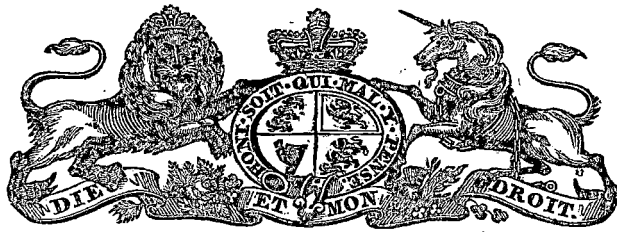


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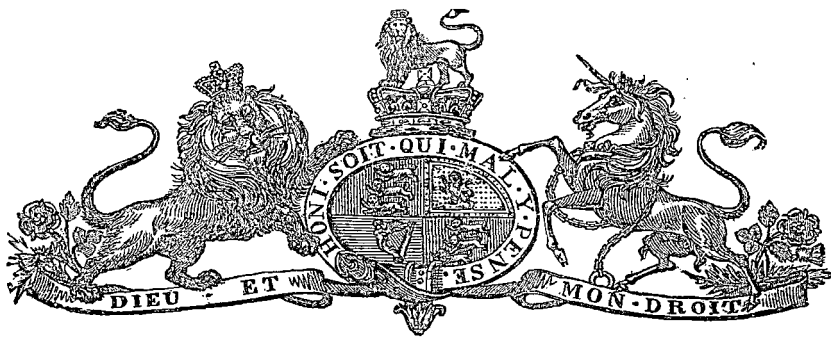
1858.

T A S M A N I A.

NORTHERN BOARD OF EDUCATION.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1857.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Henty, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
14 September, 1858.



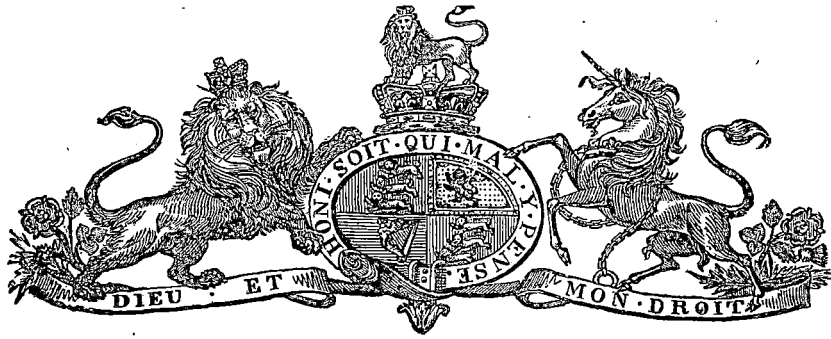
Launceston, 19th April, 1858.

THE Northern Board of Education beg to append hereto the Report of the Inspector of Schools for the Northern Division of the Island.

The Board having so recently received this the first Annual Report from the Inspector, and having had so little opportunity of investigating the various points therein referred to, do not feel themselves justified in giving any expression to their opinion at this time.

They believe that another year's experience will enable them more satisfactorily to test the correctness or otherwise of the views and statements set forth by their Inspector; also to judge more accurately as to the general working of the present system of Education throughout the Colony.

RONALD C. GUNN, *Chairman.*



REPORT

On the Schools under the NORTHERN BOARD OF EDUCATION in operation during the Year 1857, by T. STEPHENS, Esq. B.A., Inspector of Schools.

Launceston, 24th February, 1858.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE the honor to present my Report on the Schools in connection with the Northern Board of Education visited by me during the past ten months.

I entered upon my duties on April 29th, 1857, and since that time have completed two general tours of inspection, visiting more frequently the Schools in the neighbourhood of Launceston, and other places when necessary.

In May, 1857, there were twenty-three Schools in operation : those of Bishopsbourne, Hadsden, and Maitland have since been opened ; and it is in contemplation to establish Schools at Exton, Emu Bay, Chudleigh, Tarleton, Ilfracombe, Breadalbane, Cressy, Windermere, and the White Hills, so soon as the necessary quota from each locality shall be provided.

In most of the above Districts there is a large population of Children growing up entirely uneducated ; and this is also the case in many other parts, which I fear, unless coercive measures are adopted, must remain without the means of education for a long time to come. I would more especially refer to the banks of the Tamar, the North-west Coast, and that populous district lying between the Liffey and Westbury.

I subjoin a Tabulated Return of the number of Children present in each School at my last general Examination, and of the number receiving instruction in each subject. Full particulars will be found in my private Report.

It will be seen at once, by referring to the above-mentioned Return, that the standard in most of the Schools is far below what would be wished ; and even where I have recorded the several classes as well filled, the amount of information displayed has been, in more than one instance, very unsatisfactory. This might have been expected, taking into consideration the remoteness of many places, under the old arrangements, from the central management, and the difficulty of paying full attention to the requirements of all.

I may here take occasion to observe, that the circumstances most prejudicial to the efficiency of a School—the irregular attendance wherever the children's labour is required by or profitable to their parents, the early age at which they invariably leave School, the inconvenience of School-rooms, and the difficulty of procuring suitable Books and Apparatus—are to a great extent beyond the control of the Teacher ; and it would, therefore, be unfair to judge of his zeal or competency from a Return of this nature.

Reading in some three or four Schools I have found very well attended to, both as regards intonation, and a full appreciation of the subject of the lesson ; but in most it is far from what it ought to be.

Writing is generally fair, and I have found it best in those Schools where the Children are taught to use a slate and pencil as soon as they are able to hold them. Writing from Dictation is, I am glad to say, becoming more common than it was at my first visit; and I may remark that the neglect of this useful practice I have always found to be associated with bad spelling, which is worst in those Schools where the old method of learning dry columns of unconnected words out of a book is alone practised.

Arithmetic is not generally paid sufficient attention to. In such elementary Schools as these it would be unreasonable to expect a high standard, but considerable improvement might be made. Principles are little understood; and as for Notation alone, almost the first thing to be taught, I have been surprised at the very small proportion of Children in Schools otherwise well conducted who could take down correctly a number of six or seven figures repeated to them.

Elementary Grammar I have found to be well taught in several Schools, and the instruction has been given in such instances orally in connection with the Reading Lesson. Where the Teacher has confined himself to giving Definitions and Rules to be learnt from book, the result has been, as might be expected, most unsatisfactory.

The knowledge of Geography where taught at all is generally fair,—in one or two Schools very good.

I do not think, however, that young Children can form any distinct notion of the surface of the Earth from Maps,—and I should be glad to see a Globe of simple and inexpensive construction introduced into every School.

Of History I cannot say much. The want of a good Text-book of General History has hitherto proved a bar to the study of it,—and what little is known has been taught through the medium of an English History used as a Reading-book in one or two of the larger Schools.

Algebra, Geometry, and Mensuration are taught in some few Schools, but I have not felt much disposed to encourage the study of them, except the last, until the absolutely essential branches are more thoroughly known.

To Natural Philosophy and Natural History I should be glad to see more attention paid; but there are few men to be met with, even in the Mother-country, qualified to teach the rudiments in a sufficiently familiar and interesting manner. As they are usually taught, I fear little advantage results from the expenditure of time and labour.

Singing is generally—not, I regret to say, universally—taught, with of course very different degrees of efficiency. I look upon this as an exceedingly important exercise, and have often witnessed the humanising influence of Music among half-wild Children in remote districts; but where the otherwise able Teacher is unfortunately devoid of musical talent, it is better not to attempt it.

Needlework is taught in all Schools where there are Female Assistants, but they find it difficult to provide the necessary materials. Parents seldom wish their girls to learn any but fancy-work, which is of but secondary importance, at best, in a Public School. In one instance (I believe a solitary one) *plain* Needlework has been systematically encouraged by the ladies of the neighbourhood,—and their exertions have been most successful.

Some of the School-rooms are very ill adapted for their purpose, and the Furniture insufficient and unsuitable. At my first visit I seldom [met with that most necessary of all apparatus the Black Board, but it has since been generally introduced, and with great success. There has been also some improvement in the supply of Books and Maps.

In visiting various Schools in succession, an Inspector cannot fail to be struck with the remarkable difference in what may be termed their *tone*.

In one, where the attainments of the Teacher may be of a high order, and his zeal untiring, there is evident a general want of interest in the whole business of the day. Answers to the different questions are extracted with difficulty, there is little intelligence, and when the Teacher's attention is diverted for a minute or two there is visible a determined disposition to avoid anything like work. In perhaps the next School, conducted by a man of very moderate acquirements, the Children are happy and animated, eager to be asked questions, and intelligent in their answering, while the whole work goes on smoothly and regularly, as if lessons were their chief pleasure.

In the latter case the Children may leave School with but a small modicum of knowledge, but the beneficial effects of their training will last through a lifetime.

What we want are Teachers possessing high intellectual acquirements combined with the happy and invaluable knack of managing Children and imparting knowledge; and though Tasmania is not entirely destitute of such men, yet, until a far higher rate of remuneration is offered, we can only obtain them by accident.

There is a common but pernicious notion prevalent that a half-educated man is exactly suited for a School in an out-of-the-way locality. Now if there is any place where a superior Teacher is needed it is where the Children are entirely neglected at home, where they have most to learn, and least time to learn it in. In this country, where the operative classes are generally in comfortable circumstances, the object of Public Education should be rather to counteract the indifference of parents than to assist their poverty; and wherever the character of the Schools is raised, they will be attended, as they now are in some cases, by Children from all ranks of life to their mutual advantage.

In the existing Rules and Regulations there are certain clauses to which I beg specially to call the attention of the Board as requiring alteration or amendment.

1. Religious Instruction.—In only seven out of the twenty-six Schools now in operation is advantage taken of the privilege accorded to Ministers of Religion of giving instruction to the Children at a stated hour. This hour, from 9 to 10 A.M., is, for most of the Clergy, a very inconvenient one. In many places the Schools are at too great a distance to admit of regular visits at so early an hour; and even were it attempted, they would find that a full attendance can rarely be counted on until nearly 10 o'clock. This objection has been noticed in different parts of the adjacent Colonies, and an hour in the afternoon has been substituted. I am not prepared to say that any striking results would follow an alteration in the hour, but think that an occasional relaxation of this Rule would show that the Board is desirous of removing unnecessary obstacles.

2. Premiums to deserving Teachers.—I have not heard that this excellent regulation has ever been carried out, but I believe that under proper restrictions it might be the means of greatly promoting the efficiency of Schools, and assisting some of our ill-paid but deserving Teachers. To attain these ends I would propose to offer annually, in Schools where the regular attendance is under thirty, a gratuity of from £5 to £10; where it exceeds that number, from £5 to £20.

I would further beg to suggest—1st. That no gratuity should be given where the improvement during the past year had not been marked and prominent.

2nd. That, in judging of the efficiency of a School, attention should be paid rather to its general state, than the proficiency of one particular class.

3rd. That no gratuity should be given unless satisfactory testimonials from the resident Clergy, or others interested, in each School, should be yearly sent in.

Assistants in the larger Schools, if specially deserving, might receive gratuities not exceeding £10, or one-half of the higher rate.

3. Special Visitors.—The plan of appointing a Special Visitor to each School must be regarded as having entirely failed, as far, at least, as the original design is concerned. As to other Visitors, I have to lament, in common with almost all Inspectors, that they are never seen at all in many Schools, and in those most highly favored their visits are "few and far between."

I believe that the only thing at all likely to excite a general interest in the Schools, to divest them of a Sectarian character, and to secure a due surveillance, would be the formation of Local School Committees.

The responsibilities and duties attaching to proper local supervision are too great to be thrown upon one individual; and if carefully organised, I am confident that such Committees would give most valuable assistance to the Central Board.

4. Rent of School-houses.—On the establishment of Schools in rented buildings it has been stipulated that at least one-third of the expense should be defrayed from local sources. At the present moment there is not one instance where this condition is observed. In some cases the one-third has lapsed entirely, in others it has been thrown on the unfortunate School-

master, already poor enough; and one I could mention who has been in constant dread of having his furniture seized for non-payment of this debt which he had never contracted. This is a crying evil, and nothing but a power, granted by the Legislature, of levying Educational Rates will ever remedy it permanently.

5. Saturday, according to the Regulations, is a half-holiday, virtually it is a whole one. It has been found universally, as far as my experience goes, that it is impossible to get the children together on that day, as they are required at home for many purposes, and nothing would be gained by an attempt to enforce their attendance.

Mixed Schools.—Much has been said and written in favour of and against the practice of associating girls with boys in the same classes. As the Board has already determined to encourage Mixed Schools, it is unnecessary for me to enter into the subject at length. I may, however, remark that here, where it is almost impossible to obtain highly qualified Mistresses, they are especially needed; and though objections might arise from laxity of discipline, yet such an instance would be rather a reason for removing the Teacher than an argument against the system. It may not be amiss here to quote the opinion of an eminent authority on educational matters, the Rev. M. Mitchell, formerly H. M. Inspector of Schools. In allusion to Mixed Schools, he says: "I have again occasion to direct attention to this sort of school, as I am fully persuaded they are more efficient in training the moral qualities than those on the separate system. There is always a very superior tone in such Schools—a mildness, and gentleness, and propriety, which does not so generally attach to others; I am sure both sexes are improved, and all the inquiries I make only confirm this view."

Central or Model School.—The want of an institution which should serve as a Model School has long been felt in Launceston; and, now that the central management of the Schools in the Northern Division of Tasmania has been fixed here, its establishment becomes more imperatively necessary.

I cannot but think that the introduction of a high standard is the first and most important step to be taken in endeavouring to promote a general improvement in the Education of a country. This is out of the question when the Teacher's time is chiefly occupied in imparting the merest rudiments; and should he, stimulated by a natural desire of making a display, devote himself more exclusively to his senior pupils, leaving the younger ones to the care of an ill-educated Assistant or Monitor, the aspect of affairs becomes even worse.

A Central School in Launceston ought to accommodate not less than three hundred children, with School-rooms admitting of easy intercommunication, and be managed by a Head Master of acknowledged ability, with at least two or three adult and experienced Assistants. If the site were well chosen, such a School would be within the reach of all but very young children; and for these I would beg to recommend the establishment of more elementary or Infant Schools, under competent Mistresses, in such parts of the Town as might be deemed advisable. Three, including the present Infant School in Frederick-street, would probably be found sufficient.

Should these preliminary suggestions be acted upon, far greater facilities would be afforded for Training than at present; and many a zealous but untrained Teacher might have opportunities of observing the working of improved methods through a more satisfactory and convincing medium than an Inspector's visit, the only assistance now available to him.

Before concluding, I would again direct attention to what I consider the chief obstacles to the extension and improvement of the means of Education in Tasmania; viz.: the difficulty of raising the necessary local subsidy for the erection of suitable buildings, and the little inducement that is held out to men of ability to settle here, while the adjacent Colonies remunerate them on a so much more liberal scale.

I am sure that the principle professed by the Board of Education, of proportioning its grants to the sums locally subscribed, is a sound one: but it is impossible to disabuse the popular mind of the notion that the Board is bound to do every thing; and, in consequence, many places are now unassisted, where, if accommodation could be provided, and a decent maintenance for the Teacher guaranteed, large Schools might be opened at once.

One of two alternatives must be adopted where the means of Education are deficient—either to leave the youth of this Colony to grow up ignorant and uncared for until the population is stimulated into voluntary action, (which must always be a slow process in a young country), or to impress upon the Government the desirability of taking their welfare more immediately under its protection.

The latter appears to me (and it is only after long and careful consideration that I have arrived at this conclusion) the one desirable course to pursue.

It would be premature to enter into details before the principle which I am anxious to establish is admitted. What I would propose is briefly—That, for the construction and maintenance of good Schools where they are required, a power of levying general or local Rates, proportioned to the present Grants from the general Revenue, should be obtained from the Government: and *local* Rates have this advantage among others, that the people, having before their eyes the objects on which their contributions are actually expended, take a more direct and personal interest in them.

It is strange that this whole question, involving, as it does, so much of vital importance to this country, should be regarded by the many with utter indifference, while other matters (as, for instance, the formation and repair of Roads) are considered of so much consequence, that no politician would venture to propose that they should be left even partially dependent on voluntary support.

Compulsory Education, and the compulsory support of Education, are two distinct matters; and I do not think that the former will ever succeed in a British Colony, though it may answer very well in Prussia, and other parts of Continental Europe, where the entire social system is so widely different from ours.

I have been, perhaps, more prolix in treating of sundry matters in this Report than would be desirable on a future occasion; but my chief object has been to show the state of the Schools at the establishment of the Northern Board of Education, and thus to furnish data whereby their future improvement, or the contrary, may be ascertained.

I have the honor to be,
Gentlemen,
Your most obedient Servant,

T. STEPHENS.

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Northern Board of Education.*

TABULATED REPORT, in detail, on the SCHOOLS inspected in the NORTHERN DIVISION OF TASMANIA, 1857-8, by T. STEPHENS, Esq., B.A.

No.	ELECTORAL DISTRICT.	NAME OF SCHOOL.	Date of Examination.	NUMBER PRESENT.			READING.			WRITING.			ARITHMETIC.				Grammar.	Geography & History.	Mensuration.	Algebra.	Physical Science.	Vocal Music.	Needlework.	In ordinary Attendance.	On the Books.	REMARKS.	
				Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Letters and Monosyllables.	Easy Narratives.	Books of General Information.	On Slates.	On Paper.	From Dictation.	Simple Rules.	Compound Rules.	Proportion and beyond.	Mental Arithmetic.											
1	Campbell Town..	Campbell Town.....	Nov. 19	22	23	45	14	15	14	12	32	15	21	*	13	26	29	45	6	6	45	45	21	45	59		
2		Ross	Nov. 20	22	12	34	4	8	19	8	26	19	8	10	6	16	19	19	..	..	..	34	..	38	48	
3	Deloraine	Deloraine	Dec. 18	15	3	18	7	3	7	6	9	2	12	2	1	..	2	4	..	..	..	..	..	20	24	
4	Devon.....	Stanley, Circular Head	Feb. 8	26	11	37	8	12	12	9	24	12	14	5	..	..	3	7	..	..	..	..	7	36	39	
5		Forest, ditto	Feb. 9	8	4	12	2	4	5	1	6	4	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	19	26	
6		Table Cape.....	Feb. 12	4	8	12	5	5	..	1	6	4	2	3	..	..	2	3	..	..	..	..	..	12	21	
7		Torquay	Jan. 29	10	12	22	5	6	11	7	15	7	10	2	1	8	7	7	..	..	..	..	22	19	23	25
8	Fingal.....	Cullenswood	Nov. 25	4	2	6	2	4	..	2	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11	25	The Grant to this School has been withdrawn.
9		Fingal.....	Nov. 24	9	4	13	8	4	1	2	2	1	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	10	2	16	21	
10	George Town....	George Town.....	Oct. 11	7	12	19	3	4	10	2	9	5	5	2	3	..	6	5	..	..	..	..	11	19	33	
11	Launceston.....	Elizabeth-street.....	Dec. 1	75	23	98	26	28	40	18	59	29	26	9	14	18	18	18	6	..	..	60	5	98	117	
12		Margaret-street.....	Dec. 2	35	30	65	12	19	36	15	42	22	25	7	7	11	36	16	1	1	9	..	22	70	96		
13	Morven	Evandale	Dec. 3	41	20	61	13	15	27	11	36	39	13	16	10	37	27	28	7	..	..	61	*	60	72	
14		Lymington.....	Dec. 4	12	16	28	10	5	12	1	22	8	9	6	3	8	12	12	..	..	..	27	16	27	31	
15	Norfolk Plains ..	Carrick	Dec. 15	21	10	31	7	6	10	9	11	8	6	4	2	10	10	10	..	..	..	*	10	36	55	
16		Illawarra	Dec. 8	10	15	25	10	8	6	4	12	11	16	4	..	11	11	11	..	..	..	25	..	25	30	
17		Longford	Dec. 7	52	25	77	16	10	17	10	25	9	14	11	7	6	9	9	..	3	..	20	5	78	91		
18	Ringwood	Bishopsbourne	Dec. 22	18	9	27	9	6	6	..	8	6	5	*	1	6	6	7	..	..	..	21	2	26	33	Re-opened on Sept. 10.
19		Maitland	Dec. 23	15	9	24	8	14	..	5	11	4	7	3	..	..	10	..	..	..	..	24	8	24	25	Opened on August 1.
20	Selby	Hadsen	Dec. 8	13	13	26	5	4	12	11	15	12	2	11	1	..	13	13	..	..	..	..	..	21	26	Re-opened on June 8.
21		Newnham.....	Dec. 9	15	10	25	5	7	14	2	18	19	12	*	6	14	18	14	..	*	..	25	10	30	39		
22		Patterson's Plains....	Dec. 14	8	8	16	2	8	4	1	13	4	6	*	1	7	3	3	..	..	..	..	6	16	25	
23	Westbury	Exton					Not in operation during 1857.																				
24		Hagley	Dec. 16	29	24	53	13	24	15	12	40	26	21	2	9	8	13	24	4	*	..	53	24	48	55		
25		Queenstown	Dec. 16	43	32	75	25	21	14	14	34	14	20	6	1	..	35	35	..	..	..	..	12	80	99	Closed during the months of August and September.
26		Westbury	Dec. 17	51	24	75	17	39	19	22	49	38	34	20	6	19	23	35	3	*	..	75	24	80	88		

N. B.—The sign * denotes that the several subjects so designated are professedly taught in the School, though the pupils learning them were not present at the Examination.

RETURN of the PUBLIC SCHOOLS under the NORTHERN BOARD OF EDUCATION, in operation between the 1st of January and the 31st of December, 1857.

No.	ELECTORAL DISTRICT.	SCHOOL.	No. of Children on the Rolls for the Half-year ending						Average daily Attendance of Pupils for the Half-year ending		No. of Teachers.				Total No. of Teachers.	Amount paid during the year to Teachers of all Classes in Salaries, Gratuities, &c.	Rent of School Buildings, &c.	Erection, Repair, and Improvement of School Buildings, &c.	Local Contribution and School Fees in aid of Teachers' Salaries.	REMARKS.								
			30th June.			31st December.			30th June.	31st Dec.	M.		P.															
			BOYS.	GIRLS.	TOTAL.	BOYS.	GIRLS.	TOTAL.																				
1	Campbell Town..	Campbell Town..	27	29	56	27	30	57	39	44	1	1	..	..	2	£ 250	0	0	..	..	..	45	16	2	
2		Ross	30	18	48	24	18	42	37	32	1	1	137	7	4	20	0	0	43	16	10		
3	Fingal	Cullenswood	11	15	26	12	13	25	15	11	1	..	..	..	1	50	0	0	..	..	..	10	10	6	
4		Fingal	10	9	19	9	9	18	12	13	1	1	..	..	1	50	0	0	..	..	..	15	0	0	
5	Morven	Evandale	37	23	60	49	23	72	49	51	1	1	..	..	2	196	13	4	25	0	0	62	12	6		
6		Lymington	11	16	27	13	18	31	21	27	1	..	..	..	1	60	0	0	25	0	0	34	0	0	
7	Norfolk Plains ..	Bishopsbourne ..	..	..	..	19	14	33	..	26	1	1	..	..	2	35	19	10	..	..	..	12	3	3	Re-opened in September, 1857.
8		Carrick	32	27	59	34	23	57	32	37½	1	..	..	..	1	147	16	1	..	..	..	36	17	3	
9		Longford	61	26	87	62	28	90	67	68	1	1	2	127	9	6	29	10	0	72	8	0		
10		Illawarra	10	13	23	11	19	30	21	25	1	..	..	..	1	100	0	0	..	..	..	56	16	0	
11		Maitland .....	..	..	..	17	12	29	..	24	1	..	..	..	1	20	16	8	..	..	..	20	7	6	Opened 1st Aug., 1857.
12	Launceston	Elizabeth-street..	31	18	49	91	31	122	38	104	1	1	..	..	2	129	18	10	80	0	0	63	14	0	Closed in August.	
13		Frankland-street	74	27	101	..	..	..	75	..	1	1	..	..	2	126	13	4	45	0	0	76	5	6	
14		Margaret-street..	51	43	94	57	41	98	72	70	1	1	1	..	3	225	0	0	83	0	0	81	0	0	Re-opened in June.	
15	Selby	Hadspen .....	..	..	..	13	12	25	..	21	1	..	..	..	1	52	18	4	..	..	..	16	5	6	
16		Newnham	21	9	30	26	13	39	17	27	1	1	..	..	2	80	0	0	..	..	..	28	17	6	
17		Patterson's Plains	8	12	20	14	11	25	18	19	1	..	..	..	1	130	0	0	..	..	..	21	17	0	
18	George Town....	George Town ...	15	19	34	12	18	30	28	20	1	1	..	..	2	125	0	0	..	..	..	11	19	0	
19	Westbury	Westbury	57	45	102	56	32	88	75	71	1	1	2	171	5	8	146	13	4	48	10	8		
20		Hagley	21	22	43	31	25	56	35	49	1	1	2	178	13	4	11	0	0	144	3	8		
21		Queenstown ...	31	26	57	53	47	100	27	74	1	1	..	..	2	110	0	0	..	..	..	9	3	6	
22	Deloraine	Deloraine	25	9	34	19	5	24	26	21	1	..	..	..	1	100	0	0	20	0	0	79	0	5	
23	Devon	Forest, Circular Head	16	10	26	18	7	25	11	18	1	..	..	..	1	60	0	0	..	..	..	22	8	0	
24		Stanley, ditto....	15	7	22	29	10	39	22	38	1	1	..	..	2	115	0	0	..	..	..	49	15	10	
25		Table Cape.....	9	9	18	10	12	22	13	18	1	..	..	..	1	50	0	0	..	..	..	3	2	0	
26		Torquay	13	10	23	13	12	25	21	20	1	1	..	..	2	80	0	0	18	4	0	36	5	5		
			616	442	1058	719	483	1202	771	928½	25	15	1	..	41	2911	12	3	213	4	0	290	3	4	1102	16	0	