

1893.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION:

REPORTS OF THE INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS

FOR THE WELLINGTON AND MARLBOROUGH EDUCATION DISTRICTS.

[Supplement to E.—1b., 1893.]

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

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Wellington, 28th February, 1893.

We have the honour to present the following report on the public schools of this district for the year 1892.

Eighty-five schools were in operation, including four new ones which were opened during the year—at Newman, Makakahi, Mangamahoe, and Kaituna. As recommended in last year's report, there is still more pressing need of a school in the Newtown District, to relieve the overcrowded existing school, which in November last numbered 837 children. Three of the City schools have lately been partly renovated; and now a further considerable expenditure is urgently required to put them all in good order. The total number of children on the books for the year 1892 was 11,681, showing an increase of 476 on the number for the previous year.

The standard work shows a steady and satisfactory increase in the upper standard work, and a generally progressive condition throughout. The following table gives the actual passes made in the several standards—irrespective of failures, exceptions, and absentees—and, for the sake of comparison, we give those of 1891:—

	Standard I.	Standard II.	Standard III.	Standard IV.	Standard V.	Standard VI.
1891 ...	1,379	1,412	1,322	1,240	760	461
1892 ...	1,464	1,491	1,386	1,241	979	520

The percentage of failures in 1891 was 7; this year it is 5·5. As in former years, the very good results of many of the largest schools has kept down the average percentage of failures; but anything over 15 per cent. of failures is of rare occurrence; and then, at times, under exceptionally unfavourable surroundings. Cases of manifest incompetency in the teaching or management become fewer year by year. Much of the success of the system depends on a good selection of teachers being made in the first instance; and it is very satisfactory to note that a more careful selection is now being made. Many of our pupil-teacher candidates are now matriculated students. Most of them are girls; but we do not deplore the employment of well-qualified girls of good influence in the teaching of the young. But, on the other hand, it is always very unsatisfactory to find any teacher in charge of a school who, for any cause whatever, is a bad model for children to imitate: it is simply a burlesque on education. No teacher is fit for his post who is not in true sympathy with children's thoughts and actions, who has not a fine sense of what is right or proper for them to say or do, or who fails to win their sympathies and respect. That this is so, no one will doubt; and yet we find that nearly all the trouble which arises in the management of schools is attributable to this cause—that the teacher does not possess the true instincts of a teacher.

In this report we still retain our classification of schools according to size, for purposes of fairer comparison as to general and numerical results. Referring, then, first to the ten largest schools in the district, schools in Class A of the Appendix, we find that much of the class-work is improved; although in one of these schools model drawing has been neglected, in another the teaching of singing has suffered for the purpose of making better drawing results, and, in a third, the object-lesson work is unprogressive. Of the sixteen schools in Class B, only one had more than 15 per cent. of failures; and this arose from weakness in lower classes, for which the head-teacher could not be held responsible. Very good work was done in all, with not more than 5 per cent. of failures; and most of the others were satisfactory. Of the twenty schools in Class C, many showed satisfactory improvement. The quality of the work at Porirua, Manakau, Park Vale, Kaiwairai, and Ohariu was satisfactory, and better than the actual number of failures would indicate. Among the twenty-three schools in Class D are a few weak ones. In four of them, however, changes of teachers have been made. All with less than 10 per cent. of failures may be said to have done well.