholars in the Third and Fourth Standards, after working five or six questions accurately with their pencils, should be unable without these aids to perform quickly and correctly such simple calculations as are daily required in the smallest country store. There are signs of improvement in grammar and composition, though the last named is too frequently spoiled by gross misspelling. I have imposed more difficult special spelling tests this