

In Auckland, Hawke's Bay, Westland, and Otago every child on the roll is returned as receiving instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and all those in Taranaki and Marlborough are returned as learning reading and writing. Of the total number enrolled, there are 800 who were not instructed in writing, and 1,885 not learning arithmetic, in 1881 the corresponding numbers were 3,065 and 5,038. The number of girls on the books was 44,772 of these, 32,275 were taught needlework.

NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

A return of the schools in the several Board districts, with a statement of the expenditure on each for the year, and of the names, status, and rates of emolument of the teachers employed in them during the last quarter of 1883, is given in the Appendix, Table 9, pages 9-44. The number of schools reported as being in operation at the close of the year was 943, being an increase of 32 during the twelve months. There was an increase of 42 in the previous year. The following table furnishes information on various particulars relating to the schools of the different Board districts:—

TABLE D.—NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OPEN AT THE END OF 1883.  
(In this enumeration every two half-time schools are reckoned as one school.)

EDUCATION DISTRICTS.	Number of Schools open at End of Year.	Average Attendance for Last Quarter.	Mean Average at each School in each Education District for last Quarter.	Number of Schools in which the Attendance for the Quarter was—											Number of Half-time Schools open at End of Year.	Number of Aided or Subsidized Schools at End of Year.	Number of Small Schools closed permanently in 1883.
				Under 15 Pupils.	15 and under 20 Pupils.	20 and under 25 Pupils.	25 and under 50 Pupils.	50 and under 75 Pupils.	75 and under 100 Pupils.	100 and under 150 Pupils.	150 and under 300 Pupils.	300 and under 500 Pupils.	500 Pupils and upwards.				
Auckland	192	13,348	69.5	7	24	22	76	22	10	15	8	4	4	25	8	1	
Taranaki	36	1,458	40.7	3	6		15	8	3	1						1	
Wanganui	67	4,155	62.0	7	3	9	27	5	2	7	6	1			4		
Wellington	53	5,344	100.8	4	5	5	14	6	4	4	5	6					
Hawke's Bay	36	2,940	81.7	5	3	2	8	5	2	8	1	1	1		5	1	
Marlborough	29	1,141	36.4	5	8	1	6	5	3	1							
Nelson	82	3,424	41.8	13	9	8	26	18	2	4	2				12		
North Canterbury	143	13,462	94.1	5	7	19	50	19	11	14	10	3	5	1	4		
South Canterbury	39	3,045	78.1	2	4	2	18	5	1	3	2	1	1		9		
Westland	35	2,289	65.4	3	6	4	12	2	2	2	2	2				1	
Otago	159	17,070	107.3	1	8	17	61	17	14	11	14	9	7	2	3	2	
Southland	72	4,538	63.0		3	7	37	14	2	5	2	1	1		3		
Totals for 1883	943	72,214	76.6	55	86	96	350	126	56	75	52	28	19	28	48	6	
Totals for 1882	911	68,288	75.0	46	74	97	362	110	63	67	52	21	19	23	65	14	

The increase in the number of schools has scarcely kept pace with the average attendance. At the close of 1883 the average number of scholars for each school was 76.6, a year previously it was 75. All the half-time schools, with the exception of three, are maintained in the Auckland District.

It is enacted by the 88th section of the Education Act that "in outlying districts, or parts of the country where, from the scattered state of the population, it is not practicable to establish a public school, the Board may appoint itinerant teachers, under regulations to be provided for that purpose. The Board may also, on the recommendation of the Inspector, in such outlying districts which it would be premature or inconvenient to constitute school districts, assist schools started by private enterprise, in books, school apparatus, or money, as the Board shall think expedient." The returns show that the maintenance of half-time and aided or subsidized schools is regarded with growing disfavour, although it might be thought that by their means the wants of very sparsely settled localities might be met to some extent. The employment of itinerating teachers was tried by the Auckland Board a year or two ago, but the experiment does not seem to have proved successful.

Although so small a number of the schools are subsidized or half-time, yet the number of schools with an average attendance of less than 20 has increased from 120 to 141, an increase of 21 out of a total increase of schools for the year of only 32. Only six small schools have been closed. This shows that schools formerly aided or subsidized have not been all closed, but have become ordinary public schools, and that the Boards have not ceased in their efforts to provide schools for the families in the newly-settled and remoter localities.