

(No. 17.)



1886.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

**RAGGED SCHOOLS, AND ST. LUKE'S
FREE SCHOOL:**

REPORT FOR 1885.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.



REPORT on the Ragged Schools, and St. Luke's Free School, Hobart, for 1885,
by T. STEPHENS, M.A. Oxon.

Hobart, 27th March, 1886.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to present my Report on the Ragged Schools and St. Luke's Free School, Hobart, for the year ended 31st December, 1885.

The Schools were visited periodically throughout the year, and examined in detail; but the pressure of official duties prevented me from giving as much time as I should have wished to the work.

CASCADES ROAD.

	Boys.	Girls.	TOTAL.
No. on Rolls	106	101	207
Average attendance	90	74	164
Present at Examination	86	84	170

In the infants' division 73 were examined, 12 of whom were able to read the 1st primer very fairly. The rest of the work was generally satisfactory throughout, though the routine is somewhat too mechanical. The discipline is good, and the usual physical exercises are well executed.

In the middle division 52 were present, representing the two divisions of the Second Class, with two drafts in each. The instruction was found generally up to the standard, the defective work being readily traceable to irregular attendance. Writing, which is taught under difficulties from the want of sufficient desk accommodation, receives much attention. The recitation of simple poetry might be improved; it is somewhat deficient in the emphasis and expression which show that children appreciate the meaning of the passages which they say by rote. The zeal and industry with which the whole of the instruction is carried on deserve high praise.

In the upper division, consisting of the two divisions of the Third Class and the Fourth Class, 45 were present. The work generally was well up to the satisfactory standard of former years, the writing being very good, and the elementary branches of arithmetic well taught. Children who are set to parse sentences on slates or paper ought to be first made acquainted with the spelling of common grammatical terms, but the failures under this head do not call for more than incidental notice. The teaching staff of the School remains unaltered.

The premises are generally in good order. The ventilation of the large Schoolroom will not be satisfactory until sashes hung on pivots are fixed high up in the gables, and an opening made in the top of the wooden partition. An improvement is needed in one of the out-offices.

WATCHORN-STREET.

	Boys.	Girls.	TOTAL.
No. on Rolls	73	63	136
Average attendance	46	38	84
Present at Examination	54	43	97

In the Infants Division 45 were present under the charge of Miss Johnston, a promising young teacher whose death shortly afterwards through a sad accident was deeply lamented by all connected with the school. The children were mostly very young, and engaged in very rudimentary branches of instruction, but those in the highest division were approaching the standard of qualification for advancement into the Second Class. There was a quiet tone about the school, and discipline was well maintained without severity.

In the schoolroom were the two divisions of the Second Class, the two divisions of the Third Class, and a small Fourth Class, under Miss Williamson, who had succeeded to the post left vacant through the resignation of Miss Proctor. The lower divisions of the Second and Third Classes were both weak in the elementary arithmetic prescribed for their grades, and some random and mechanical answering was noticeable under oral examination; but ample evidence of close attention to the general routine of work was to be seen, as heretofore. The Fourth Class were reading a book which, though unobjectionable, has not been authorised, and the reading cannot therefore be properly brought into comparison with that in the other schools.

The staff has been increased, but the exceedingly inconvenient planning of the large school-room still impedes the introduction of good methods.

The premises are generally in good order: the confined space precludes a satisfactory arrangement for out-offices and playing yards.

LOWER COLLINS-STREET.

	Boys.	Girls.	TOTAL.
No. on Rolls	78	82	160
Average attendance.....	56	59	115
Present at Examination	61	55	116

In the Infants Division 51 were present, too large a number to be properly managed and taught under existing conditions. Of these 10 were reading easy monosyllables, writing the letters of the alphabet with moderate success, and forming figures on their slates very fairly. General proficiency moderate; answering and intelligence low. The Primer used in this Class does not belong to the authorised set, and is not designed to be used according to the old plan of spelling every word before it is pronounced. The usual exercises were gone through with much spirit, and the general order was fairly satisfactory.

In the middle division of the School 33 were present, constituting the Second Class, in two divisions. Here the general result of the year's work was found to be exceedingly satisfactory. The discipline firm but kindly, the close attention to the little details of instruction, the patient tolerance of what was defective until the wayward spirit of the young scholar had been stimulated to voluntary effort in the direction of improvement, had, as heretofore, borne good fruit, and rendered the Examiner's work an easy and pleasurable service. The standard of proficiency was found to be well up to that which is prescribed for the class, and the children showed a lively interest in all the subjects which came within their range. The untimely death of their loved teacher, Miss Kate Proctor, during the Christmas vacation, has left a void in the teaching staff which the Committee will find it hard to fill satisfactorily.

In the upper division, the Third Class in two divisions, with 23 present, and the Fourth Class, with 9 present, were examined in the essential subjects of instruction. In the Third Class the general proficiency was found fairly up to the standard, and a similar result was obtained in the Fourth Class, except in arithmetic. One girl passed creditably in this subject. The discipline showed improvement, and the general order was satisfactory; but the planning and arrangement of the schoolroom materially increase the ordinary difficulties of class teaching and management.

The premises are in good order; the planning of a portion of the out-offices needs improvement.

ST. LUKE'S FREE SCHOOL.

This School was regularly inspected from time to time during the year, but the heavy pressure of my regular official duties left me no leisure for the usual examination. No change of any importance occurred during the year, and the same zealous and unwearied devotion to the work on the part of the ladies who conduct the School was as conspicuous as on former occasions. The attendance has not much improved in regularity, and until punctuality and continuous attendance are strictly enforced, the weak points which have been noted in my former reports must continue to exist to a greater or less degree.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

The Hon. the Chief Secretary.

T. STEPHENS.