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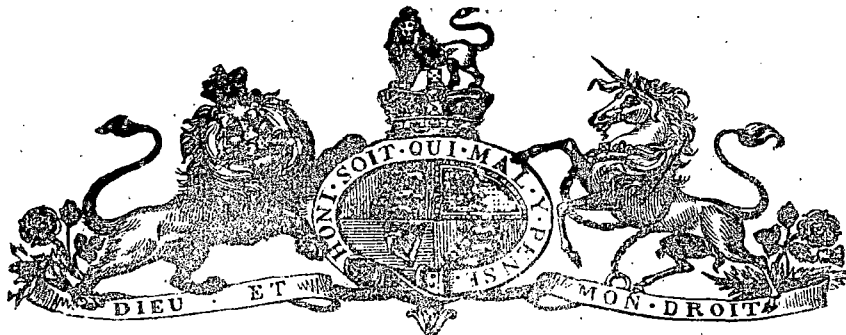
T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

HOBART RAGGED SCHOOLS :

REPORT OF CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS FOR 1882.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Moore, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
July 24, 1883.



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

Hobart, 6th March, 1883.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to furnish a Report on the condition of the Ragged Schools at Cascades Road, Lower Collins-street, and Watchorn-street, and St. Luke's Free School, which were continuously in operation during the year ended 31st December, 1882.

All the Schools were visited as frequently as possible during the year, without notice. They were examined in detail between the 16th November and the 14th December.

CASCADES ROAD SCHOOL.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>
No. on Rolls	106	100	206
Average daily Attendance	69	59	128
Present at Examination	78	72	150

The School is organised in three sections, the staff consisting of three adult teachers and a paid monitor.

In the lowest or Infants' Section there were 66 children present, nearly one-half of whom were able to read easy monosyllabic lessons from tablets or the First Primer. The highest division, containing 17 children, were very fairly advanced in the rest of their work, but the writing has somewhat retrograded, much of it being too small for this stage. Much care has evidently been taken to remedy some defects to which attention was called at the last examination.

In the next section there were 48 children in three classes, representing the highest division of the First Class with the upper and lower divisions of the Second Class. In the lowest of these three classes the average proficiency was not beyond that of the highest class in the Infant Room, and several children might change places with those in the lower grade. The two divisions of the Second Class passed, on the whole, a creditable examination in their class work, the reading being especially good. The children require more training in the method of repeating the poetry which they have learnt; and it should be remembered that writing in small hand is not one of the subjects of instruction in the Second Class.

In the highest section there were 36 children present in three classes, representing the Upper and Lower Third and the Fourth Class. There was noticeable here also a break in the regular sequence of the several grades of instruction, the average proficiency in the Lower Third being scarcely, if at all, beyond that in the Upper Second Class. The reading in this section ranged from moderate to very fair; the writing and arithmetic in the Upper Third and the Fourth Class were very good; and the other subjects of instruction fairly up to the prescribed standard. The reading might have more time allotted to it with advantage, and the first elements of grammar are best taught orally in the familiar language of conversation, rather than in the set terms of ordinary text-books. The discipline and general management in this and the other sections are highly satisfactory.

The premises are in good repair. The ventilation of the principal School-room is defective: the necessary improvements may be effected at a trifling expense.

LOWER COLLINS-STREET SCHOOL.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	TOTAL.
No. on Rolls	76	81	157
Average daily Attendance	48	49	97
Present at Examination	52	58	110

This School is organised in three sections each under a separate teacher.

In the lowest or Infant Section there were 53 present, of whom 10 professed an acquaintance with the first fifteen pages of the First Book of the old Irish Series, but scarcely any could be said to be able to read easy monosyllabic lessons, or to be otherwise qualified for the highest division of Class I. The rest in this section were in various lower grades of proficiency. A piece of poetry was repeated nicely by the children, and more time might be given to such exercises with advantage. The children are under control, and the teacher appears to spare no pains, but is not successful in bringing the highest division up to the *minimum* standard of proficiency which is intended to be reached before promotion to the next section of the School takes place.

In the next or middle section there were 32 present in two classes, corresponding approximately to the two divisions of Class II., but not conforming strictly to the new Standard of Instruction as regards the use of a graduated series of reading-books. The teaching is thorough, and the results of instruction fairly satisfactory throughout. Many of the children have acquired a sing-song style in reading, &c., which should be checked. The general management and discipline are highly satisfactory.

In the next or highest section there were 25 present in two groups, intended to represent Classes III. and IV., but in reality representing more correctly the upper and lower divisions of Class III. according to the new Standard of Instruction. The reading lessons had been fairly mastered; the general answering and intelligence ranged from moderate to fair. About the same standard of proficiency was maintained in the writing on slates and in copy-books, one in the highest class passing creditably. The arithmetic was below standard: four in the lower and one in the upper division passed fairly. A fair proportion in the upper division showed some general acquaintance with Old Testament History, and with the rudiments of grammar and geography. The actual results attained are not in fair proportion to the zeal and industry with which the work of instruction is carried on, and this deficiency arises from causes described in last year's and previous reports.

There is no change to report in the condition of the premises, which, though not altogether convenient, are in pretty good repair.

WATCHORN-STREET SCHOOL.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	TOTAL.
No. on Rolls	55	64	119
Average daily Attendance	35	39	74
Present at Examination	41	46	87

This School is organised in two sections, with one teacher in each, as heretofore.

In the lower or Infant Section there were 56 present, of whom 31 were grouped in three classes, reading First and Second Primers and the First Book respectively. The rest were in various stages of elementary preparation. An attempt has been made here to cover the ground which is occupied by two teachers in the other schools, and if it has failed, as it necessarily must fail, the fault does not lie with the teacher. The highest of these three classes was, as regards proficiency, intermediate between the Upper First and Lower Second of the Standard, the weakest point being the arithmetic. The other two classes represented lower stages of the First Class of the Standard, and were not sufficiently advanced to be reading the books placed in their hands with any profit. The general management and tone continue to deserve high praise.

In the upper section there were 31 present in two classes, representing the Upper and Lower Third of the Standard. The reading, except in the case of two children who ought to have been in the infant room, was generally fluent and correct, the writing very fair throughout, and the arithmetic on the whole well up to the class work, six in the Upper Third being sufficiently advanced to be fit, in this subject, for the Fourth Class. In the same class a fair acquaintance was shown with the outlines of Sacred History and with the elements of geography and grammar: the last subject requires to be treated in a more familiar style. The general tone of the School is decidedly good, and the defects noted last year under the head of discipline have evidently received attention with a view to their removal.

The condition of the premises remains as reported last year.

GENERAL.

The Registers of Admission and Progress, the use of which I have recommended on former occasions, are now kept in all the schools, and, with a little more experience in the mode of making entries, will be found very useful. The Standard of Instruction, which was introduced for the purpose of securing uniformity of system and a regularly graduated course of teaching in the several schools, does not appear to be quite understood, and will require closer attention than it has hitherto received. The plan of working these schools in separate departments, as it were, has many advantages over the Public School system, but requires more supervision over the classification of the children than appears to be exercised at present. It has been shown that the several departments sometimes overlap one another, and that, in one school, the Second Class, which represents the most important stage in a child's school life, is almost entirely unrepresented. The advantage, both to teachers and children, of strict conformity to definite principles of classification will be readily understood.

ST. LUKE'S SCHOOL.

	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>
No. on Rolls	34	29	63
Average daily attendance	23	21	44
Present at Examination	26	29	55

The ladies who conduct this school have recently introduced the new Standard of Instruction adopted by the Committee of the Ragged Schools Association, so far as regards the details of secular instruction. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to allow the working of a new scheme to be fairly tested, and the state of the school at the end of the year will be described in general terms.

In the lower or Infant Section there were 36 children present in four groups, the two highest of which approximately represent the Upper First and Lower Second of the Standard. The reading is quite in harmony with the scheme of classification; the writing requires to be taught on a different plan, both as regards letters and figures.

In the higher section there were 19 present in three groups, which come within the range of an Upper Second and a Third Class. The reading here also is sufficiently advanced for this stage; but an intelligent knowledge of the reading lessons requires to be cultivated. Some creditable writing was shown in each class. The other subjects of instruction are not yet much in conformity with the standards which regulate the several grades of proficiency.

The attendance has somewhat fallen off during the year, and is not as regular as might be expected where opportunities of separate instruction are so freely and zealously afforded by the conductors of the school.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

T. STEPHENS.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary.