

past year. Sixty-nine teachers have left the service, viz.: twenty-eight head teachers, twenty-three assistants, and eighteen pupil-teachers. Seventy-six new teachers have entered, and eleven have re-joined the service, of whom eight are teachers in charge, seven assistants, and seventy-two pupil-teachers.

There is still a surplus of seventy assistant teachers in excess of scale requirements. But the surplus is being gradually reduced by their promotion to the charge of schools as vacancies occur. The appointment of female teachers to the charge of country schools continues to be attended with satisfactory results. The reports of these schools are (almost without exception) very favourable. The Board has adhered to its course of action regarding the appointment and removal of teachers—namely, to consult the Committees to the fullest practicable extent, and at the same time to give due consideration to the claims of teachers to promotion on the ground of their classification, service, and efficiency.

The question of adopting a fixed scale for the remuneration of assistant teachers has been considered, but no action has yet been taken.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—The following table shows the results of the annual examination of pupil-teachers and candidates for employment held in June, 1890:—

Class.				Examined.			Passed.			Failed.		
				M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
Candidates for employment	...	...	...	22	70	92	13	25	38	9	45	54
First-year pupil-teachers	...	...	...	9	40	49	7	26	33	2	14	16
Second-year pupil-teachers	...	...	...	3	5	8	3	2	5	...	3	3
Totals	...	...	...	34	115	149	23	53	76	11	62	73

All candidates who qualified received immediate employment. But the supply was not sufficient to meet requirements, and the Board was therefore obliged to employ a number of candidates who, although otherwise suitable for employment, had not passed the entrance examination prescribed by the regulations. In order to prevent any further increase in the surplus of assistants, it has become necessary to rescind the rule under which pupil-teachers, on gaining their certificate, were promoted to the rank of assistants. In future, such promotion will take effect only when a vacancy occurs.

ATTENDANCE.—The attendance of scholars during the December quarters of 1889 and 1890 is thus compared:—

Year.				Number of Schools.	Roll Number.			Average Attendance.		
					Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
1890	...	...	...	266	11,557	10,822	22,379	9,515	8,720	18,235
1889	...	...	...	255	11,235	10,449	21,684	9,300	8,479	17,779
Increase	...	...	...	11	322	373	695	215	241	456

These numbers include 443 scholars above school age and 175 scholars who had passed the Sixth Standard. Very serious disadvantages are occasioned by irregularity of attendance. The school suffers, the teacher is discouraged, the teaching staff is reduced, and the Board sustains a considerable loss of income. But the chief sufferers are the children themselves, whose parents keep them at home, or permit the most trivial causes to interrupt their regular and punctual attendance at school.

Committees may exert a useful influence by impressing upon parents the duty of securing for their children the fullest advantage of the system of education provided by the State. The issue of good-attendance certificates affords a valuable incentive in this direction.

SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION.—With the advice of the Inspectors and of Professors Brown and Thomas, of the Auckland University College, a programme has been drawn up and issued to teachers for their guidance in carrying out the requirements of the standard regulations regarding the teaching of science. The programme comprises a three years' course of instruction in agricultural science, and in elementary physics, chemistry, and physiology.

INSPECTION.—The appointment of a fourth Inspector of schools has enabled the staff to overtake the work of inspection and examination. Nearly every school has been visited twice during the year.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—Thirty junior and fourteen senior district scholarships were held during the year. The holders attended the Grammar Schools at Auckland and at the Thames. Scholarships established by private bequest under the Rawlings trust have been maintained for several years, and the holders have gained distinction in University examinations. Free education at the secondary schools is granted to a certain number of those pupils who pass the district scholarship examination with credit. The junior scholarships are divided into four classes, with a view to their equitable distribution in proportion to the advantages enjoyed by town and country schools respectively. The Board suggests that provision should be made to enable the holders of senior scholarships to attend the Lincoln School of Agriculture. At present they cannot do so, inasmuch as that school is not