

filled up; but the very necessity of making these returns at stated periods has no doubt brought about a considerable degree of expertness on the part of those who make them, and the number of returns of an unsatisfactory character is consequently on the decrease.

The quarterly returns prove of much value to Boards by enabling them to report to the department as to the numbers in attendance, and by affording periodical information to them respecting the state of the schools in such a shape as to enable them to form a tolerably correct opinion as to the sufficiency or otherwise of the staff employed in each school. The circular of 6th June, 1878, printed on page 114 of the report for 1878, which was issued to Boards with the first supply of attendance-registers and return-forms, fully sets forth the objects contemplated by the regulations.

It cannot be too much kept in mind that, as the parliamentary grants are paid to Education Boards and to schools almost wholly on the basis of the average daily attendance, it is of the utmost consequence that the school-registers and returns should be thoroughly trustworthy. For this the department and the Boards are almost entirely dependent upon the carefulness and good faith of the teachers, and the attention given to the matter by the School Committees. The Education Department, which is immediately responsible to Parliament for the proper disposal of the public grants for education, has no control whatever over the District Inspectors of Schools, who are the only persons, apart from the School Committees, that have an opportunity of examining the school registers and of checking any neglect or irregularity which may occur. In the course of the past year three cases of falsification of the school register by teachers were detected by Inspectors of Schools. In all these instances the delinquents were dismissed by the Boards, and their names excluded by the department from the list of certificated teachers.

A list of the whole of the schools in operation during the past year, with an abstract of the enrolments and the average daily attendance, is appended (Table No. 8). The following is a summary of the attendance-returns furnished by the several Boards for the year :—

TABLE C.—SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

Education Districts.	On School Roll.				Average Daily Attendance.					
	Number of Scholars belonging at beginning of Year.	Number admitted during the Year.	Number who left during the Year.	Number belonging at end of Year.	Strict Average.		Working Average.			
					Whole Year.	Fourth Quarter.	Whole Year.	Fourth Quarter.		
								Males.	Females.	Totals.
Auckland ... ..	11,672	10,625	8,338	13,959	9,740	10,390	10,167	5,711	4,977	10,688
Taranaki ... ..	948	972	618	1,302	810	915	860	511	468	979
Wanganui ... ..	2,525	2,897	1,677	3,745	2,539	2,805	2,577	1,531	1,319	2,850
Wellington ... ..	4,189	4,695	3,251	5,633	3,828	4,350	3,944	2,456	1,946	4,402
Hawke's Bay ... ..	1,519	2,236	1,058	2,697	1,713	1,937	1,807	1,103	917	2,020
Marlborough ... ..	910	588	419	1,079	781	817	808	445	389	834
Nelson ... ..	3,305	1,717	1,285	3,737	2,725	2,842	2,815	1,524	1,411	2,935
North Canterbury ... ..	11,886	10,433	7,089	15,230	10,098	11,065	10,449	6,083	5,297	11,380
South Canterbury ... ..	2,668	2,029	1,494	3,203	1,948	2,169	2,056	1,241	1,083	2,324
Westland ... ..	2,424	1,418	989	2,853	2,154	2,194	2,194	1,139	1,102	2,241
Otago ... ..	14,511	9,394	6,121	17,784	14,654	14,449	13,879	7,732	6,905	14,637
Southland ... ..	3,150	2,788	1,594	4,344	3,077	3,368	3,168	1,786	1,662	3,448
Totals for 1879 ... ..	59,707	49,792	33,933	75,566	53,067	57,301	54,724	31,262	27,476	58,738
Totals for 1878 ... ..	50,849	37,125	22,934	65,040	45,521	49,435	47,996	27,091	23,548	50,639
Increase ... ..	8,858	12,667	10,999	10,526	7,546	7,866	6,728	4,171	3,928	8,099
Totals for 1877 ... ..	...	...	...	55,688	...	...	40,837	...	...	41,773
Increase in 2 years	...	...	...	19,878	...	...	13,887	...	...	16,965

The average daily attendance is ascertained by dividing the total number of morning and afternoon attendances taken together by the total number of times (morning and afternoon reckoned separately) that the school has been in operation during the period for which the computation is made. In order, however, that the capitation allowance may not be unduly affected by bad weather, epidemics,