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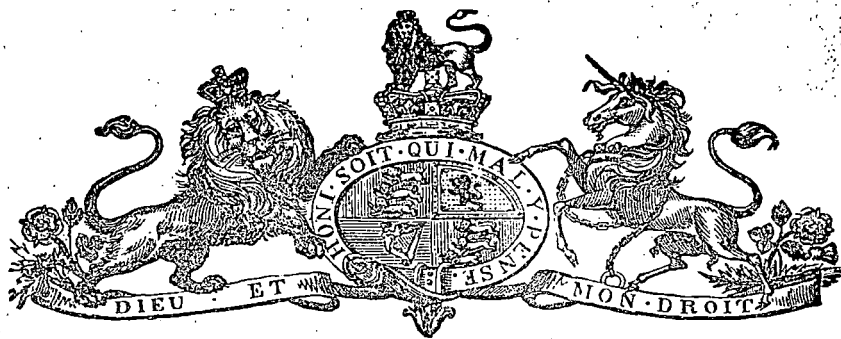
T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

RAGGED SCHOOLS, HOBART TOWN :

REPORT OF THE CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Moore, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
October 28, 1880.



REPORT of Chief Inspector of Schools on the Ragged Schools in Hobart Town.

Hobart Town, 28th September, 1880.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to furnish a Report on the condition of the Ragged Schools in Hobart Town.

There has not been much time available for regular inspection during the past year; but the Schools were occasionally visited, and they were fully examined in detail between the 9th and 24th of last month.

The Schools at Cascades Road, Lower Collins-street, and Watchorn-street are under the control and management of the Ragged Schools Association; the St. Luke's School is connected with St. Joseph's Church.

CASCADES ROAD SCHOOL.

	Boys.	Girls.	TOTAL.
No. on Rolls	99	91	190
Average daily Attendance	72	68	140
Present at Examination	72	79	151

In the Infants' Division there were 69 children examined in five classes, the highest comprising children able to read the First Book of the Irish Series, forming letters and figures creditably on their slates, and working easy sums in simple addition with fair accuracy. General answering very fair. Intelligence moderate to fair.

The Second Class with 37, and the Third Class with 13 children present, constitute the middle division of the School. The Reading Books are the 2nd and 3rd Royal Readers, and the lessons are well mastered; but the reading in many instances was somewhat monotonous, a defect probably contracted in the elementary classes. The writing on slates was good throughout, with few exceptions, and the children have been well grounded in the easier simple Rules of Arithmetic, a fair proportion being advanced as far as Multiplication. General answering and intelligence very fair.

The upper division of the School comprises the Fourth Class, in which there were 21, and the Fifth Class, in which there were 11 present. Except in a few cases, and these chiefly confined to the lower division of the Fourth Class, the elementary work in all its branches was highly satisfactory. The Fifth Class are well acquainted with the essentials of Grammar, the parsing being above the average. The outlines of Geography, with that of Australia in particular, are also familiarly known. General answering and intelligence good.

Some repairs of a trivial character are required to the buildings; and a small group of desks is needed for the use of children in the Second and Third Classes.

The out-offices have been somewhat improved; but their position, as pointed out in my Report for 1877, is very objectionable.

LOWER COLLINS-STREET SCHOOL.

	Boys.	Girls.	TOTAL.
Number on Rolls	84	87	171
Average daily Attendance	61	66	127
Present at Examination	60	72	136

In the Infants' Division there were 72 children present, under one Teacher. The three highest classes contained 38 children learning to read monosyllabic lessons of various grades, and to write letters, figures, and easy words on slates,—the proficiency ranging from moderate to fair:

Improvement has been made during the past year; and the Teacher deserves much credit for the work performed under very difficult conditions. There is an evident anomaly in the arrangement which imposes the most difficult task upon the Teacher who has had least experience; and, unless some assistance is allowed in the Infants' Division, or other provision made for the relief of the single Teacher, the future efficiency of the whole School will be seriously impaired.

In the middle division of the School there are two classes—the Fourth with 15 children, and the Third with 12 children present. The Reading was very fair on the whole; the Writing fair to good; and the Arithmetic up to standard. The general answering and intelligence were not quite so satisfactory as in former years.

In the Upper Division there are the Second Class with 27, and the First Class with 10 children present at the Examination. The Books in use are the 2nd Book (Collins) and the 3rd and 4th Royal Readers; and the majority of the lessons in each have been fairly mastered. The Writing and Spelling range from fair to good. The Arithmetic, as far as Compound Rules inclusive, fair on the whole, but inaccurate, and showing signs of habitual copying in a portion of the Second Class. Little time is available for other than the essential subjects; but the elements of Grammar have been taught; and most of the children have a fair general knowledge of the outlines of Geography. General answering and intelligence satisfactory.

The Premises appear to be in good repair generally. There is a steep staircase leading to the room occupied by the Third and Fourth Classes, which will always be a source of danger; and if at any time the discipline is relaxed when the children are leaving the room a serious accident is almost inevitable. The Out-offices are badly planned, but in as good order as can be expected.

WATCHORN-STREET SCHOOL.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	TOTAL.
No. on Rolls.....	60	56	116
Average daily Attendance	51	44	95
Present at Examination	52	37	89

In the Infants' Division there were 60 children present, of whom 34, arranged in three classes according to proficiency, were reading easy monosyllabic lessons or simple narrative from tablets or books. The rest of the work was generally satisfactory, especially the elementary work in Arithmetic. The gallery lessons are effectively rendered, and the discipline and general tone very good. The standard of the highest class corresponds approximately to that of the lower Second at Cascades Road and the Fourth Class at Lower Collins-street.

In the schoolroom there were 29 present in three classes. The Reading is fairly fluent, and the subjects of the various lessons appear to have been carefully studied. The Writing, both from copy and from dictation, is highly creditable, except in very few cases. The work in Arithmetic extends over the ground prescribed, but the answering was quite satisfactory in only a few instances, the prevailing defects being inaccuracy in simple operations, and a tendency to mechanical work. The Third Class has received instruction in the rudiments of Geography, and the Fourth Class has a fair general acquaintance with the Map of the World. The same class is well grounded in the common grammatical definitions, but the result hardly justifies the expenditure of time and labour. The general management and tone of the School are highly satisfactory.

Some repairs are required to the out-offices. They are badly planned, but in passable order. Repairs are urgently required to the floor of the shed. Some of the boards have apparently been used in the construction of a dust-bin, which is now the most popular playing place on the premises.

GENERAL.

It would be easy to give fuller particulars of the merits and defects, and to specify the points in which one school excels or is inferior to another; but, except to those who are well acquainted with the conditions under which the work is being performed in each case, any such comparison will almost necessarily convey a wrong impression. No fair judgment of the teacher's work can be formed without a knowledge of the circumstances in which the children have been brought up, and the widely different degrees of culture which different individuals have experienced before the beginning and during the continuance of their school life. Speaking generally, there is no reason to qualify in any way the expressions of satisfaction which have characterised former Reports. The Schools are doing a good work; and not only those who are receiving the direct benefit, but also the community at large, have every reason to be grateful for the means of education that are thus afforded to many who without the Ragged Schools would be utterly neglected.

It is necessary to call attention to the want of some general superintendence over the schools. There are Committees appointed for the three districts, but their function appears to be local, and there seems to be no one at present charged with the duty of maintaining that uniformity of

principle and practice in the organisation and working of the schools which their peculiar constitution demands. The fourth class in one School now corresponds with the first class in another; the reading books are not referable to one common standard, nor are they always suitable for their purpose; the standard of proficiency required at a particular stage varies in different Schools; and there are many other matters which require the control of general rules under competent personal direction.

ST. LUKE'S SCHOOL.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>
No. on Rolls	37	53	90
Average daily Attendance.....	22	33	55
Present at Examination	30	28	58

In the Infants' Division there were 40 children present, of whom one-half were reading words of one syllable and simple narrative, the majority being fairly acquainted with their lessons. In the highest division the children present were able to write the letters of the alphabet fairly, and to work very easy sums in Addition and Subtraction. Oral Spelling and general answering moderate to fair. The children in this room are all young, the average age being between 6 and 7 years.

The Second Class in the principal school-room consisted of one boy, whose attainments were on a par with those last mentioned.

The Third Class comprised 10 girls, of ages ranging from 7 to 12 years. Their Reading was fairly fluent, and the Writing on slates very fair on the whole. The Arithmetic was not satisfactory. Much ignorance of easy notation was displayed, and all, with one exception, failed to work correctly easy sums in the Simple Rules which were set before them. They have received some instruction in Grammar, Geography, and English History.

The Fourth Class consisted of seven girls, of ages ranging from 10 to 17 years. In this class the Reading was fluent and fairly correct; the Writing moderate to good; but the Spelling bad; and the Arithmetic very defective, only two showing a competent knowledge of the Simple Rules, one of these, however, being well advanced in the higher rules. In Grammar some little knowledge of the parts of speech was shown, and most in the class had a fair acquaintance with the outlines of Geography.

The general answering and intelligence in the Third and Fourth Classes were not at all satisfactory, but the deficiency was not conspicuous in the case of those few who had attended with tolerable regularity during the past six months.

Boys above the age at which they are usually found in an Infant School are not now admitted. Those who were formerly in the upper portion of the School were very irregular in their attendance, and constituted a somewhat disorderly element, which often gave much trouble. As there are ample means of education available elsewhere their exclusion from this School appears to have been a judicious step.

It is a matter for regret that the zealous labours of the ladies who conduct this School are not better seconded by the parents. With 90 children on the rolls the average daily attendance is only 55 at present, and some of those who are counted as attendants are present during only a portion of the School hours. Under such conditions it is impossible that satisfactory progress can be made.

The premises appear to be in good order. The Infants' Room is much too small for the number of children who are sometimes in attendance.

T. STEPHENS, *M.A.*, *Chief Inspector of Schools.*

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary.