

(No. 70.)



1879.

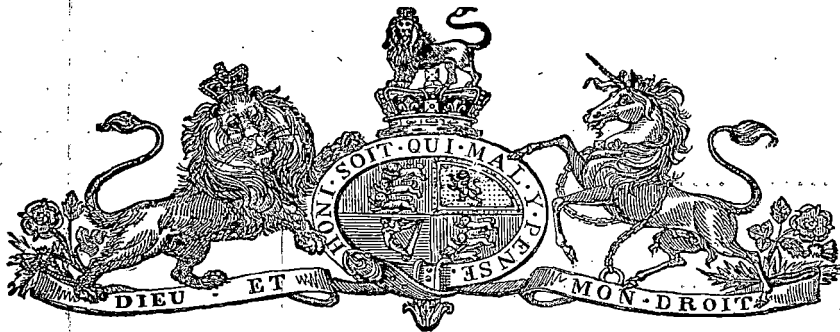
T A S M A N I A .

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y .

R A G G E D S C H O O L S :

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E , A N D R E P O R T S O F C H I E F I N S P E C T O R
O F S C H O O L S .

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Secretary, and ordered by the House to be
printed, October 17, 1879.



Colonial Secretary's Office, Hobart Town, 21st August, 1879.

SIR,

THE Government have been applied to by the Committee of the Ragged Schools Association for additional assistance beyond the sum of £300 voted by Parliament on the Estimates for the current year.

In 1878 and previous years a sum of £200 was voted, payable to the extent of an equal amount subscribed by the public; but the late Administration omitted to insert this conditional grant in the Estimates for 1879, submitted by them to Parliament, and which were accepted by the present Government.

Before bringing the present application under the consideration of my Colleagues, I am induced to enquire whether or not the time has arrived when these Schools should be amalgamated with the Public Schools of the Colony and conducted under the control of the Board of Education.

It would appear that the Association, which has undoubtedly done a good work in establishing Schools where the very poorest and worst clad of our population can secure elementary education, have latterly met with very indifferent success in obtaining contributions towards their expenses; and as so large a proportion of the cost is now defrayed from the Public Revenue, it would appear to me questionable whether the management should continue to be vested in an irresponsible body.

I have, &c.

THOMAS REIBEY.

The Chairman, Board of Education.

Board of Education Office, Hobart Town, 5th September, 1879.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor, by direction of the Board, to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 21st ultimo, in which enquiry is made whether or not the time has arrived when the Ragged Schools in Hobart Town should be amalgamated with the Public Schools of the Colony under the control of the Board of Education.

In reply, I am instructed to inform you that the matter was fully discussed at a meeting of the Board held on the 29th ultimo, when it was unanimously agreed that there were many difficulties in the way of the Board assuming the control of the Schools.

I am, moreover, to point out that there is space available at present in the Board's Schools in Hobart Town sufficient to absorb all the children attending the Ragged Schools, as the accompanying Return will show. Having this circumstance before them the Board would not feel justified, were they to entertain the proposal to take over the Ragged Schools, in incurring the unnecessary expenditure in maintaining them in their present character.

I have, &c.

HENRY BUTLER, *Chairman.*

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

RETURN showing Space available in the Hobart Town Public Schools, calculating Eight Square Feet per Child.

<i>School.</i>	<i>No. of Children for whom accommodation is provided.</i>	<i>No. in ordinary Attendance.</i>	<i>Additional Children the School will accommodate.</i>
Central	460	170	290
Battery Point	347	202	145
Goulbourn-street	230	165	65
Macquarie-street	208	80	128
Murray-street	198	146	52
Trinity Hill	300	243	57
TOTAL	1743	1006	737

GEO. RICHARDSON, *Secretary.*

Education Office, 5th September, 1879.

REPORT of Chief Inspector of Schools upon the Hobart Town Ragged Schools.

Hobart Town, 25th September, 1879.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to submit a Report on the condition of the Cascades Road, Lower Collins-street, and Watchorn-street Ragged Schools.

So far as the material organisation of the Schools is concerned there has been no change since the date of my last Report. The premises, with the exceptions then noted, are generally in good order, though signs of wanton mischief are occasionally to be seen on walls, doors, or fences. All such offences are likely to occur where there is a divided responsibility arising out of the use of the same buildings for different purposes; and it is due to the teachers of the day schools to say that their management of the children while within their jurisdiction appears to be at all times highly satisfactory.

The recommendations made last year in reference to uniformity of system in registering the attendance at the different schools have been partially carried into effect; but there is still room for improvement in recording results and making returns, without increasing the teachers' labours. No register of admissions, properly so called, is kept in any of the schools; and without the information obtainable from such a source it is impossible to report on some of the matters incidentally connected with the question of the maintenance of the Institution. There is an impression generally prevalent that there are children attending one, at least, of the Ragged Schools whose parents are well able to pay for their instruction; and it is desirable on many grounds that some plan should be devised for confining the benefits of the schools to the classes for whom they are specially designed. The only excuse for the existence of Ragged Schools, chiefly supported by the State, is, that they extend the means of education to poor or neglected children who cannot be reached by other means; not that they are excluded from the schools under the Board of Education, but because there is a sort of passive resistance on the part both of parents and children which no compulsory enactments have yet satisfactorily overcome. But if it should be found that any Ragged School is giving gratuitous education to children who ought to be paying fees at a public or private school, it is easy to see that reasonable grounds of objection might be taken to the continuance of aid from public funds. In the few cases which have come under my notice the Ragged School has been selected by the parent, not from any unwillingness to pay school fees, but because the teachers were popular and the character of the instruction was exactly what he required for his children. It seems expedient that some official test should be applied before the admission of children, and that the condition of the parents should be duly registered and periodically revised, both to prevent abuses and to remove any doubts which may exist upon the subject.

The kindly co-operation of the ladies who periodically visit the Schools is highly advantageous both to Teachers and children, and I believe that the General Committee intends to appoint members of its own body as special visitors to the several schools. It is only by quiet informal

visits paid to the schools while in their ordinary working condition that the nature of their work can be really ascertained : the so-called public "inspections" of such institutions are not productive of satisfactory results, and are often positively mischievous.

ANNUAL EXAMINATIONS.

CASCADES ROAD SCHOOL.

The annual examination of this School was held on the 27th August and three following days.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>
Number on Rolls.....	119	103	222
Average daily Attendance	98	81	179
Present at Examination	92	80	172

Upper Division.

First Class.—Boys, 4; Girls, 10; Total, 14. Age, 10 years to 14 years.

Second Class.—Boys, 8; Girls, 12; Total, 20. Age, 9 years to 13 years.

The reading books are the 5th and 4th Royal Readers. The reading was generally fluent and correct, somewhat wanting in distinct and deliberate utterance. General intelligence well developed. Writing and Spelling fair to good. Arithmetic, from Simple Rules in the Second to Practice in the First Class, good on the whole. Grammar good. Geography fair. The average proficiency in the First Class ranges between the work of the 4th and 5th Classes in a good Public School, and the teaching and management of this department, which were not satisfactory last year, have become very efficient under the present Teacher.

Lower Division.

Third Class.—Boys, 6; Girls, 9; Total, 15. Age, 8 years to 12 years.

Fourth Class.—Division I.—Boys, 9; Girls, 9; Total, 18. Age, 8 years to 11 years.

Division II.—Boys, 6; Girls, 12; Total, 18. Age, 7 years to 9 years.

Reading in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Royal Readers quite satisfactory, considering the ages of the several children and their position in the School. Writing very fair to good. Elementary work in Simple Rules neatly and correctly done up to the standards of the respective classes, except by some five new comers of irregular attendance. General answering satisfactory, and the whole of the teaching and management reflecting great credit on the single Teacher of these three classes.

Infant Division.

Boys, 53; Girls, 34; Total, 87. Age, 3 years to 8 years.

About half are reading in various stages, from easy tablet lessons to simple narratives, the highest division being well acquainted with the First Book of the Irish Series. A somewhat larger proportion was advanced as far as this stage last year, but the average proficiency in general work shows no falling off. The Gallery Exercises and Drill are executed with satisfactory precision, and sufficiently break the monotony of the daily routine.

LOWER COLLINS-STREET SCHOOL.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>
No. on Rolls.....	87	80	167
Average daily Attendance.....	65	56	121
Present at Examination.....	66	53	119

This School was examined on the 2nd September and two following days.

Upper Division.

First Class.—Boys, 2; Girls, 4; Total, 6. Age, 10 years to 12 years.

Second Class.—Boys, 16; Girls, 9; Total, 25. Age, 9 years to 12 years.

The reading books in use are the fourth, third, and second of Collins's Progressive Readers, a series which is not well adapted to schools of this class. Reading, generally, fluent, and the substance of the lessons well taught. Answering and intelligence fair to good, with a few exceptions. Writing from Dictation fair to good, except about half of the lower part of the Second Class. Arithmetic below standard in the same portion of the Second Class, but in the rest of the two classes quite satisfactory, and showing good progress during the year. Collective instruction is given in Sacred History and Geography, and fair progress has been made. The exceptional cases in this division are those of children who have been long absent or who attend with great irregularity. The general discipline is satisfactory, though the attention of some of the children is not secured without much difficulty.

Lower Division.

Third Class.—Boys, 12; Girls, 5; Total, 17. Age, 8 years to 12 years.

Fourth Class.—Boys, 8; Girls, 7; Total, 15. Age, 6 years to 10 years.

The reading in this division does not proceed beyond the First Book of the Progressive Readers; but it is well taught, and the intelligence of the children sedulously developed. Writing very fair, with scarcely any exceptions. Arithmetic fairly up to standard, except in notation of some easy numbers. Discipline and general management highly satisfactory. There is an unusually wide gap between the proficiency of the children in the Third and Fourth Classes, and this will only be obviated in future by securing a somewhat higher standard than is now attained in the Infant Division before the children are moved into the Fourth Class.

Infant Division.

Boys, 28; Girls, 28; Total, 56. Age, 3 years to 9 years.

In the highest class there were 13 reading easy tablet lessons fairly, and writing the letters and figures more or less satisfactory. The proficiency of the rest of the children cannot easily be particularised; but the general condition of the whole division is much the same as it was last year. The teacher is evidently painstaking, and anxious to do the work well; but it is a business which eminently requires a natural gift, besides special training in Infant School routine.

WATCHORN-STREET SCHOOL.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>
No. on Rolls	66	71	137
Average daily Attendance	50	59	109
Present at Examination	40	60	100

This School was examined on the 9th September and two following days.

School-room.

First Class.—Boys, 3; Girls, 7; Total, 10. Age, 9 years to 13 years.

Second Class.—Boys, 7; Girls, 5; Total, 12. Age, 8 years to 10 years.

Third Class.—Boys, 4; Girls, 14; Total, 18. Age, 7 years to 10 years.

The Reading Books in this Division are Collins's 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Books; and in the First Class, M'Culloch's 4th Reader. The average proficiency continues to improve. Writing from dictation in the First Class fair to good, and equally satisfactory in the other classes, with a few unsatisfactory exceptions in the Second. Arithmetic, from Addition and Subtraction in the Lower Third to Compound Rules in the First Class, well taught, and the execution of the work on slates generally neat and satisfactory. Most of the children in the First Class have a fair knowledge of the parts of speech, and some acquaintance with the outlines of Geography and of Sacred History. There is a tendency towards a habit of rote answering which it would be well to correct. Memory work is highly important in its proper place, but the children require to be trained to answer questions in their own words, and they cannot begin too soon. The general management is highly satisfactory, and the order and attention greatly improved.

Infant Division.

Boys, 26; Girls, 31; Total, 57. Age, 2 years to 9 years.

In the First Class there were five reading the Second Primer fairly; in the Second Class, ten reading the First Primer equally well; and in the Third Class, eight reading tablet lessons. In this and the other work the First Class would be on a level with Class II. in a Public School, and the other classes seemed to be fairly graduated in the different elementary stages. The Gallery Exercises and Drill are fairly executed, and the general management is all that can be desired.

GENERAL.

There are many matters of detail in which improvements can be made in the organisation and management of these Schools; but the defects are quite insignificant in comparison with the benefits conferred by the Institution, and it is rather a matter for surprise that so important a work is being done by its means, and done so well.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

T. STEPHENS.

REPORT of Chief Inspector of Schools on St. Luke's Ragged School.

Hobart Town, 27th September, 1879.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to submit a Report on St. Luke's Ragged School, situated near the upper end of Macquarie-street.

General Condition.

The premises are generally in good order. No change has occurred since the date of my last Report except the enclosure of a piece of ground adjoining the School, which is a great improvement.

The attendance is now registered daily in a book provided for the purpose, the form of which might be made more convenient, though it sufficiently answers the purpose. There is no register of admissions.

The chief particulars of the attendance are as follows:—

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>
No. on Rolls	48	49	97
Average daily Attendance.....	25	32	57
Present at Examination	23	34	57

The School was specially examined on the 11th and 12th September. The following is an outline of the chief results of examination:—

Schoolroom.

First Class.—Boys, 4 ; Girls, 13 ; Total, 17. Age, 8 years to 16 years.

The class is in two divisions, the Upper reading the 4th Royal Reader, and the Lower the 3rd of the same series. Reading fair on the whole ; answering and intelligence satisfactory only in a few cases. Writing to Dictation very fair in the Upper, moderate to fair in the Lower Division. In Arithmetic the Upper Division showed a fair knowledge of Simple and Compound Rules, and four out of twelve in the Lower Division passed satisfactorily. The Upper Division have a fair knowledge of the rudiments of Grammar, and some general knowledge of the Map of the World, and of Europe.

Second Class.—Boys, 4 ; Girls, 9 ; Total, 13. Age, 7 years to 13 years.

The Upper Division read from the 2nd Royal Reader fairly on the whole ; their Slate Writing was passable ; and they are learning Simple Addition and Subtraction. Two or three exhibited an intelligent knowledge of their work. The Lower Division were engaged with much the same work, but their irregular attendance has prevented them from showing satisfactory results of teaching. There is still too much talking and inattention in the desks, and it requires an Examiner's utmost vigilance to prevent copying. There is nothing like actual insubordination noticeable ; the irregularities are the natural result of the idle habits contracted by the class of scholars who think it sufficient, both here and in other schools, to put in an occasional appearance ; and the maintenance of good discipline is not an easy task.

Infant Division.

Boys, 15 ; Girls, 12 ; Total, 27.

The attendance fluctuates so much that the children present on any one day do not afford a fair criterion. The numbers given above include all children who were present on either of the two days of the examination.

This department is usually worked in three divisions, the highest learning to read Collins's 1st Book, but not well acquainted with even the easiest lessons. The rest of the attainments are of a very rudimentary character, as might be expected from the extreme youth of the majority, and the surrounding circumstances. More collective oral teaching according to the ordinary Infant School methods is required.

The Gallery is inconveniently large for so small a room, and might be reduced in size with great advantage.

It is much to be regretted that those for whom this School is maintained make, by the irregularity of their attendance, so poor a return for the kindly interest which is taken in their welfare, and the patient labour expended on their instruction by the ladies who carry on the School.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

T. STEPHENS.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary.

JAMES BARNARD,
GOVERNMENT PRINTER, TASMANIA.