

University of Otago; E.-7, Canterbury College; E.-8, Auckland University College; E.-9, Secondary Schools.

### PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

In the last quarter of 1892 the average attendance—on which the capitation grant, the principal source of the Boards' income, depends—for the first time reached and exceeded one hundred thousand. In the year 1878, the first year of the operation of the Education Act now in force, the average attendance for the year was 45,521, and for the last quarter of the year 49,435. For 1892 the corresponding numbers are 99,070 and 100,917; and these numbers exceed those for 1891 by 2,012 and 4,653 respectively. Table A shows the progress in school attendance during the whole period of the operation of the Act.

TABLE A.—SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND YEARLY INCREASE FROM 1877 TO 1892.

Year.	School Attendance.					Yearly Increase on			
	Number belonging at Beginning of Year.	Number belonging at End of Year.	Average Attendance.		Average Attend- ance expressed as Percentage of Roll-Number.	Number belonging at Beginning of Year.	Number belonging at End of Year.	Average Attendance.	
			Fourth Quarter.	Whole Year.				Fourth Quarter.	Whole Year.
1877	..	55,688	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1878	50,849	65,040	49,435	45,521	..	..	9,352	..	..
1879	59,707	75,566	57,301	53,067	73·8	8,858	10,526	7,866	7,546
1880	68,124	82,401	62,946	60,625	74·6	8,417	6,835	5,645	7,558
1881	74,359	83,560	63,009	61,822	74·2	6,235	1,159	63	1,197
1882	76,309	87,179	66,426	63,709	73·6	1,950	3,619	3,417	1,887
1883	79,416	92,476	70,077	67,373	74·0	3,107	5,297	3,651	3,664
1884	84,883	97,238	74,650	72,657	75·1	5,467	4,762	4,573	5,284
1885	90,670	102,407	80,183	78,327	76·6	5,787	5,169	5,533	5,670
1886	95,377	106,328	83,361	80,737	76·1	4,707	3,921	3,178	2,410
1887	99,206	110,919	87,386	85,637	77·0	3,829	4,591	4,025	4,900
1888	103,534	112,685	90,849	90,108	79·3	4,328	1,766	3,463	4,471
1889	104,919	115,456	94,308	93,374	80·3	1,385	2,771	3,459	3,266
1890	108,158	117,912	96,670	94,632	79·9	3,239	2,456	2,362	1,258
1891	110,665	119,523	96,264	97,058	80·3	2,507	1,611	[ - 406 ]	2,426
1892	112,279	122,620	100,917	99,070	80·6	1,614	3,097	4,653	2,012

The main particulars of the attendance of the year in the several education districts are set forth in Table B. A comparison of local attendances for the fourth quarter with the attendances for the fourth quarter in the preceding year is of little value, because the attendance in the last quarter of 1891 was abnormally low in consequence of the prevalence of influenza. In 1892 most of the districts had, as usual, a larger attendance in the last quarter than in the three other quarters; but Auckland and Westland are exceptions to this rule. The only district in which the average for the year is less than the average for 1891 is Wanganui, and there the difference is very slight, being merely the difference between 6,109 and 6,104. The case is explained by reference to the alteration of the boundaries of Stratford County, which had the effect of transferring the care of some schools from the Wanganui Board to that of Taranaki. Notwithstanding this change, the attendance for the fourth quarter of 1892 in Wanganui exceeds by 471 that of the corresponding quarter of 1891. Only two districts show a diminished attendance for the whole year in a comparison of the data for 1892 with those of 1891: North Canterbury shows a loss of 245, and Nelson a loss of 67.

The mean roll for the year is estimated by the following method: The state of the roll at the end of every week is ascertained, and, the average state of the roll having been deduced for each quarter, the mean of the four quarterly averages is the mean roll. For 1892 this number is 122,860. The average attendance—99,070—is to this roll-number as 80·6 to 100. This is the highest ratio yet recorded. In 1891, and also in 1889, the highest preceding level—80·3 per cent.—was attained. Table A shows that, with slight fluctuations, there has been a steady increase from 73·6 in 1882 to 80·6 in 1892. The highest ratio of attend-