

The increase in the average attendance for the year was 620, and in the number that attended at all during the year 810. The increase indicated by these figures, although slightly in advance of that of the previous year, is still under what, under favourable conditions, might have been expected. The prevalence of sickness in the district during a large part of the year no doubt seriously reduced the attendance.

FINANCE.—Appended hereto is a certified copy of the income and expenditure for the past year. A statement of the amounts contributed by the Board to each school for teachers' salaries (including bonuses on classification and bonuses for instructing pupil-teachers), and for allowances to Committees in aid of School Fund, and of the amount paid for the erection and improvement of school buildings, is given. The sum paid by the Board for teachers' salaries, &c., was £56,401 0s. 9d. Early in the year, the Board decided to employ, when practicable, female head-teachers in schools having an average attendance of less than thirty-five pupils, at salaries considerably under those paid to male teachers. It has been found, however, after nearly a year's trial, that the alteration does not work well in all cases, as schools of the class referred to are often situated in remote districts, which offer few attractions and comforts to young women.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCOUNTS.—An abstract of the income and expenditure of the accounts of the several Committees is appended.* It will be seen that the Board contributed £5,511 13s. 5d., while the Committees raised locally the sum of £1,445 0s. 5d. The recent Order in Council altering the mode of auditing the accounts of School Committees, and empowering Boards to appoint an auditor, is a step in the right direction. The Board appointed its chief clerk as auditor for the district, and arranged that the School Committees should forward their books, accounts, &c., to the Board's office. It is pleasing to report that the Committees, with one or two exceptions, willingly fell in with the new order of things, and rendered the auditor every assistance in carrying out his work. The report of the auditor is, on the whole, satisfactory, and shows that a large majority of the Committees in this district are expending the moneys placed at their disposal in an economical and useful manner. The total balance to the credit of the Committees was £1,622 7s. 1d., being £90 6s. 6d. under that of last year. It is necessary to explain, however, that a great many Committees had not paid the accounts owing by them when their books were made up for the year, and that a considerable part of this balance would have to be paid away early in January.

PUPIL-TEACHERS' REGULATIONS.—Early in the year the regulations respecting the employment, education, and examination of pupil-teachers were reconsidered, and changes were made which have the effect of somewhat lightening the course of study, and of more nearly equalizing the remuneration of male and female pupil-teachers.

INSPECTION.—During the year one or more visits of inspection were made to 146 schools, eight others were found closed when the Inspector was in the district, and five were not visited. The 159 schools that have been in operation during the year were all examined in accordance with the regulations of the Education Department. A few of the schools were examined twice—once at the beginning of the year, and again at the end. The results of the examinations held during the year are summarized in the following tables :—

TABLE I.

	Number present.	Number passed.	Number absent.	Percentage of Passes.	Number of Schools.
Standard I.	2,407	2,226	70	92	150
Standard II.	2,653	2,034	104	77	158
Standard III.	2,453	1,471	95	60	157
Standard IV.	1,858	1,149	71	62	151
Standard V.	1,074	627	33	58	130
Standard VI.	488	402	14	82	79
Totals ...	10,933	7,909	387	72	—

TABLE II. : showing the Percentage gained in the several Subjects of Examination for the Years 1882 and 1883.

Subject.	Percentage. 1882.	1883.	Subject.	Percentage. 1882.	1883.
Reading	84	83	Grammar	73	72
Spelling	86	86	Geography	82	77
Writing	91	93	History	80	73
Arithmetic	68	67			

TABLE III. showing the Percentage of Passes in Subjects gained by each Standard, and the Average Percentage of Passes in Subjects gained by all the Standards, for the Years 1882 and 1883.

	Percentage. 1882.	1883.		Percentage. 1882.	1883.
Standard I.	92	89	Standard IV.	75	78
Standard II.	81	81	Standard V.	80	76
Standard III.	78	76	Standard VI.	89	87

Average percentage, 1882, 81, 1883, 80.

* Not reprinted here.