

Grade.	Examined.			Passed.			Failed.		
	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
First-year pupil-teachers	3	10	13	3	7	10	...	3	3
Second-year pupil-teachers... .. .	9	31	40	7	25	32	2	6	8
Candidates for employment... .. .	15	36	51	6	18	24	9	18	27
Totals	27	77	104	16	50	66	11	27	38

All the candidates who qualified have received employment. There is no demand for more pupil-teachers just now. At the present time (March, 1890) there is a sufficient supply to meet probable requirements for the remainder of the year. The arrangement made for the instruction of pupil-teachers by the head teachers has been attended with satisfactory results.

ATTENDANCES.—The attendance of scholars during the December quarters of 1888 and 1889 is thus compared :—

Year.				Number of Schools.	Roll Number.			Average Attendance.		
					Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
1889				255	11,235	10,449	21,684	9,300	8,479	17,779
1888				254	11,207	10,306	21,513	9,291	8,349	17,640
Increase				1	28	143	171	9	130	139

This increase is very much smaller than that in any previous year. The number of scholars above school age was 443, and 186 scholars had passed the Sixth Standard. In September last the Board addressed a circular to School Committees, reminding them of the many disadvantages resulting from irregular attendance, and of the provisions which the Act affords as a remedy. It is believed that Committees may exercise a wise influence by impressing upon parents the duty of securing for their children the fullest advantage from the system of education which the State provides, and also by upholding the teacher in his efforts to obtain the regular attendance of the pupils committed to his instruction. The Board is glad to report that, as an immediate result of this appeal, the average attendance was raised from 79 to 82 per cent. of the roll number.

INSPECTION.—For some time past the work of inspection and examination has been growing beyond the powers of three Inspectors to overtake. It has been impossible to visit each school twice every year, as required by the regulations. The staff was instructed to combine the inspection and examination of all schools under twenty-five average attendance; but even with this modification the work fell into arrear. After due consideration the Board decided to appoint a fourth Inspector; and the district is now divided into four divisions, each division being for one year under the separate charge of an Inspector. Mr. Fidler having resigned his inspectorship, on account of continued ill-health, Mr. James C. Dickinson was appointed to succeed him, and Mr. Richard Crowe was selected for the position of fourth Inspector.

SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION.—The drawing master has continued to visit the country schools, and to hold classes at convenient centres for the instruction of teachers in the drawing prescribed for the standards. As an encouragement to the teaching of agricultural science, Professor Thomas, of the Auckland University College, has made a liberal offer of prizes, which will be competed for in March, 1891, by pupils of the upper standards. A syllabus of work has been prepared and issued to Committees and teachers, which may be adopted as a three years' course in science.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The regulations have been amended, with the approval of the Minister, so as to distribute the junior district scholarships more equitably in proportion to the advantages enjoyed by town and country schools respectively. After consultation with the Governors of the Lincoln School of Agriculture (Canterbury), a regulation was framed to enable the holders of senior district scholarships to receive their education at that institution. The Governors consented to admit them on favourable terms; but, inasmuch as the school is not under inspection by a public school Inspector, and as the Governors could not see their way to place it under such inspection (so as to fulfil the requirements of section 51 of the Education Act), the project had to be abandoned.

BUILDINGS.—Although there has been no growth of population, and little or no increase in the number of scholars, yet settlement in the country districts has advanced much more rapidly than usual, and the Board has found it necessary to build and maintain schools in places where there is only a small population, in order that the settlement of the country may not be impeded by reason of any want of school accommodation. Each settlement requires a school of its own; and the cost of building in remote and scattered places is very much greater than the cost of providing accommodation for the same number of scholars in a large centre of population. Moreover, as the settlements are for the most part peopled from the towns, where fairly adequate accommodation already exists, the Board is put to the expense of building a number of schools for children for whom, if they remained in town, no such outlay would be required. The Board is again obliged to report that the building requirements of the district are greater than can be overtaken by the grant voted for the purpose. The grant of £4,568 11s., which was received since the end of the year, is now nearly all expended, and a further sum of £3,500 is needed in order to meet immediate requirements. The Board has given special attention to the duty of preserving and improving the school