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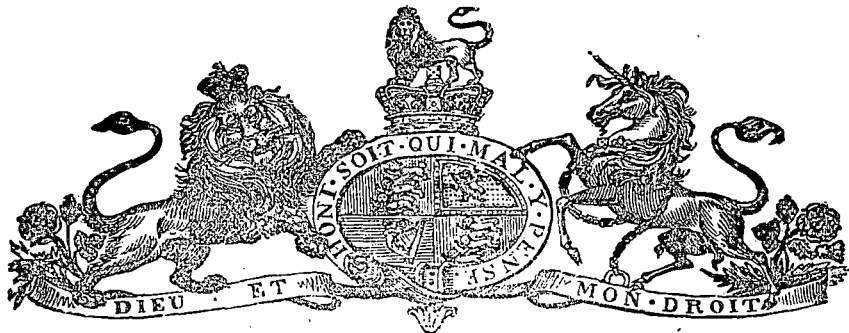
1884.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

HOBART RAGGED SCHOOLS :

REPORT OF CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS FOR 1883.

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



*REPORT on the Hobart Ragged Schools, by T. STEPHENS, Esq., M.A., Chief
Inspector of Schools.*

Hobart, 1st March, 1884.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to furnish a Report on the condition of the Ragged Schools at Cascades Road, Lower Collins-street, and Watchorn-street, and St. Luke's School in Angelsea-street, which were continuously in operation during the year ended 31st December, 1883.

All the Schools were visited periodically throughout the year. The usual examinations were held at the three Schools under the Ragged Schools Association during the last quarter of the year, the examination of St. Luke's School being unavoidably postponed until after the Christmas vacation. The results of inspection and examination are summarised in my remarks on the several schools.

CASCADES ROAD SCHOOL.

	Boys.	Girls.	TOTAL.
No. on Rolls	100	110	210
Average daily Attendance	73	76	149
Present at Examination	77	81	158

The premises are in good repair. The position of the out-offices in low places, which receive nearly all the surface drainage, is objectionable. The ventilation of the principal School-room needs improvement.

The school is worked in three sections, each under a teacher who is practically independent of the others. In the Infants' Section 65 children were examined, of whom 30 were fairly proficient in the reading lessons prescribed for this grade. Of these 12 were able to read the First Primer, to write letters and easy words on slates, and to make figures and add single columns. In the next division were 12 nearly up to the same standard in writing. The text-book in use in the highest division does not supply sufficient reading matter; the children soon learn the lessons by heart. There is not much cultivation of intelligence, but the children are kept well and actively employed, and the discipline is good.

The middle section comprises the two divisions of the Second Class, the lower of the two being usually worked in two drafts. With very few exceptions these children were fairly up to the standard of proficiency in all the subjects of instruction except arithmetic, in which the lower division was scarcely advanced beyond the standard of Class I. A bolder style of writing requires to be cultivated in this division. Irregular attendance and the presence of neglected children are sometimes serious obstacles here. There is abundant evidence of hard work on the part of the teacher.

The highest section comprises a Third Class in two divisions and a Fourth Class. A somewhat peculiar habit of dropping the voice at short intervals in reading has been acquired, but there is no other fault to be found with the general work of these classes. The Fourth Class is well grounded in the elements of Grammar and Geography and the outlines of Sacred History, and both classes are quite on a level with similar classes in a fairly good public school. The discipline and general management in the two higher sections are highly satisfactory.

It is necessary to note that no promotions were made at mid-winter in this school.

WATCHORN-STREET.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>
No. on Rolls	58	57	115
Average daily Attendance	37	38	75
Present at Examination	40	43	83

The premises are in fairly good order. It is very desirable that the ceiling of the principal School-room should be completed before the winter. The out-offices are passably clean, but certain small improvements in connection with them are much needed.

The School is organised in two sections, each under a separate teacher. In the Infants' Section there were present 49 children, of whom 10 were able to read easy lessons in the First Primer very fairly; their writing was passable, and about half were up to the standard in the rudiments of arithmetic. The next division contained eight who were able to read easy tablets, and learning to make letters and figures on slates. The rest were in various rudimentary stages of proficiency. The general management and tone continue to be satisfactory.

In the higher section 34 were present, comprising a Third Class in two divisions and a Second Class. The last was able to read the Second Primer, and otherwise fairly advanced in the prescribed subjects. The lower division of the Third Class would have passed fairly as an upper division of the Second; under its present designation it was somewhat below standard. The higher division of the Third Class was found to be fairly proficient in the essential subjects, showing also some acquaintance with the rudiments of grammar and geography and the outlines of Sacred History.

The children are orderly and obedient, and the general management is very satisfactory.

LOWER COLLINS-STREET.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>
No. on Rolls	69	66	135
Average daily Attendance	48	49	97
Present at Examination	58	62	120

The premises are, on the whole, in good order. The out-offices are passably clean, but require repairs and improvements, which can be effected at small cost.

The School is worked in three sections, each under a separate teacher.

In the lowest or Infants' Section there were present 56 children, with eight in the highest division, of whom six were able to read very easy lessons in the First Book (Irish Readers) with tolerable readiness, and to write letters and figures with more or less facility. In the next division there were seven children imperfectly acquainted with the easy tablet lessons on which they were engaged. The rest were in various lower stages. The teacher appears to be zealous and painstaking, but the standard of instruction and general efficiency cannot be described as satisfactory. As I have pointed out in former reports, the situation is one of peculiar difficulty, and demands the serious attention of the Managers.

In the middle section of the school there were present 29 children, forming a Second Class in two divisions. The lowest was reading the first part of the Second Primer very fairly, and making fair progress in other work. In the upper division the children were well up in the first part of the First Book, and nearly all were able to write a fair round hand and to work correctly simple sums in addition and subtraction. The management is excellent, and there is nothing to suggest in reference to the teaching except that the lower division should be habitually practised in writing of a bolder character, and that all recitation of tables or other memory work should be done more slowly and distinctly.

In the highest section 35 were examined, constituting a Third and a Fourth Class. In the former the results in reading were satisfactory, and in writing fairly up to the standard. In arithmetic only 11 out of 20 justified their position in the Class, the essential elements having been very imperfectly mastered. In the Fourth Class the reading was moderate to fair. Under the head of writing 8 out of 15 just satisfied the *minimum* standard, the spelling being even less satisfactory. In arithmetic 9 out of 15 just passed, the rest not having mastered Third Class work. The other subjects in both Classes showed fair proficiency, except Old Testament History and Narrative, instruction in which appears to have been suspended during the year.

The management is characterised by much earnestness and zeal, and there is much good work done which does not appear in an examination. The discipline is improving, and if the children can

be trained to give more undivided attention to their work in the desks, and care be taken to avoid premature promotion, there will be little room for finding fault with the standard of general efficiency.

It will be well to require in all the schools closer attention to the definition of class-work provided by the Standard of Instruction in order that children may not be promoted from any class before they have thoroughly mastered the elements which are necessary to prepare them for satisfactory progress in a higher position. If any practical difficulty is experienced in working under the Standard it can be easily modified; but no regulation should be allowed to become a dead letter while still in existence.

ST. LUKE'S SCHOOL.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>
No. on Rolls	36	25	61
Average daily Attendance	26	21	47
Present at Examination	26	24	50

The premises are convenient and in good repair, and are capable of accommodating a larger school.

In the lowest division there were 13 present who had not yet arrived at the stage at which reading begins. In the next division eight were learning to read easy sentences from tablets. The next, representing the highest division of the First Class according to the Standard, contained seven children reading the Primer fairly on the whole, most of them being able to form letters and figures on slates. Their oral exercises were done fairly well.

In the Second Class there were present 14 in two divisions. The reading was well up to Standard, and appears to have been carefully cultivated. The slate-writing of most was fair, but some were not advanced enough to transcribe from reading-books, which is a usual exercise for the Second Class. In arithmetic six out of 14 were passably up to the standard.

In the Third Class seven were present, being well up to the Standard in reading, and also in writing and spelling with one exception. Two boys passed very fairly in arithmetic. All the girls failed to work correctly easy sums such as they profess to be conversant with in the simple rules. In other respects the work of this Class was fairly satisfactory.

There was also present a girl who, though her proficiency is creditable to her instructors, is somewhat out of place in a school designed exclusively for the children of the poorer classes. She passed very fairly in the subjects prescribed for the Fourth Class.

The attendance is only moderately regular, and many children are withdrawn by their parents during a portion of the school hours for various home duties, the difficulty of securing steady and uniform progress in a class being thereby much increased.

T. STEPHENS, *Chief Inspector of Schools.*

The Hon. the Chief Secretary.