

TEACHERS.—The staff of teachers at the end of the year numbered 529, as compared with 488 at the end of 1882. Their classification is as follows :—

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Head-teachers	156	36	192
Assistant teachers	24	98	122
Pupil-teachers	18	152	170
Sewing-teachers		40	40
Visiting teachers	5		5
Totals	203	326	529

The Board has continued the employment of probationers, who learn to take part in the work of teaching, and receive special instruction at the classes held in connection with the Training College. The number of uncertificated teachers employed at the end of the year was eighty-six. Of this number, fifty-three were head-teachers. The Board gives a preference of employment to those who hold a certificate but it is clearly impossible to supply every small school with a certificated teacher

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—The number of pupil-teachers has increased from 136 to 170. The supply of male pupil-teachers is very limited, and the Board is considering how it may be increased. There is an adequate supply of female pupil-teachers, but some difficulty has been experienced in providing pupil-teachers for country schools. The Sixth Standard is the qualification for employment. In each case the Board requires from the candidate certificates of physical health and general fitness for the work of teaching, and candidates are required to go through a term of three months' probation in order that their capacity may be tested before they are formally indentured as pupil-teachers. The following table shows the result of the annual examination of pupil-teachers held in June, 1883 :—

Grade.	Examined.			Passed.			Failed.		
	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
First-year pupil-teachers	9	57	66	7	39	46	2	18	20
Second-year pupil-teachers ...	4	27	31	3	25	28	1	2	3
Third-year pupil-teachers		3	3	...	3	3			...
Candidates for employment		18	18		10	10		8	8
Totals ...	13	105	118	10	77	87	3	28	31

The examination for third-year pupil-teachers was optional. Those first-year pupil-teachers who had passed the entrance examination between December, 1882, and June, 1883, were not again examined on this occasion.

ATTENDANCES.—The number of schools, scholars on the roll, and average attendance for the December quarters of 1882 and 1883, are thus compared :—

	Number of Schools.	Roll-Number.			Average Attendance.		
		Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
December quarter, 1883	217	8,785	8,335	17,120	6,941	6,407	13,348
December quarter, 1882 ...	209	8,304	7,797	16,101	6,595	6,046	12,641
Increase for 1883	8	481	538	1,019	346	361	707

The attendance during the year was 77 per cent. of the roll-number. There was no epidemic or exceptionally bad weather to occasion a falling-off in the attendance. In town schools the average is fully 80 per cent., but in country schools it is sometimes less than 60 per cent. of the roll-number

AGES.—There were 418 scholars over school age, besides the number attending evening schools. The admission of children under five years of age is prohibited, but there is reason to believe that scholars have been entered under age contrary to rule. The Board has lately instructed head-teachers, in case of doubt, to require from parents a *written* certificate of age.

INSPECTION AND STANDARDS.—The report of the Inspector of Schools contains the usual return of the results of the annual examinations in standards. The Board has endeavoured to provide, as far as possible, that each school shall be inspected at least once a year (in addition to the annual standard examination), and that the inspection and examination in standards shall not be conducted consecutively by the same Inspector in the same portion of the district. In order to do this, it was necessary to appoint a third Assistant Inspector