

which follows the table) this total is still further reduced by the 7,567 who were at the end of 1886 receiving home tuition, the 831 children in the industrial schools, and the 416 European children attending Native village schools. So that the actual number of children not known to be attending any school is 26,258. But, in referring to this 26,258, care must be taken to guard against the assumption that 26,258 children remain neglected in the educational sense, or that they have never received any education. In analysing this total, two elements come into play. First has to be considered the number of children whose parents object to send them to school before they have reached the age of six or seven. It would be difficult to estimate the number of these children. The number of course is an indeterminate number, but it should be understood that, whatever the number, they are included in the 26,258. Next has to be taken into account the very large number of children who, having passed the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Standards, leave the public schools from the age of eleven and upwards, having probably received all the school education they will ever receive. The number of these can be estimated. For instance, last year (*vide* Education Report, 1887), out of a total of 12,302 children who were preparing for the Fourth Standard (12·5 being the average age at which the standard is passed), 3,523 either left the public schools finally, or continued in the class preparing for such standard. It is a fact that the great bulk of the children of the working-classes leave school at about that age, themselves to go to work. To a close observer then it will become apparent that in the Registrar-General's figures the same 3,523 children who left school at the Fourth Standard, as just stated, will be made to do duty for possibly three, but certainly for at least two, succeeding years amongst the "not accounted for;" for, leaving school at twelve and a half years, they will be classed as "not at school" at thirteen, so at fourteen, and possibly so at fifteen, the fact being that they have finished their school-days although they are still within the range of school-age (five to fifteen). And the same process will take place in regard to a number of children of other standards, who finish their education (all they will get) and leave school before they reach fifteen, and are consequently returned by the Registrar-General as being within the school-age, but are "not accounted for" because they are not in actual attendance at school. To illustrate this point, which is one of considerable importance, I am enabled, through the kindness of Mr. J. H. Richardson, Associate of the Institute of Actuaries (England), to submit a table which shows the proportion of children who leave school, presumably to go to work, but who will be returned as "not accounted for" although they have attended school. The table is as follows:—

TABLE showing the APPROXIMATE NUMBER of CHILDREN who have left SCHOOL between, say, the AGES of ELEVEN and FIFTEEN, and who are NOT YET FIFTEEN.

1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	Assumed to have left School for Work or otherwise.
III. .. 15,083	IV. .. 11,398	V. .. 7,524	VI. .. 4,501	10,582
..	III. .. 15,887	IV. .. 12,302	V. .. 8,779	7,108
..	..	III. .. 16,467	IV. .. 13,487	2,980
				20,670
* To approximately account for deaths, emigration, immigration, and for children "plucked" at one examination who go up for the subsequent one.				* Less 3,670
				Net 17,000

NOTE.—1. The figures against the standards represent the children who are *preparing* for such standards in the respective years with which the columns are headed.

2. It has been assumed that the children go up for examination once a year; also that the ages at which they leave school are not materially different from the ages at which children pass the various standards; also that, of the children who (*e.g.*) are preparing for Standard III. in 1884, viz., 15,083, only 4,501 are left in 1887 preparing for Standard VI., and that those representing the difference have either left school or died in the interim.

Thus, of the 26,258 (35,072) returned as not accounted for in the Registrar-General's figures, we have 17,000 accounted for in Mr. Richardson's table. The principle of Mr. Richardson's table must next be applied to the 13,437 children found to be attending private schools, and, as the principle accounts for two-thirds of the "not accounted for" in the case of the public schools, it may be taken roughly to account for one-third in the case of the private schools. These two numbers, the 4,479 (one-third of 13,437) and the 17,000 shown in Mr. Richardson's table, form a total of 21,479, which, deducted from the 26,258, leaves a residuum of 4,779 children who in reality may be said to be "not accounted for." To this explanation it is only necessary to add a statement the truth of which is known to all who have travelled New Zealand extensively, that in this colony population frequently finds its way to almost inaccessible places, quite beyond the reach of schools or of the schoolmaster. Notably is this shown to be the case in the Districts of Auckland and Taranaki. There are other causes, of a minute character, which would satisfactorily account for a portion of this residuum of 4,779, although it is not disputed that the bulk of them, through parental neglect, are not attending school. Whether it be viewed favourably or unfavourably, the fact stands that, out of a total of 158,261 children of school-age, we have 4,779 not accounted for, in the absolute sense, a number which may be regarded as remarkably small, taking into account the geographical and topographical features of New Zealand; for we are not a compact, level, easily-worked colony like the Colony of Victoria. Without doubt the enforcement of the compulsory clauses and the assistance of a truant staff would be necessary to ensure the attendance at school of this residuum, speaking of it as a whole, for the experience of the world is that there will always be in every community a certain proportion of children whose attendance at school can only be ensured by compulsory measures. From all this reasoning two things appear clear—1, that we educate a larger number of children in proportion to population than any adjoining colony, except Victoria; and (it follows as a natural consequence) 2, that the colony is well provided with school-buildings.

As to school-buildings, in answer to representations that children in various parts of the colony