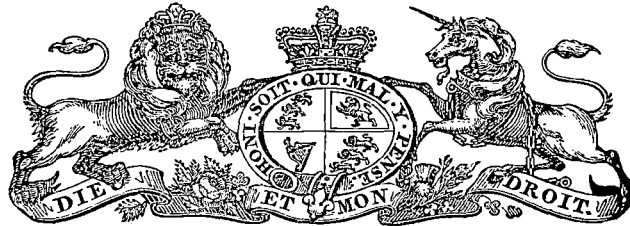


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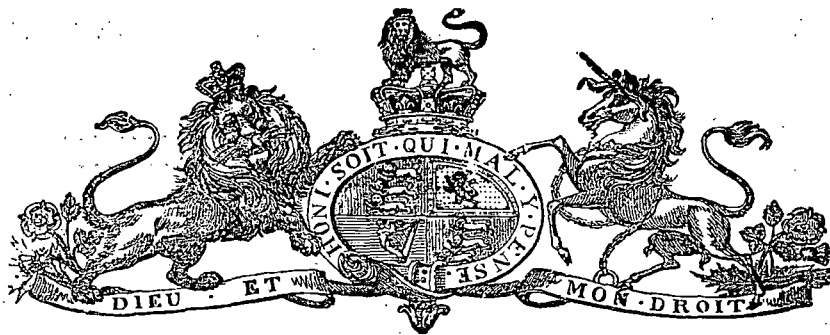
PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

PUBLIC EDUCATION:

INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS, 1885-6.

Return to an Order, Legislative Council, September 3, 1886. (Mr. Fysh.)

Laid upon the Table by Dr. Agnew, and ordered by the Legislative Council to be printed, October 1, 1886.



REPORT ON SCHOOL INSPECTION.

Education Office, Hobart, 18th September, 1886.

THE accompanying Return gives a comparison of the number of visits paid to schools by two Inspectors from January to June, 1886, with the number paid by three Inspectors for the corresponding period of 1885, together with the total number of visits paid during 1885.

A Memorandum from the Inspectors of Schools is appended.

It is necessary to point out that the disadvantages resulting from an insufficient staff of Inspectors cannot be estimated from numerical returns of visits to schools. Whether his district be large or small, it is the Inspector's duty to distribute his work as evenly as possible over the whole of the area allotted to him. With three Inspectors the work was latterly more than sufficient to fully occupy their time, and the necessary result of a reduction in the staff is that either a number of schools must be left unvisited, or that shorter visits must be paid.

A zealous Inspector, choosing the least of two evils, will generally prefer the latter course, though he is well aware that a portion only of the duties directly or indirectly connected with inspection can be discharged when his attention is obliged to be chiefly given to the business of getting over the ground as fast as possible.

Under such circumstances it is seldom possible for the Inspector to devote any time to matters connected with the extension or improvement of the means of education, and questions which arise in any locality subsequently to his visit, and which require investigation by a professional officer, must often remain unsettled for a long time.

The effect of an insufficiency in the staff of Inspectors is, however, most felt during the latter half of the year, when the School Examinations are held. The main object of the second annual visit is to formally test the results of the teachers' work by examining every child in every subject in which he has received instruction during the past year, and to note down every varying degree of proficiency in such a way as to form a permanent record by means of which the whole school history of individual children may be traced at any future time.

It is obvious that this is a branch of professional duty which ought not to be done in a hurry. The examination of one of the larger schools requires from three to six days, if the work is to be done thoroughly, and in examining even the smallest schools the Inspector ought to have at least half a day quite free from other engagements.

The duties of the Director will require his almost continuous attendance at the Education Office; and the special business which occasionally requires him to visit the country districts will be generally unconnected with school inspection or examination.

T. STEPHENS, *Director of Education.*

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, TASMANIA.

NUMBER of Visits paid to State Schools by the Inspectors of Schools during the first Six Months of the Years 1885 and 1886.

1st January to 30th June, 1885 (three Inspectors)	241
1st January to 30th June, 1886 (two Inspectors)	224
Number of visits paid by three Inspectors of Schools during the year 1885	494

T. STEPHENS, *Director of Education.*
24th September, 1886.

LIMITATION TO TWO INSPECTORS.

MEMORANDUM.

THE limitation of the staff of Inspectors to two makes it impracticable to give to all the State Schools the full amount of inspection that they ought to receive.

The duties of Inspectors of Schools may be thus summarised:—

- 1st. To make at least two visits (one for inspection and one for examination), and as many more as circumstances may require, to every school during the year, and to render to the Minister full reports on their efficiency, &c.
- 2nd. To visit, for investigation and report thereon, localities for which schools are required.
- 3rd. To examine, as soon as possible after application, candidates for admission to the Government Service as Teachers.
- 4th. To hold annually three separate general examinations—that of Teachers for classification; that of Pupils for Exhibitions; and that of Pupil Teachers at the end of their several years of service.
- 5th. Correspondence, and the consideration and minuting of papers referred from Head Quarters to the Inspectors on a variety of matters having reference to the schools individually or generally.

To discharge the first of these duties properly, without attention to the others, the present staff of Inspectors is insufficient. With the other duties enumerated, which are imperative, there is more than sufficient work to occupy the time of three Inspectors; and if only a third is appointed in addition to the present staff, we shall still find it necessary to spend a considerable portion of our private time in travelling and official correspondence.

J. RULE, *Senior Inspector of Schools.*
G. BOURDILLON, *Inspector of Schools.*
Hobart, 11th September, 1886.

The Honorable the Minister of Education.