THE REV. WILLIAM JAMES HABENS'  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND

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by
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to record and evaluate the contributions made to education in New Zealand by the Rev. William James Habens. The major aims of the study are: to record the details of Habens' activities in Canterbury's education system, and as the first Inspector-General of the Education Department; to note the influences that affected him personally and those which affected education; to estimate the significance of these influences as they affected his actions in provincial and national education; and to assess Habens' contributions to education in Canterbury during the provincial period, and as Inspector-General from 1878 until 1899.

There are three major reasons why this topic was chosen for research. Firstly, is the writer's interest in the history of New Zealand generally and in the history of New Zealand education specifically.

Secondly, the topic was selected because of the writer's curiosity concerning the man who, as New Zealand's first Inspector-General of Schools, held office for nearly twenty-one years. The term 'Habens' period,' has been used to denote those years from the 1877 Education Act until 1899, but what does the name Habens represent if the
question, 'Who was the Rev. W.J. Habens?' is asked? By way of an informal investigation at the beginning of the 1969 university year, this question was put to twenty-one, stage three students of Education at Canterbury University. The students were instructed to write down anything they knew about Habens, or the part he played in education in New Zealand. The results confirmed the writer's predictions; eight knew 'nothing' while eleven could manage only one or two sentences and in most cases these contained one or more incorrect statements. Only two students produced more than two sentences and of these, this was the 'better: '

If the Rev. W.J. Habens is the Habens associated with the period of New Zealand education from 1860 to 1886, then he was a Member of Parliament responsible for education at that time. Habens was concerned with the autonomy of secondary schools and their final exams. He allowed discussions to be carried out on a national scale about whether University Entrance should be the responsibility of universities or of secondary schools. This led to a conference of headmasters in 1867. Representatives of the secondary schools in New Zealand united in their request for the universities taking responsibility for University Entrance as its standard and its syllabus. The Rev. W.J. Habens was also responsible for suggesting in Parliament that there should be united local control of schools. Habens was opposed continuously, for all his altruism and concern for the best for New Zealanders.

As a result of this small survey and the oral questioning of others who have studied education in New Zealand, the writer concludes that very little is known about a man who contributed much to the education system.
of Canterbury during the latter years of the provincial period, and to the New Zealand system from 1878 until 1899. But then, as is pointed out later, very little has been written about Habens himself and so the way was open for an investigation to see what new information could be obtained.

A third reason offered to justify this research is the fact that the recording of the history of education in New Zealand has been comparatively neglected. Although there are a few major works, they deal mostly with trends and events. There are few studies of the men whose ideas have shaped our education system.

Plan of Thesis

The obvious way to study Habens' contributions to education in New Zealand is in terms of chronology. This enables the thesis to be more systematic and reduces the risk of omitting important data. Because a chronological sequence is followed, all the factors which influenced Habens' efforts at the provincial and national levels may be seen in perspective and their effects noted. For convenience, and to enable a quick reference to be made to any aspect of the thesis, each chapter is sub-divided into appropriate sections.

The thesis commences with a short chapter which firstly describes Habens' early life in England, and
secondly, gives a brief account of the events that took place in the education system of Canterbury between 1850 and 1864, the year of Habens' arrival in Christchurch. The background thus noted, Chapter II investigates Habens' activities in Canterbury and shows how, in some fourteen years, he became more and more involved in the education system of the province. Of particular significance in this chapter is the discussion of a lecture entitled 'Education' which Habens delivered in 1871.

Because of his influence on the curriculum of the primary school both at the provincial and national levels, the standards and the results of their introduction are the subject of a separate chapter. This chapter provides the link between Habens' contributions at the provincial and national levels and it leads on to Chapter IV which deals with Habens, the Inspector-General of the first national Education Department. The thesis concludes with a summary of Habens' contributions to education and an evaluation of these contributions in the light of the circumstances which surrounded them.

Review of Source Material

To date, one thesis has been the only attempt at a

study of Habens which goes beyond the standard facts obtainable from the major texts on the history of education in New Zealand. However, this writer does not support certain statements made by Forsman in the introduction to his work. He asserts in his first sentence that 'anyone writing on Habens does so with a sense of intruding on an already overworked claim,' and later, that 'so much has been written so ably about Habens.' Such an assertion is obviously incorrect. Apart from Forsman's thesis, the present writer was unable to find any other work which discussed Habens at any length. Those publications which do mention Habens usually give factual details within the context of the topic being studied or in a purely biographical form.

Forsman also writes 'that at no time did Habens seem to attempt a systematic exposition of his educational thinking.' This writer did find a report of a lecture on education which Habens gave in Christchurch in 1871. This lecture is discussed in Chapter II and a copy of the report appears in Appendix A.

Several works which relate to education in New Zealand refer to Habens and where information has been obtained from such sources, it is acknowledged and incorporated in the thesis. The writer is particularly indebted to the published works of Butchers, Sebb and Ewing. However, as useful as these works have been in the general writing of
this thesis, it was through the exhaustive searching of the Lyttelton Times, The Press, the Canterbury Provincial Government Gazette and the Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, that the major part of the material directly pertaining to Habens has been obtained.  

Although information was sought from those libraries in New Zealand which would be expected to have relevant material, nothing was forthcoming, except some photocopied documents from the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

Since no descendants of Habens are alive in New Zealand, it is difficult to trace the intimate personal detail which does much to produce an authentic, honest appraisal of an individual. One person to whom the writer spoke as a likely source of information, was an elderly member of the Congregational Church in Christchurch. Although he recalled meeting Habens when Habens was visiting Christchurch 'sometime in the 1890s' he could remember little of significance for this thesis. Church records revealed nothing other than biographical details.

In the presentation of the thesis, the writer has attempted to remain as unbiased as possible in the interpretation of the available information. It is

2. This writer feels that by not directly consulting the first three of these references, and by relying mainly on Butchers' Centennial History of Education in Canterbury and The Education System for his information, Forsman has not given due credit to Habens' contributions to education in Canterbury.
accepted however, that an endeavour has been made to produce sufficient evidence to conclude firstly, that Habens' contributions to the education system of Canterbury during the latter half of the provincial period were considerable, and secondly, that his contributions to national education have been underestimated. Had he not had to administer an education system over which he was virtually powerless, and had he not been in office during a period when the country was in financial difficulties, his impact as Inspector-General would have been much greater. As Inspector-General, Habens was a victim not of any lack of ability but of the times.

This thesis therefore, attempts to substantiate the writer's view that Habens deserves to be rated as one of the great men of New Zealand education to date.

**Abbreviations**

In the footnotes to the text, *A. to J.* signifies Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives and *Hansard* signifies New Zealand Parliamentary Debates.
CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND

William James Habens was born at Brighton, England, in June, 1839. He was the son of Mathew Habens and Mary Ann, née Hayter. From 1846 until 1855, Habens was educated at Puget School in Brighton. At the age of sixteen he started an accountancy career in London but four years later in 1859, Habens entered Hackney College, London, to prepare for the ministry. In 1862, at the age of twenty-three, Habens graduated from the University of London, gaining his Bachelor of Arts with honours in Animal Physiology, Logic and Moral Philosophy.¹

On 7 October, 1862, the chairman and secretary of a society formed to promote the establishment of a

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¹ Sources for these early biographical details are:
The Congregational Union of New Zealand, Year Book, 1899, p.59.
An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, Vol.1, p.394.
New Zealand Times, 4 February, 1899.

Forsman claims that 17 June, 1839, 'is consistently asserted' as the date of Habens' birth, but this writer is unable to verify the actual day of birth.
Congregational Church in Christchurch, wrote to the Rev. Thomas James, secretary of the Colonial Missionary Society, London, requesting that a minister be sent out to the then rapidly growing city. On 1 July, 1863, in response to this request, the Colonial Missionary Society appointed the Rev. W.J. Habens who had just completed his course of study at Hackney College, and instructed him to proceed to Christchurch. He was formally ordained to the Congregational Church pastorate on 26 August, 1863, at the Abney Park Chapel.

Prior to leaving for New Zealand, Habens married Miss Annie Mellish, daughter of the late Mr. Thomas Mellish of Brighton. Together they departed for Christchurch on 19 September, 1863, on the 'Canterbury' which carried a total of 422 persons. They arrived in Lyttelton on 10 January, 1864.2

Habens’ reputation was soon brought to the notice of the citizens of Christchurch. An article in the newspaper noted that, ‘it may not be uninteresting to our readers to be informed that the gentlemen who has come among us has credentials from the most respectable ministers of the religious body to which he belongs.’3

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The early years of Habens' life have been outlined only briefly because it is not the purpose of this thesis to investigate his life in England. However, these details have been included to establish the major milestones of Habens' early life and to help place his later work in its proper perspective.

Education in Canterbury (1850-64)

In order that Habens' contributions to the education system in Canterbury may be properly assessed, it is necessary to give some indication of the background and current state of education in Canterbury at the time of his arrival.

When the Canterbury Settlement was established in December, 1850, the educational aims of the Canterbury Association were high. The early settlers were determined to have schools and churches, and it was natural that they should look to the churches to provide the schools much as they had done under the parish system in England.

From the sale of Canterbury lands, the average price of which was fixed at £3 per acre, no less than one-third of the revenue was to be reserved for religious and educational purposes. There being a million acres for sale, a million pounds was thus expected to be available. A portion of this finance was to be used for the erection and equipment of a university and for the provision of an
ample supply of schools and schoolmasters.\(^4\) However, these
plans were only partially fulfilled:

No money was immediately available for
elementary schools from the settlement's handsome
educational endowment, so that the settlers had
at first to provide schools for themselves. Hence
the early years of the settlement saw nothing more
than the establishment of the Canterbury College
and Grammar School (in practice, a grammar school
only), and the haphazard growth of a collection of
private and denominational schools that were quite
inadequate to meet the needs of the community.\(^5\)

The New Zealand Constitution Act of the British
Parliament became law on 30 June, 1852, and it was
promulgated by Governor Grey on 17 January, 1853.
Canterbury, which was the first Provincial Council to meet,
assembled on 27 September, 1853. On that occasion
Superintendent Fitzgerald, referring to education in his
opening address to the Council asked:

First, what is the relation in which the State
in its corporate capacity, is to stand towards the
various religious bodies existing within it? And
secondly, in what manner and to what extent ought
the State to interfere in the education of the young?\(^6\)

In fact, the churches achieved recognition as the
proper authorities to organize education with the State

\(^4\) Purchas, H.T., Bishop Harper and the Canterbury
Settlement, pp. 32-3.

\(^5\) Campbell, A.E., Compulsory Education in New Zealand,
p. 19.

\(^6\) Journal of the Canterbury Provincial Council, 1853,
Session 1, p. 10.
being responsible for the provision of monetary grants. Consequently, with the passing of the Canterbury Education Ordinance, 1857, the Council, from year to year, made grants to the three denominations (in proportion to their numerical strength), which had by that time established schools.7

Any school maintained from the money granted was managed by the head of the particular denomination. He was responsible for the appointment and removal of the teachers, and for the control of the curriculum (religious and secular) in any school under his management. During the ensuing years defects in this system became apparent. The administration by the heads of the denominations resulted in the Council having little control over what was, in effect, public money. In addition, there was no uniformity between the denominations in their approach to education so that in the organization of the schools, choice of sites, appointment and remuneration of teachers, etc., a most unco-ordinated system of education arose. Little wonder then, that such a system should prove uneconomical.

A Commission (the Tancred Commission) was appointed to investigate thoroughly the entire education system and in 1863, it reported in terms that condemned the

denominational system because of its extravagance, inefficiency and discord. In this connection, Butchers noted some of the findings of the Commission:

The school buildings were all inadequate, in many cases overcrowded, and in some absolutely insanitary. In some places owing to denominational rivalry there were two and even three competing schools where one would have sufficed; in other places schools were not provided at all. Of the total number of children of school age the proportion actually attending school was most unsatisfactory, and even in respect of religious instruction the scheme was shown to be a complete failure. 8

As a result of the Tancred Commission's Report, 9 new laws were passed which made provision for the establishment of public schools and the formation of a central Board of Education. Other legislation provided for the establishment of education districts, for the election of school committees, and for the definition of the powers of these school committees in relation to those of the Board. In these public schools, providing the school committee unanimously agreed, the teacher and the teacher only, might impart religious instruction. In addition, the committees might set aside one whole day or two half days on which ministers could give religious instruction to the children of their own denomination.

Existing denominational schools continued to receive

Government subsidies and so it was that except for minor amendments, the two systems continued side by side until 1871.

At the time when Canterbury was commencing this dual system of education Habens arrived in Christchurch. In retrospect, it may be said that his arrival coincided with the approximate mid-point in the transition of Canterbury's education system from one which was wholly denominational, to one which was wholly public and secular.

This brief review of the more important features in the history of education in Canterbury between 1850 and 1864, has provided the background for an investigation into Habens' contributions to education in Canterbury. Chapter II deals with this theme and shows how Habens became involved in Canterbury's system of education, particularly during the latter years of the provincial period.
CHAPTER II

CONTRIBUTIONS IN CANTERBURY

When Habens arrived in Christchurch he did not immediately take an interest in any aspect of the province's system of education. Rather, as would be expected, his early months were confined to the establishment of the Congregational Church in the city.

He preached his first sermon on Sunday, 17 January, 1864, in the hall above Bonnington's music warehouse which stood on the present site of Dulgety's building in Cathedral Square. The Christchurch Congregational Church was formally constituted with thirty-seven members at a meeting held shortly afterwards and Habens accepted the pastorate. He therefore became the first minister of the Trinity Congregational Church and when the foundation stone of the present church (on the corner of Worcester and Manchester Streets) was laid in November, 1873, he gave an account of the history of the church up to that date.

It is interesting to note that on the occasion of the laying of this foundation stone, William Rolleston,

the Superintendent of the province, acknowledged publicly the high respect in which Habens was held by the community at large:

I would congratulate you, Mr. Habens, as its minister, on this crowning conclusion of some years of patient and conscientious toil. You have won the respect, not only of your own congregation but of the whole community in which you have been placed, as a good citizen, and one always ready and willing to devote his abilities to promote any movement which has for its object the progress and welfare of the public. 2

These remarks coming from a man of Rolleston's calibre were indeed very complimentary, but as this chapter progresses evidence will be presented which will show that by 1873 Habens had become recognized as one of the most distinguished men in the city.

Four months after his arrival in Christchurch Habens delivered his first public address. It was in fact to be the forerunner of many addresses given by Habens during his stay in Christchurch. He spoke to the Christchurch Mechanics' Institute about 'Animal Physiology,' a subject which he had studied as part of his B.A. course at the University of London. There was a large attendance but it appears as though either his topic or his presentation was too advanced. According to The Press report, the lecture was very instructive but it demanded more scientific

2. Lyttelton Times, 7 November, 1873.
knowledge than a mixed audience was likely to possess. 3

The Teacher

One year after Habens arrived in Christchurch he gave the first indication that he was going to be active in at least one aspect of education in the province. In an advertisement he made his intentions known to the public:

The Rev. W.J. Habens, B.A. (London), intends to receive a very small and strictly limited number of pupils for daily tuition. What is known as a "plain English Education" will be regarded as the first object. Beyond this the course of study in the case of each youth will be made to depend upon his age, ability, previous attainments and intended business or profession. A preparation for any university, or for the immediate study of any of the learned professions, may thus be secured. 4

Habens' general views on education will become more evident as the thesis progresses but within this advertisement are two opinions regarding education which Habens held throughout his life. Firstly, he believed that the most useful curriculum for the pupils during the early years of New Zealand's colonization was one based

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3. The Press, 20 May, 1864. Other addresses given by Habens during his stay in Christchurch covered a wide variety of topics as the following examples suggest: 'The Reformation in England and the Netherlands,' 'The Transit of Venus,' 'Socrates,' 'Reason and Revelation,' 'Oliver Cromwell' and Tennyson's poem, 'Queen Mary.'

on an English model, and secondly, he believed that constant attention had to be given to individual differences amongst children.

The tenor of the notice would seem to suggest that Habens was an extremely intelligent man and that his knowledge extended over a wide range of subjects. This writer supports this view.

Unfortunately, the writer was unable to find any evidence of the success or failure of this venture but a further indication of Habens' activities as a teacher was obtained. In 1868, he became Classics Master at the Christchurch Academy which was conducted by Mr. David Scott. When Scott became bankrupt Habens took over as Superintendent of the academy.

Although no claims can be made as to Habens' ability as a teacher, it is rather significant that after only two and a half years in Canterbury he was chosen to examine pupils for Government Scholarships. It was perhaps his success as a teacher that prompted the Board of Education to make the appointment.

The Examiner

In July, 1866, Habens became more involved in Canterbury's education system. With J.V. Colborne-Veal

and G. MacFarlan, he was appointed by the Board of Education to examine the candidates for Government Scholarships. These scholarships, valued at £40 each, were open to all boys below twelve years of age who were attending any public or private school in Canterbury. Habens’ responsibilities were the examinations in geography, English composition, modern and sacred history.6

A perusal of his report to the Board of Education in 1867 suggests that although the pupils he was examining were not yet twelve years old, Habens made his examinations quite demanding:

In the morning I set a paper on English History and Composition, allowing three hours and a half for the written answers to be produced. In the afternoon the paper was on Modern Geography, General Modern History and Sacred History, and for this two hours and a half was the time allowed.7

The examination of pupils for Government Scholarships, which Habens continued to be responsible for until he left Christchurch, was to become only one of his duties as an examiner. In 1874, by which time Habens’ interests in education had extended considerably, he was appointed with Colborne-Veal and J.P. Restall to examine and classify the teachers and candidates for teaching certificates. It is

6. Ibid.
interesting to note that in comparison with today's
inspection and grading system, the teachers in Canterbury
in those days were subjected to very rigorous investigation.
Written examinations which extended over six and a half
days were held. In addition, those who had not previously
given sufficient proof of ability as teachers were required
to teach a class in the presence of one of the examiners.
For their efforts the teachers were graded into first,
second or third class, each of which had three sub-grades.

At this time and later when he was Inspector-General,
Habens attached great importance to the need for teacher
training as an aid to increased teacher efficiency. During
the course of one of their examinations, the examiners
regretted that up to that stage no provisions had been made
for giving instruction to those who wished to prepare
themselves for the teaching profession. Their statement
that, 'we are of the opinion that several who now rank as
assistants might be qualified for appointment as principal
teachers if they could spend three months in a training
institution,'\(^8\) may well have been inspired by Habens.

As the issue of teacher training is introduced again

\(^8\) Canterbury Provincial Government Gazette, 9 March,
1875, p. 409.
later, it will suffice at this point to note that Habens' wishes were realized when a training college was established in Christchurch in 1877.

The success and diligence with which Habens and his fellow examiners performed their duties were acknowledged in a report of the Board of Education:

The work of the Board of Examiners is succeeding admirably in raising the standard of teaching. Many of the teachers already classed have, of their own accord presented themselves for examination and obtained higher certificates. The candidates who have been examined have, as a rule, obtained satisfactory positions ... The Board desires to express its thanks to these gentlemen for the care and ability with which they have performed their duties.9

Similar sentiments were expressed in the report of the Board of Education a year later.

Evidence that Habens was an Inspector of High Schools is given.10 With Mr. Colborne-Veel he was required 'to report on the efficiency of the schools, the subjects for instruction, and the proportionate time allotted for each subject.' Unfortunately, nothing can be said about Habens' activities in this role as no relevant information was revealed during the writer's investigations.

9. Ibid., p.65.
It has been suggested that it may have been because of his success as a teacher that Habens was appointed to examine the pupils who sought Government Scholarships. In addition, being so recently from England, Habens probably brought with him knowledge of what approximated sound educational standards at that time, and was considered capable enough to act as an examiner.

Habens' apparent success in this earlier role was no doubt instrumental in his becoming an examiner of teachers some eight years later. However, by 1874, Habens had lived in Christchurch for ten years, and it was perhaps his reputation as a learned gentleman and a most knowledgeable man in matters relating to education, that made him a logical choice for the difficult task of examining and classifying the teachers.

It is interesting to note that Habens was associated with examinations or inspections in some form or other during thirty-three of the thirty-five years that he lived in New Zealand.

Habens' Lecture

It will be recalled from Chapter I that when Habens arrived in Christchurch a dual system of education was just commencing in Canterbury. The rivalry between those wanting a secular system of education and those wanting a denominational system intensified during the next seven
years but it appears as though Habens was not drawn into the controversy. However, in August, 1871, Habens delivered a lecture on 'Education' in which he discussed certain aspects that were pertinent to the Canterbury system at that time.11 Because of the relevance of the lecture to this thesis, an analysis of it follows.

In defining education Habens saw it as:

the drawing forth of the native power of the child, conducting him out of the weakness of infancy and its narrow sphere, into the broader and higher sphere of science, literature, and art. It included all the various influences which went to make up and develop the formation of the character of the child.

This might be considered a grandiose definition when thought of in relation to a young system of education. However, it would seem that what Habens intended was that education should be a potent force in the development of children's characters.

Turning to the issue of State education, Habens advanced three main reasons in its favour. Firstly, he felt that every child had a right to be educated and that schooling should be more readily available than it then was. Secondly, Habens believed that crime would be decreased by the spread of education and so it became the

11. The Press and Lyttelton Times, 13 August, 1871. The Press report of the lecture appears in full in Appendix A. According to the writer's investigations this lecture was Habens' only public dissertation on education.
State's duty to promote the very best system of education. A third reason in favour of State education Habens believed, was that it was the duty of the State to provide education of a proper quality, as there were many parents who were unable to discriminate between a good and a bad education.

In outlining reasons against State education, Habens noted that interference by Government might be carried too far; for instance in the teaching of erroneous political and other doctrines. This fear of the State might be viewed as the rather typical nineteenth century Englishman's reaction. Certainly the Congregationalists, for most of the century, held this view. This point will be expanded later.

Another reason against State education was, in Habens' view, that the centralization of the control of education might in fact result in the lessening of efficiency. Thirdly, he wondered whether it would be possible to produce a class of teachers suited for their work without Government intervention. Habens felt that this would give a natural growth to the teaching profession rather than a forced growth which could arise from a centralized control of education. Lastly, Habens thought that a feeling of selfishness amongst the people might be created by State education.

Although he provided the aforementioned points for and against State education, Habens recognized that State
control was inevitable as this had taken place in many overseas countries including England and America. In England, where many were affected by a utilitarian attitude, it had become acknowledged that it was mainly through education that social progress could be made. To meet this demand for a national system of education, an Education Act had been passed in 1870.

Accepting that the State was to provide education the greatest problem, Habens believed, would be that caused by religious issues. By virtue of the fact that he was a clergyman, what Habens had to say concerning religious instruction was of special significance to those interested in Canterbury's education system at that time.

Habens' opinion was that it would be exceedingly undesirable to establish any system of State education that was unjust to any denomination. In line with the world trend which seemed to favour the separation of Church and State, Habens supported the establishment of schools for secular instruction as this appeared to him to be the fairest system to all. He felt that the teachers did not have the time at their disposal to give religious instruction and that if it was an offence to anyone, he would even support the omission of Bible reading from the daily programme. Habens' conclusion, therefore, was that if the State resolved to undertake the work of education, then it should confine itself entirely to secular subjects.
In advocating a secular system Habens was no doubt influenced by four main factors. Firstly, there was the doctrine of the Congregational Church which was based on democratic principles and held that while the essentially simple pattern of New Testament order and worship should be followed, the claims of those churches which followed a different order should also be recognized and honoured. 12

Secondly, Habens' thinking must have been influenced by the comparative failure of Voluntaryism in English education. Voluntaryism, a movement which arose from the Congregational Church, was based on the principle that all education must have a religious basis and that State interference in education was harmful. Although Voluntaryism spread for a time the movement finally collapsed as this summary describes:

At a meeting of the Congregational Union, held at Leeds in 1843, Edward Baines repudiated State control in education and declared for a voluntary system on a religious basis. The Voluntaryists set about raising funds for schools, and by 1851 had opened 564 schools which were independent of State aid. They opened their own training college at Homerton in 1846. The movement spread for a time, but then diminished and finally came to an end in 1867. 13

12. Jackson, Rev. G.W., 'What is a Congregational Church?' This pamphlet was sponsored by the Papatoetoe Congregational Church, Auckland, in July, 1961.

Thirdly, it must be remembered that Habens was the leader of a denomination which accounted for only one or two per cent of Christchurch's population at that time and did not directly control any school. Habens would therefore be influenced by the fact that the children of his faith would benefit most from a secular system.

It seems reasonable to argue, that in addition to the three factors mentioned thus far, Habens' views would have been reinforced by the denominational problems which he had seen develop in Canterbury's system of education. The combined influence of these four factors was, in this writer's opinion, the reason for Habens' advocacy that a secular system of education was the best and fairest system.

Under Habens' scheme the teachers were to play an important part. He believed that they should become officers of the State and that the Government should fix a minimum rate of salary to be paid, so that when a schoolmaster was required, the Government could provide one so long as the school requiring the teacher guaranteed to pay one-half of his salary. Habens thought that the provision of a purely secular system of education would be more easily achieved if, in the selection of a teacher, his good character and not his religion was the determining factor. Should any denominational schools
survive and want teachers, Habens felt that such schools would have to be staffed from within the ranks of the denomination concerned.

Habens had very definite ideas concerning the qualities required in a good teacher. These he noted in this lecture and on other occasions when he was Inspector-General. A teacher, in Habens' view had to be: well informed, clear headed, patient, kind, firm, consistent, judicious, able to discriminate character and able to teach to the children's level. In addition he needed to be a disciplinarian, had to see that everything was in its proper place, should have a punctual regard for time, and above all, should not be a conceited man.

These ideals demonstrated quite clearly that Habens desired to have the teaching profession comprised of personnel of a high standard. To obtain the services of such people, he believed that no one should be paid less than £150 per year and that a bonus should be paid to teachers who held qualifications above those needed to teach in the primary schools. Habens' suggestion that a bonus should be paid for extra qualifications is an interesting parallel to the current practice in this country.

Regarding the establishment of schools, Habens believed that the provision of what he termed municipal schools (schools with upwards of six teachers) was
essential. These, he suggested, would be much more efficient than the denominational system to which he objected, because in that, the energies of six teachers were wasted on the same number of schools.

Habens touched briefly on other aspects related to education during his lecture. Regarding compulsory education, he was of the opinion that if the State was compelled to provide education then the parents should be compelled to send their children to school. Referring to school books, he recognized that many books being used in schools at that time were inaccurate, too lengthy and expensive. He concluded that what the schools needed were cheap, compact text books.

With the lecture being given at a time when education was a very live issue in Canterbury, Habens' views received both support and opposition in the days which followed. The opposition, as was to be expected, came mostly from the Roman Catholics one of whom wrote:

With regard to the Scriptures, I suppose even Mr. Habens is not ignorant that Catholics and he do not think alike ... Catholics naturally object to any canon of Scripture but that of their religion, and to any version but that authorized by their Church being read to their children ... . While, of course, they will learn little that is true in religion, since the system is to be one of secular instruction is it tolerable that Mr. Habens should insult us as ranters and declaimers. 14

In his reply to this opposition Habens clarified his point of view, which it seems might have been misinterpreted by the reader concerned:

I advocated a system of purely secular education as the only system that could be righteously administered by the State. I said that the granting of State money for the teaching of all religious views was an act of injustice to every taxpayer who, having strong convictions on religious questions, objected to part of his contribution being used for the spread of opinions or dogmas which to him were objects of abhorrence. 15

Mr. George Gould, a member of the Board of Education, was one who supported Habens' views. 16 Mr. Gould was certain that nothing practicable could be obtained until denominational education was 'knocked on the head,' and like Habens, he wished to see the whole of the schools in Christchurch amalgamated into three or four at the most, over which an efficient staff of teachers would preside.

It is interesting to note that some of the points that Habens raised in his lecture did in fact become standard practice in Canterbury's education system during the remaining years of the provincial period. Ordinances in 1871 and 1873 resulted in the abolition of Bible reading, in the prohibition of teachers from giving religious instruction and in the stoppage of all grants

15. Lyttelton Times, 23 August, 1871.
16. Ibid.
to denominational schools. Only by a very narrow margin (16-14) was the right of the clergy to give religious instruction in the schools preserved. With regard to this last provision, Habens proposed a scheme which he felt would not offend any denomination and would least affect the school timetable:

My desire is to avoid denominational distinctions in the schools. I wish to see a great majority of the ministers of religion agreeing to teach the children those truths which many denominations hold in common. If we could come to this agreement, two ministers might go at the same hour to a large school, and one might instruct the senior portion and the other the junior portion of the children whose parents requested that they might be so taught... It would enable them (the ministers) to accomplish the work with very little interruption of the ordinary routine of the school... I am strongly opposed to the spending of one shilling of public money on religious education... I propose to appropriate only two hours out of the one whole day or two half days allowed every week by the Ordinance.17

In concluding this discussion of Habens' lecture, the writer feels that it was this lecture that established Habens in Canterbury's system of education. As we shall see, during the remaining seven years of his stay in Christchurch, Habens devoted more and more time and contributed much to various parts of the system.

17. Lyttelton Times, 16 September, 1873.
Habens and Canterbury College

When Habens became a member of the Board of Governors of Canterbury College his interests were extended to the sphere of higher education. Canterbury College was founded by an Ordinance in June, 1873. There had already been in existence since 1871, the Canterbury Collegiate Union which had given instruction in mathematics, modern languages, classics and certain branches of science including physiology, zoology, botany, mineralogy and geology.

Outside of Canterbury provisions for higher education were limited. The Otago Provincial Council had established a self-contained local university in 1869 and the University Act of 1870, whereby the General Assembly had made provision for a University of New Zealand and given it power to affiliate colleges for teaching purposes, had been passed.

The Canterbury College Ordinance, 1873, constituted a Board of Governors as a body politic and corporate by the name of the Canterbury College, with full powers over land and property. The Board, named in the Ordinance, consisted of twenty-three members who might serve for life. Habens was named with such eminent administrators as Rolleston, Tancred, Bowen, Bishop Harper, Inglis and Gould. The first

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18. Canterbury Ordinances, 1873, Session XXXIX, No.4.
meeting of the Board of Governors was held on 9 July, 1873. This Board had been in operation only a short time when it passed a series of resolutions concerning the affiliation of Canterbury College to the New Zealand University. It was in fact Habens who moved the resolutions and one which was to concern him personally, a few days later, stated:

That the University of Otago, in the event of its being disposed to take common action with the College, be requested to receive a deputation from the Board of Governors to agree upon the terms of application for affiliation.

When the University of Otago agreed to receive a deputation, the Board of Governors appointed Habens and Bowen (author of the 1877 Act) to attend the discussions. It is important to note that of the twenty-three Board members, the Board chose Habens as one of its two spokesmen. It would seem that he was accepted as one of the most able members on this Board and that he was well qualified to represent it in these important negotiations.

Habens and Bowen met the Council of Otago University on 9 March, 1874, and held lengthy deliberations. The result of the conference was a recommendation that Canterbury College and the University of Otago should

20. Lyttelton Times, 5 March, 1874.
apply for affiliation to the University of New Zealand.

For this reason, a deputation representing Canterbury and Otago met with the University Council at Wellington, and arranged not only a favourable basis for the affiliation of both Canterbury College and the University of Otago, but also the provisions of a new Act to replace the University Act of 1870. This new legislation established the University of New Zealand. Habens and Bowen were the Canterbury delegates at these discussions too and it would seem that their total efforts were most successful from Canterbury College's point of view. Certainly, they presented their case so well that Canterbury gained equality with Otago in the early days of higher education. Butchers wrote:

The English and the Scots were apparently reconciled and the treaty made was at once ratified by the New Zealand University Council, and without delay thankfully embodied by Parliament in the New Zealand University Act, 1874. But the victory lay with the English, and Otago, retaining its title of University, but emasculated of its power to grant degrees, became a member of the very "Corporation of Grammar Schools" which it had so bitterly denounced. One degree, and one only had it granted.21

The meetings of the Board of Governors were reported fully in the daily newspapers and these reports reveal the fact that Habens was an active participant in the

discussions at all meetings. He was responsible for the introduction of much of the early policy of Canterbury College and his many motions, or notices of motions for subsequent meetings were always carefully prepared. This one, which proposed the establishment of a Professorial Board, provides a good example of Habens' ability in this respect. Habens moved:

1. That a Professorial Board be instituted.
2. That the functions of the Professorial Board be as follows:
   (a) To deal with questions of discipline, subject to a right of appeal to the Board of Governors.
   (b) Subject to the approval of the Board of Governors to fix the course of study and the days and hours of lectures and of examinations.
   (c) To give through the registrar such instructions as may be necessary to the porter or other college servant.
   (d) To furnish to the Board of Governors such information as the Board of Governors may require, or the Professorial Board deem necessary, and to offer to the Board of Governors such suggestions as the Professorial Board may think advisable.
3. That the Professorial Board consist of the Professors, with the addition of one lecturer elected annually by the lecturers.22

As was the case with most of the motions moved by Habens, this one was subsequently passed with only minor amendments.

22. The Press, 6 October, 1877.
In another motion, Habens demonstrated his concern for the improvement of standards of attainment, which were in his opinion an important aspect. In moving this motion it would seem that he wished to raise the standards of the Girls' High School, which was at that time managed and controlled by the Board of Governors. Habens moved:

Until the attainments of the lowest class for the time being in the Girls' High School are such as the Board shall by resolution recognize as sufficient, no lower class shall be formed nor any pupil admitted to the school who is not, in the judgment of the Lady Principal, fit for admission to the lowest class.\(^{23}\)

Throughout his life Habens always emphasized the need for accuracy and care and it seems that even such eminent men as Dr. Von Haast and Professor Rickerton were subjected to criticism from him. Habens did not think that a report they presented, concerning the establishment of a School of Mines in connection with Canterbury College, was 'copious enough.'\(^{24}\)

During his years of service to Canterbury College it would seem that Habens was an active and reliable member of the Board of Governors. Certainly, there was no more regular attender at meetings and Habens has been

\(^{23}\) The Press, 8 January, 1878.

\(^{24}\) Lyttelton Times, 9 February, 1877.
acknowledged as one of twelve members 'who gave the
greatest amount of time to the duties of their office
during the first six years.'

The Christchurch East Educational District

With Canterbury's movement towards a public system
of education, the early 1870s saw a sharp increase in the
number of district schools. Advocating as he did, free,
public and secular education, it was not too surprising
when Habens became a member of the original Christchurch
East Educational District School Committee, which was
formed to administer the schools within the district.

At the first meeting held in this school district on
6 August, 1873, there was an attendance of 150, and Habens
and fourteen others were nominated for places on the nine
man committee. On 13 August, 1873, a poll, which was
open in two places for seven hours, was held and Habens
was formally elected to the committee. He received the
fourth highest number of votes of the fifteen men who had
been nominated.

At the first official meeting of the committee
Habens was elected secretary and he was soon actively

26. Lyttelton Times, 7 August, 1873.
27. Lyttelton Times, 14 August, 1873. It is interesting to
note the considerable interest that committee elections
aroused in these early years.
engaged in negotiations for a site and the construction of school buildings. Financial matters which accompanied this programme were Habens' responsibility and his early training as an accountant was no doubt of great value to the committee.

Because of his knowledge of the attributes required of a good teacher, Habens was entrusted with the task of selecting the most suitable teachers from those who applied for positions in one of the three schools then controlled by the committee. In this connection, on one occasion Habens reported to the committee:

that in accordance with its request, he had appointed on probation a third pupil teacher at the Music Hall School . . . The Rev. Habens also reported the result of an interview he had had with an applicant for an appointment under the committee. It was resolved that the Board be requested to sanction his appointment to Avonside on probation.28

When Mr. Wynn-Williams resigned from the chairmanship and the committee in June, 1875, Habens was unanimously elected the new chairman, a position he held on the occasion of the formal opening of the East Christchurch School which was, and still is, situated in Gloucester Street. At the time of the opening ceremony the school roll stood at 1,223 (697 boys and 526 girls) and there were thirty-eight teachers. It is interesting to note that in providing this particular ratio of teachers to pupils (approx. 1 to 32) the committee served the district

well, as these figures compare more than favourably with those for the present day. This school became the central school of four which were controlled by the East Christchurch Educational District Committee and from this time, approximately one-eighth of the total number of pupils of the district schools of Canterbury belonged to this district.29

In his speech at the opening ceremony Habens made reference to religious instruction, a subject about which he had had much to say in his lecture four years earlier. One can detect that Habens viewed the triumph of secular education with a certain amount of satisfaction:

The position in which we stand today has been rendered possible by the determination of the people through their representatives to separate the work of secular instruction from what the great majority regard as the certainly no less important work of instruction in the elements of religious knowledge.30

Being the chairman of this committee and witnessing the East Christchurch School (then the largest in the province) offering free, public and secular education, must have been for Habens a very happy conclusion to his administrative activities at the district level.

In August, 1876, Habens resigned from the chairmanship

29. Lyttelton Times, 18 November, 1875.
30. Ibid.
of the committee and soon after was obliged to resign from the committee itself. This situation arose because of his acceptance of the secretaryship of the Board of Education. Habens no doubt realized that it would not be in the best interests of either the Board of Education or the school committee, for him to remain a member of the latter, while being employed by the former. At the time of his resignation from the chairmanship Habens' valuable contributions at the district level were acknowledged by Mr. Rose, a member of the committee:

Mr. Rose moved "that a vote of thanks be accorded to the retiring chairman for the energy and care with which he had discharged the onerous duties of his office." He said it must have been apparent to the youngest member of the committee how much the ratepayers of the district were indebted to the untiring energy, hard work, and good influence which had characterized Mr. Habens' tenure of office.31

This writer suggests that the Board of Education invited Habens to become its secretary partly because of the manner in which he had performed his duties at the district level. Having played a leading part in the administration of the large Christchurch East Educational District must have given Habens a thorough understanding of the workings of the education system, and so, as we shall see, when the Board of Education was seeking the services of an able administrator, it was to Habens that the position was offered.

Habens the Correspondent

Before his contributions to the Board of Education are discussed, a brief investigation into Habens' activities as a newspaper correspondent is warranted because it reveals not only that Habens was a very able scribe but also that he played a part in the establishment of teacher training in Christchurch. Habens wrote to the newspapers concerning various topics during his stay in Christchurch but most had some relationship to education. For the purpose of this discussion however, two letters, one related and one unrelated to education, are introduced to demonstrate the method Habens sometimes used to address the public.

In one letter, Habens, who was respected for his integrity, felt it his duty to hold up a fellow clergyman to the derision of the citizens of Christchurch. The Rev. E. Bailey, who was at that time the minister of St. John's Church, Latimer Square, delivered several lectures to large audiences. Habens wrote a very lengthy letter to the Lyttelton Times 32 accusing Bailey of plagiarism and producing examples printed side by side as proof. Evidence provided in this letter and letters written to the newspapers on subsequent days, suggested that Habens was probably right in his accusations but it would seem

doubtful whether it was appropriate to cause so much feeling to achieve such a trivial object. The explanation was perhaps that Habens was a Congregationalist and a truly learned man, whereas Bailey was an Anglican and as far as learning was concerned it seems he was something approaching a charlatan.

In the second letter under discussion, Habens wrote to the newspaper concerning the Normal School. It seemed to him that very few people at that time understood what the functions or purposes of the Normal School were. He felt that in the absence of a statement from the people who originally promoted the scheme, he should, as an interested observer of whatever affected education, inform the public of the facts of the situation.

Habens pointed out that the Normal School was not a building intended to afford accommodation for students preparing for the teaching profession, but rather that it was a school that might be made a 'Model School,' where persons in training for the profession of teaching might gain practical experience, by doing the actual work of teaching while being observed by an experienced teacher.

Later in this letter Habens' own views on teacher training were outlined. These ideas were advocated no

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33. Lyttelton Times, 18 May, 1875.
doubt as a result of his experiences as an examiner of the teachers. He wrote:

A practising school and some provision for training are urgently required. We have, indeed, a considerable number of well-trained and very efficient teachers now in this province. But there are also many whose want of training is a serious bar, to their thorough efficiency. It would be true economy to give them the opportunity of some training and sound advice, and so to increase their teaching power to a very large extent. 34

Comments such as these from men of Habens' calibre, kept the training of teachers a live issue. It is significant that Habens was one of three men who were approached by a sub-committee of the Board of Education, to consider its possible management of the Normal School as a training institution. 35 Habens' wishes for some sort of training facilities for teachers became a reality when lectures began at a training college in Christchurch, on 19 February, 1877, 'under the sole charge of Mr. C.O. Roward who had been selected from a large number of applicants.' 36 This beginning of what is now Christchurch Teachers' College, coincided with the commencement of Habens' term as secretary of the Board of Education.

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34. Ibid.
35. The Press, 8 February, 1877.
36. Jubilee Recorder, 1967, p.50. This publication is the official magazine of the Christchurch Teachers' College Students' Association.
In addition to his administrative ability, one of the reasons why Habens was invited to be secretary to the Board of Education was no doubt his ability in the language skills, an attribute which was a necessity for this position. In this writer's opinion, Habens may well have partly proved his ability in this respect through his carefully presented correspondence to the daily newspapers.

Habens the Board Secretary

There is little doubt that Habens' major contribution to education in Canterbury during the provincial period, was made when he was the secretary of the Board of Education for seventeen months from 1 January, 1877, to 31 May, 1878. The establishment of the Board of the Education District of Canterbury resulted from the Education Boards Act, 1876, enacted by the General Assembly of New Zealand.

The first meeting of the newly constituted Board of Education was held in the Normal School on 13 November, 1876. The members of this Board were Messrs. W. Montgomery, J. Inglis, A. Duncan, J.N. Tosswill, H.R. Webb, A.C. Knight, W. Rolleston, H.J. Tancred, T.W. Hall and the Hon. E.W. Stafford. The first duty of the Board was to

37. Statutes of New Zealand, 1876, No. XLII.
38. The Press, 14 November, 1876.
appoint a permanent chairman. Mr. Inglis was elected but before he accepted appointment he expressed certain views regarding the clerical administration of the Board:

From his knowledge of the working of the late Board, he was of opinion that the duties of chairman would be a severe tax upon anyone unless the clerical work was thoroughly and expeditiously performed . . . What was required was to have the office put upon a thoroughly efficient executive footing, so that the work would be properly done.39

With the knowledge that the secretarial duties had to be 'thoroughly and expeditiously performed,' the Board immediately offered the post of secretary to Habens. He notified the Board on 20 December, 1876, that he accepted 'the offer of the Board to appoint him secretary at a salary of £550 a year, and with an additional honorarium of £50 as Examiner, and agreeing to accept the position from January 1, giving up his connection as pastor of the church, and devoting the whole of his time to the duties of the Board.'40

At the same meeting a telegram was read from the Colonial Secretary approving the appointment of Habens. In offering Habens the handsome sum of £550 per year, the Board must have had no doubt that he was well qualified to meet the onerous demands of the secretariship and must

39. Lyttelton Times, 14 November, 1876.
40. Lyttelton Times, 24 December, 1876.
have been most eager to obtain his services.

A question that might be asked is why Habens chose to change his occupation from minister to education administrator. The answer was partially supplied in a speech of farewell made by Mr. Inglis on behalf of the members of the Congregational Church, when Habens was about to leave Christchurch in 1873 to take up the position of Inspector-General. Mr. Inglis said:

There is no hiding the fact that from two and a half to three and a half years ago, I cannot say precisely, a state of feeling arose in the minds of some of the office bearers of the church, inimical to Mr. Habens continuing as pastor. He found himself not in accord with them - to say nothing more... He had, however, many months previous to the change in his relations to the church, informed the secretary to the Colonial Missionary Society of the unsettled state of his mind in regard to his charge here, so that when the offer was made to him of the secretarship of the Board of Education, he was, so far prepared to consider the question... It has been said that he quitted his post for a higher salary; that he wanted power and not a successor, and many other things besides... I must just add that when Mr. Habens' salary was of the smallest, he made larger contributions towards the Building Fund than anyone else except Mr. John Lewis, and during the past seventeen months he has ungrudgingly done the work of a pastor, not only without remuneration, but at an actual cost to himself.\[41\]

This writer believes that there were two major reasons why Habens chose to accept the Board of Education's offer to become its secretary. Firstly, it appears as

\[41. The Press, 6 June, 1873.\]
though he was not in harmony with all the officers of his church. This situation was probably caused by the fact that Habens spent a good deal of his time on various aspects of Canterbury's system of education. The church officers might understandably have felt that he was neglecting his pastoral duties, although it was noted that Habens 'laboured faithfully and to the satisfaction of his people.'

Secondly, because of his active participation in the education system in one form or another during his earlier years in Canterbury, Habens was perhaps influenced into thinking that he had something worthwhile to contribute to the Board, and inasmuch as the position offered to him presented a new challenge, he was prepared to accept it. It was then, in this writer's opinion, a combination of this and the former reason which persuaded Habens to change his occupation. Habens attended his first meeting on 3 January, 1877.

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42. Ibid.

43. Lyttelton Times, 4 January, 1877. On this day, Mr. F. Mainwaring who had been secretary of the old Education Department became the chief clerk of the Board. Mainwaring had been appointed secretary of the Education Department on 15 July, 1875. Butchers, in Young New Zealand, p. 250, claims that Habens became the secretary of the Department of Education but this is incorrect as Mr. Mainwaring held the position until the Education Boards Act, 1876, resulted in the new Board being formed. It was this Board which Habens became secretary of in January, 1877.
One of Habens' major duties as secretary was to deal with the vast amount of correspondence which the Board received and sent. During the seventeen months he was in office Habens wrote between five and a half and six thousand letters. 44 This represented an average of between three and four hundred letters per month and although many were of a relatively simple nature, this task must have been very time consuming. From the writer's analysis of these letters, it would appear that although Habens was required to deal with all kinds of people and all types of problem, he executed this duty with all accuracy and efficiency.

In his control of the clerical aspect of the Board's administration, Habens' approach was very methodical and he was responsible for establishing a system, which brought order to 'the chaos' that had existed prior to his becoming secretary. His office controlled much of Canterbury's education system and so Habens was responsible for the keeping of all records relating to school attendance, school buildings and grounds, equipment, teachers and school committees. In addition, Habens distributed and kept the records of the Board's many financial transactions.

44. "The Letter Books of the Canterbury Board of Education." In Appendix B, Habens' first and last letters as secretary of the Board are reproduced.
So well did he perform his duties that his methods soon became widely acclaimed. A request from the Auckland Board of Education in April, 1877, sought details of Canterbury's payment of teachers and of the office accounting and recording system. Then, in March, 1878, Habens was asked by the secretary of the Education Department in Wellington, to forward to Otago a copy of the daily attendance register then being used in Canterbury as it appeared to be very effective.

Twice during his term of office Habens was appointed by the Board to investigate complaints forwarded to it. In October, 1877, he made inquiries into a charge preferred against an assistant master of having taught English history in a manner offensive to members of the Roman Catholic Church. A month later, he was authorized to make inquiries into an alleged flogging of some boys at the Loburn School for not reading the Bible. Habens was no doubt aware of the seriousness of both charges and of the Board's reliance upon him to conduct thorough investigations. Accordingly, on both occasions he presented the Board with detailed reports which demonstrated the care with which he had dealt with the inquiries. Because of his exhaustive examinations in the two cases mentioned, the Board was

45. The Press, 19 October, 1877.
46. The Press, 16 November, 1877.
able to reach decisions without the need for further investigations. This was indeed a tribute to Habens' efforts as both issues were controversial to say the least.

In addition to the duties mentioned thus far, Habens was, as is fully outlined in Chapter III, promulgating the six standards which without serious alteration later became the distinguishing feature of the national system. Having held the office of secretary for only seventeen months, it was of some credit to Habens that 'when the transfer to the national system took place, no Province was able to hand over a better organized or better equipped system of free, secular, public schools,' than Canterbury.\(^47\)

At the Board of Education's meeting on 4 April, 1878, Mr. Inglis, the chairman, read the following letter of resignation which he had received from Habens:

Sir,

My acceptance of appointment to the office of Inspector-General under the Education Act, 1877, renders it necessary for me, as I intimated to the Board at its last meeting, to place in your hands my resignation, and to request that I may be relieved of my duties as secretary on the 31st May next. The time is short, but it will enable me to attend to important matters connected with the transfer of the Board's work to the two new Boards of North and South Canterbury; and I believe you will feel that this district, equally with others, is deeply interested in many questions which call for early settlements, and with which in my new office I shall have to deal. I trust, therefore, that you will not judge

\(^{47}\) Butchers, A.G. _Young New Zealand_, p.250.
me inconsiderate in withdrawing so soon. I cannot retire without acknowledging the uniform confidence and kindness exhibited towards me by the Board and by you as its chairman, and I desire particularly to thank you for your generous mention of me in the report just issued. 48

There can be very little doubt that as secretary of the Board of Education, Habens made a considerable contribution to Canterbury's education system. A resolution passed at the meeting, and speeches accompanying it, provide clear evidence of the high esteem in which Habens was held, and acknowledge the admirable way in which he had performed his duties:

The Board of Education, in accepting the resignation of Mr. Habens, desire to express their appreciation of the admirable manner in which he has discharged the duties of secretary since his appointment, and to place on record the high sense they entertain of the value of his services to the cause of education, and of his special fitness for the office of Inspector-General, which has been conferred upon him. 49

In proposing the foregoing resolution, Mr. Montgomery, a Board member, emphasized the fact that it would have the approval of every member of the Board. In this connection the newspaper report of the Board meeting continued:

They had all had personal experience of the very great zeal and intelligence he had exhibited in the discharge of his duties. They must all regret the loss of Mr. Habens' services as secretary, but it was a cause for congratulation that the gentleman was now about to have a more extended sphere of usefulness in the cause of

48. The Press, 5 April, 1878.
49. Ibid.
education, which they all had so much at heart. It was satisfactory to them to know that the secretary of that Board had been chosen as Inspector-General for the colony, and he was quite sure that the Minister of Education had not made the appointment without looking all over the Colony in order to get the best man possible.50

It would seem that one of Habens' greatest attributes was his ability to analyse a problem or weakness in the education system and to propose a carefully constructed solution. This talent helped him considerably during his reorganization of the clerical aspects of the Board's administration. Mr. Inglis told the Board members 'that if they had not enjoyed the services of such a man, the educational department they were connected with would have been in a state of hopeless mess.'51

Evidence that the amount of work in the office was extraordinary and that the Board made great demands on Habens was acknowledged by Mr. Inglis when he spoke in support of the adoption of the resolution. There seems to be no doubt however, that Habens was equal to the task:

He had, as far as he was able, thrown a great deal of work upon the secretary, and could say that the careful and efficient manner in which everything had been done was deserving of the highest praise. Mr. Habens, they were aware, had not been brought up to a merchantile career, but had shown in the conduct of the office a business aptitude which would be a credit to

50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
anyone in a merchant's office. Knowing how admirably their secretary had brought the Board business out of the state of chaos in which it was previous to his appointment he (the chairman) concurred heartily in the resolution, and had great pleasure in supporting its adoption.52

With these tributes as a testimony of his contributions to the Board of Education, Habens left Christchurch in June, 1878, to take up the post of Inspector-General of Schools for New Zealand. It is not the writer's intention to summarize and evaluate Habens' contributions to education in Canterbury at this stage as that is the purpose of Chapter V. It will suffice to record that in his services as a teacher and an examiner of pupils and teachers; in his contributions to Canterbury College, the Christchurch East Educational District and the Board of Education; and because of his interest in all matters concerning education, Habens' contributions to the Canterbury education system during the latter years of the provincial period were considerable.

What this liberal-minded man had done for education in Canterbury he was now called upon to do for education at the national level. There is no doubt that the Colony had a claim on Habens' services and it was perhaps because he saw it as a matter of public duty, that he accepted the appointment as Inspector-General.

52. Ibid.
It must be understood that although Habers devoted so much time to the Congregational Church and to education, he was still associated with many other organizations during his years in Christchurch. He was at one time or another an office bearer or member of the Literary Society, the Benevolent Aid Society, the Congregational Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association, the Popular Amusement and Entertainment Association, the Temperance Society, the Female Refuge Committee, the Young Men’s Bible Class attached to the Congregational Church, and the Philosophical Institute. His departure therefore, represented a loss not only to education in Canterbury but to the whole community.
CHAPTER III

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM (1840-1900)

Because Habens' influence on the curriculum of the primary schools in Canterbury and New Zealand extended from 1875 until 1899, he might fairly be regarded as one of the dominant figures in the origins of the primary school curriculum. He was largely responsible for the establishment of the standards in Canterbury, and then for the preparation and promulgation of the first national primary school curriculum, which remained practically unaltered for a quarter of a century despite some criticisms particularly from the inspectorate.

Before examining and assessing Habens' contributions it is necessary to review firstly, the curriculum provided in Canterbury prior to 1875 so that subsequent events may be seen in their proper perspective, and secondly, certain events which took place in English elementary education, as these were to influence Habens in his preparation of the standards.

Curriculum in Canterbury Before 1875

In the pre-provincial period, the curriculum offered
in the few schools that were then in existence depended
upon the teacher's knowledge of the English system,
although 'solid achievement in the three Rs seems to have
been necessary for a school to survive in the practical
atmosphere of the time.'¹

Upon this foundation grew the provincial system of
education. Canterbury was particularly fortunate in that
while it gained from the rich pastoral lands and the
discovery of gold, it was relatively unaffected by the
Maori Wars which were largely confined to the North
Island. Thus it was in a reasonably calm environment that
the early schools of Canterbury were established. The
task of developing an efficient curriculum during the
1850s and early 1860s, rested with the heads of the
respective denominations and the teachers, but it would
seem that in some cases the quality of the teachers was
not high. In 1863, the Tancred Commission reported that
in Canterbury, 'teachers have been appointed to schools
who are wholly unfitted for their duties, and whose
continuance in office has been most prejudicial to the
schools in which they have been placed.'²

1. Ewing, J.L., Origins of the New Zealand Primary School
   Curriculum 1840-1873, p.15.
2. Canterbury Provincial Government Gazette, 1 December,
   1863, p.229.
This apparent weakness of some teachers was perhaps one reason for the slow development of the curriculum. Another reason was the lack of equipment and books. In this connection the Tancred Commission found that there was a wide diversity in the texts then being used in the schools and recommended that there should be greater uniformity in this respect, so that children changing from one school to another would not be at a disadvantage, and the inspector's task of evaluating a school would be easier. However, eight years later, it was reported that Habens, in his lecture, complained that 'many of the text books now used in schools were inaccurate in many of their details, were too lengthy and expensive, all of which were obstructive to the spread of education.'

A third factor which affected the establishment of a curriculum in Canterbury's schools, was that there were some teachers who used the curriculum in an endeavour to further their own prospects. The Tancred Commission found that some children were being taught subjects 'which on examination prove to be far beyond their comprehension, apparently from a desire on the part of the master to exhibit a showy programme of his pupils' attainments.'

The Tancred Commission's recommendations resulted in

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3. See Appendix A.
a curriculum being officially defined in the Ordinance of 1864. Reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography, history (sacred and profane) and English grammar were to be taught in all schools aided by public funds.\textsuperscript{5} Ideal as this curriculum was, it probably existed only in those schools which were fortunate enough to have the services of an English-trained teacher. In the other schools the curriculum began and ended with the three Rs. Therefore, the curriculum and methods of teaching from 1864 until 1875, the year the standards were introduced in Canterbury, varied from school to school.

At the same time, changes which had taken and were taking place in the administration of English elementary schools, were to influence the subsequent curriculum in New Zealand and it is necessary at this point to briefly outline them.

**The English Influence**

Although elementary education in England had its beginnings in the 1840s and 1850s, there was no direct control over the curriculum of the schools. Kay-Shuttleworth, an eminent educationist, did suggest that the inspectors of the time should investigate reading, writing, arithmetic, singing, drawing, physical exercises,

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\textsuperscript{5} Canterbury Ordinances, 1864, Session XXII, No.7, p.36.
geography, grammar, history and etymology.

In actual fact, 'according to the Census Returns (1851) the great majority of elementary schools, both public and private, taught nothing beyond the three Rs. 6 Where attempts were made to introduce some liberalism into the curriculum, as for example through the introduction of the Pestalozzian object lesson, such moves affected a comparatively small proportion of schools and teachers.

During the 1850s there was a growing belief that the increasing amount of money being spent on popular education was not being used effectively enough. Consequently, a Royal Commission was appointed in 1858 under the chairmanship of the Duke of Newcastle, to make thorough investigations 'into the state of public education in England and to consider and report what measures, if any, are required for the extension of sound and cheap elementary instruction to all classes of people.' A detailed account of the report of this Commission is not necessary here, but of significance is the fact that 'the main criticisms were directed at the curriculum and the poor attendance.' 7

Finding that most children left school before eleven, that the basic subjects were being neglected, and that the teachers concentrated on the older and brighter pupils, the Commission made these recommendations:

The Government grant ought to be based on the three factors of regular attendance, the state of the school buildings, and a satisfactory report from the inspector. The establishment of local boards of education in the counties and towns with a population over 40,000 was recommended. These boards should appoint a panel of examiners consisting of certificated teachers with over seven years' experience to organize the examinations. Each school should receive a grant from the rates dependent on the examination results. Thus, the Newcastle Commission recommended the system which is generally known as Payment by Results. 8

A new era now began for the English elementary school. Reading, writing and arithmetic were divided into six stages under the Revised Code of 1862. 9 The relationship between the grant and the curriculum was made quite explicit by the fact that a child could earn the school a grant of eight shillings for a pass in the three Rs, but a failure in any one would reduce the grant by one-third.

This examination system resulted in the children being placed under great pressure. In this connection Birchensough noted that 'the child became a money-earning unit to be driven; the teacher a sort of foreman whose business it

8. Ibid., p. 70.
9. See Appendix C.
was to keep his gang hard at work.\textsuperscript{10} Although the standards were not high, one immediate result was that many teachers slowed down the promotions to make sure of the grant and practically neglected the brighter pupils who were certain to earn it.

Criticisms by eminent educationists including Matthew Arnold, who claimed the system was too 'mechanical,' and Kay-Shuttleworth, who argued that a test of reading, writing and arithmetic was not in itself a fair test of the real civilizing work of the elementary schools, were common. However, as Jarman points out, 'the system lasted, with modifications, for about forty years, and with all its shortcomings was probably a good enough rough and ready method of achieving a degree of efficiency in elementary education.'\textsuperscript{11}

Three main attempts were made between 1862 and 1877 to ease the 1862 regulations. Firstly, in 1867, a Minute was issued which under certain conditions offered grants for 'specific subjects' such as geography, history or grammar. Then, in 1871, the list of 'specific subjects' was extended to include algebra, geometry, natural philosophy, physical geography, the natural sciences,

\textsuperscript{10} Birchenough, C., \textit{op.cit.}, pp.280-1.

\textsuperscript{11} Jarman, T.L., \textit{Landmarks in the History of Education}, p.263.
political economy, languages and any other definite subject of instruction approved by the inspectors, but these changes applied only to pupils in Standards IV to VI. A third attempt to liberalize the curriculum, particularly of the lower part of the school, was made in 1875 when 'class subjects' were introduced. Grammar, geography, history and plain needlework were made optional for the whole school above Standard I.

In addition to the above-mentioned attempts to broaden the curriculum generally, the compulsory subjects (reading, writing and arithmetic) also underwent changes, so that by 1877, they were somewhat more progressive than the original standards of 1862. However, many schools still taught only what was obligatory and the system was very formal.

As would be expected, these developments in the English elementary curriculum influenced Babens' thinking. In turning now to a discussion of the establishment of the standards in Canterbury we shall see how this was so.

The Canterbury Standards

Babens was not the first to introduce standards in New Zealand. According to Ewing, 'Bowden, the Wellington inspector, was probably the first to introduce formal standards of instruction into New Zealand schools.'

In 1867, Bowden reported that he had instructed the teachers to classify their pupils on the same basis as that used by the Irish National Board which worked on a system of six classes.

Then in 1870, William Taylor, an Auckland headmaster suggested that formal standards be required for Auckland schools. In his scheme he proposed that if a teacher who controlled a school of eight grades achieved a 75 per cent pass at the inspector's examination in the three Rs, grammar and geography, he would be paid his whole salary, but a teacher whose result fell below this would lose a quarter of his income. For various reasons but mainly because of the general dislike of 'payment by results,' the scheme was not pursued.

Three years later, Mr. Robert Lee, a Wellington inspector, drew up four examinable standards and submitted them to the Wellington Education Board, which officially adopted them for use from the beginning of 1874. In the same year, Donald Petrie, a newly appointed inspector in Otago, prepared a syllabus which provided a course of instruction for six standards. This was introduced into the Otago schools immediately.

Meanwhile, in Canterbury, the emergence of the free, public and secular system of education resulted in a steady increase in the number of district schools, to meet the demand created by the increasing number of pupils.
In Christchurch and the suburbs alone the number of children receiving instruction in 1874, totalled nearly 4,500. 13

Reference was made earlier to the fact that the curriculum offered in Canterbury between 1864 and 1875, varied from school to school and depended largely on the amount of training the teacher had had. In noting this and the apparent lack of efficiency of many of the teachers, Mr. J.P. Restall, Canterbury's inspector, suggested the English idea of 'payment by results' as a remedy for the problem. Restall wrote:

The masters and mistresses brought out from England are trained teachers, with a thorough understanding of an interest in their work. The staff has also been usefully augmented by some who have come out on their own account, and by the arrival of others of considerable skill from the adjoining provinces and neighbouring colonies . . . Sufficient action is not, however, taken to enforce efficiency; several teachers who have for a long time given dissatisfaction still continue to hold their appointments; they have not been negligent, they have done their best, and so nobody likes to hurt his neighbour, although "the discipline is weak and the scholars don't get on." Conference with the teachers who have recently arrived from England suggests payment by results as the only decisive means of rectifying this evil. 14

When the Board of Education became aware of the considerable differences in the curriculum offered from

13. Canterbury Provincial Government Gazette, 10 March, 1875, p. 73.
school to school, it moved immediately to standardize the syllabus for Canterbury's schools. For this reason the Board wrote to the Board of Examiners on 24 March, 1875, asking it to prepare a set of standards suitable for use in the schools of the Canterbury province.

Habens, Colborne-Veal and Restall, who at that time comprised the Board of Examiners, set about the task immediately. It would seem that Habens had much to do with the framing of the regulations. He alone planned and wrote the lengthy reply to the Board of Education, extracts from which are included here because they outline some of the factors Habens and his associates considered when they were constructing the standards. In addition, these extracts note some of the examiners' suggestions for the implementation of the system. Habens wrote:

We have prepared the accompanying scheme of standards with a view throughout rather to what is practicable than to what might be deemed desirable. It is possible that the requirements may, at first sight appear to be too moderate, but experience of examination by standards elsewhere shows, as we think, that it is a common mistake to expect too much. It should be remembered in this connection that the standards are fixed for the purposes of examination, and are not intended to impose limits upon the work of the classes for which they are designed. It may be assumed that the work will be always in advance of the standards... We have included geography, grammar, and history in addition to the essential parts of the English standards, and we are of the opinion that it may well be left to the teachers to introduce other branches of knowledge at suitable stages.
The work prescribed is so graduated that all the children in fair attendance ought to advance one stage in each year. It would seem very desirable, if not necessary, that a child transferred from one school to another school should be furnished with a certificate from the school he is leaving, showing what standard he has passed.

We have not thought it advisable, in the absence of local experience of the work of a scheme of standards, to complicate our proposals by any reference to the number of school days on which any child has been in attendance. A sufficient test of the efficiency of a school, and means of comparison with other schools, will be afforded by a return of the number of children who have passed one standard in a year.

In all cases — even where it is not stated — the children presented for examination in any standard ought to be prepared to exhibit proficiency in the work also of the lower standards.

It is possible that in the course of time a higher standard than the sixth may come to be required for the superior schools. 15

The contents of the standards and Habens’ reply to the Board of Education are self-explanatory, but it is interesting to observe that while they were based on the English pattern, the Canterbury standards contained in addition to the three Rs, history, geography and grammar and these subjects were made compulsory. In providing for compulsory standards in subjects other than the three Rs, the examiners went beyond the English custom and set an important precedent that Habens followed when he produced the national standards in 1878.

15. *The Press*, 18 May, 1875. The standards for which individual passes were required, are reproduced in Appendix D.
The standards were adopted at the meeting of the Board of Education on 17 May, 1875, and it was requested that they be put in form for circulation as printed regulations. A proof copy of the regulations was discussed clause by clause at a meeting on 21 June, 1875, and was approved. The Regulations for the Examination of Schools were finally gazetted on 26 June, 1875. 16

Like all new schemes these standards were greeted with varying degrees of enthusiasm. The first general assessment of their worth was provided by the inspectors in their reports for the year ending October, 1875. Although the standards had been in operation for only a short time, Mr. Restall's report noted that they tended to prove a valuable stimulus to the energy of teachers, and a restraint upon the tendency to neglect the drudgery of teaching the bulk of the school for the pleasure of bringing on a few advanced scholars. 17

Mr. H.F. Hammond's report provided evidence that the teachers he had visited favoured the standards and that the standards themselves had resulted in increased efficiency within the schools. He wrote:

Where schools have been examined twice under the standards I have found the work becoming, as a rule, much more accurate, and necessarily more systematic. The teachers

17. Ibid., 24 June, 1876, p. 30.
unanimously approve of a system which gives them definite approved work to do, and which tests the results of their labours by a universal standard.\textsuperscript{18}

A more objective evaluation of the Canterbury standards was made some two years later. Mr. Hammond in his general report for the nine months ending 31 December, 1877, noted:

In the large majority of schools, the quality of the work throughout shows a most marked improvement on that of former years, and in many cases is all that the most exacting Inspector could desire. I attribute this improvement in a great measure to the introduction of the standard system of examination. The teachers are unanimous in their expressions of satisfaction at the working of the system.\textsuperscript{19}

If the opinion of an inspector of the time is to be accepted, and there is no reason why it should not be, it appears as though the Canterbury standards were a success from most points of view. Some credit for this happy result must go to Habens for his part as one of the architects and overseers of the scheme.

This writer believes that although Habens' undoubted administrative ability was probably the major reason why he was chosen to become New Zealand's first Inspector-General, his part in the successful formulation and promulgation of the Canterbury standards was, perhaps,

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., p.33.
\textsuperscript{19} A. to J., 1878, H. - l., p.79.
also influential in his selection. As the construction of the national standards was to be one of the Inspector-General's first major tasks, this experience was no doubt an added recommendation. Certainly, the establishment of a curriculum was a 'common denominator' of Habens' educational responsibilities at the provincial and national levels.

The National Curriculum

In the Education Act of 1877, the subjects of instruction were listed as: reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar and composition, geography, history, elementary science, drawing, object lessons, vocal music, and sewing and needlework for girls. The syllabus and standards of instruction were to be prescribed by the Department of Education and for this the Inspector-General was personally responsible. Therefore, immediately he took office on 1 June, 1878, Habens set about the preparation of the first national standards. These standards were promulgated under the title Regulations defining Standards of Education and for Inspection of Schools, on 26 September, 1878, and remained, with few alterations, in operation until the early 1900s.

In the regulations, Habens outlined the work to be covered in each of the six standards and detailed the procedure for the examination of the pupils. In drafting the national standards, Habens borrowed extensively from the Canterbury standards which, as we have seen, he had been closely associated with. The requirements for reading, spelling, writing, grammar and composition, geography and English history were practically identical in both syllabuses, but in arithmetic there was a general tightening up of the work prescribed. This was probably due to the fact that in those days a pass in Standard IV was seen as enough to exempt pupils from further attendance at school.

As was the case in the English Revised Code of 1862 and the Canterbury standards, a pupil moved from one standard to the next by passing the inspector's examination. Not only was an individual pass necessary in reading, writing (which included spelling) and arithmetic, following the English pattern, but it was also necessary in grammar, composition, geography and English history. These subjects became known as the 'pass subjects'.

In introducing the standards the Department's aim was, 'to give the children of New Zealand an education not

21. See Appendix E.
inferior to that which can be obtained in the primary schools of England and Scotland.\textsuperscript{22} Although the regulations for the curriculum, which Habena later described as 'a good primary school course, excluding the subjects (such as classics and mathematics) that fall more properly within the scope of the secondary school,'\textsuperscript{23} were gazetted in September, 1878, the complete observance of them was not required until 1 July, 1879.

The standards were soon subjected to criticism from some of the inspectors, particularly those who were employed by the smaller education boards. This criticism generally stemmed from the fact that in addition to having to teach large classes which had resulted from the 'compulsory' clause of the 1877 Act, many of the teachers were inadequately prepared to deal with the demands of the standards. Their achievements therefore, as judged by their pupils' performances at the inspector's examination, did not appear to be very good and so it was the standards that were blamed as the basic cause of the problem.

A statement by Caughley, perhaps best summarizes the reason why some of the inspectorate were critical of the standards during the early years of the national system:

\textsuperscript{22} A. to J., 1880, H. - IA., p.14.
\textsuperscript{23} N.Z. Dept. of Educ., The Standards, p.18.
The task imposed on the teacher was therefore an arduous and often unpleasant one. He had annually to deliver his tale of bricks at an exacting and far too mechanical class examination. Therefore, however broad his ideas might be, he had at one time or another to violate almost every principle or law of child nature and child development. It was only to be expected that in consequence a rigid repressive discipline, the constant use of the strap, excessive "keeping in" and heavy burdens of "homework" were the order of the day.\(^{24}\)

In 1881, after the standards had been in operation for some two years and Habens had seen the overall effects of their introduction, he prepared and distributed a pamphlet which contained explanatory notes on the 1878 regulations. These notes explained clearly what Habens intended to be the purpose of the standards. He wrote:

They (the children) are not sent to school to pass in the standards, but to be educated. If they are being educated, a certain portion of their knowledge at each stage of their progress will settle down and become definite and solid—just as their bones harden—and the standard examinations are designed to ascertain the degree in which this process is taking place.\(^{25}\)

Not all of the inspectors were against Habens' standards and one early report of interest is that presented by Mr. W.H. Edge, an inspector for the larger North Canterbury Board of Education. In 1879, when he


\(^{25}\) The Standards, p.3.
wrote the report, standards prepared by Habens at the provincial and national levels had been in operation for some years and Edge acknowledged the advantages of them:

The "standard system" has now been in force in Canterbury for a number of years, and I must say that the more I see of its working the better I like it . . . Under this system every scholar above the infants has a direct interest in the result of the examination; the minimum not the maximum, requirements for each standard are properly defined for the teachers, and intelligent parents are enabled to form a fairly reliable estimate of their children's progress.26

Mr. R.J. O'Sullivan, Auckland's inspector, was another from a larger board who saw the value of the standard system. He noted that 'it would appear that it may be of much advantage if worked judiciously by teachers and inspectors.'27

Of those who continued to oppose the standards during later years, most did so because they believed that a strong inducement had been given to teachers to ignore education in its true sense and to aim for nothing but results. Typical of those who supported this view was Mr. H. Hill, inspector for the Hawkes Bay Board. He described the influence the standards had had on teaching method, teachers and pupils in the schools of his province:

The irregular plan of teaching, is deemed to be easier in preparing children for examination; and the consequence is that much of the standard work in the schools is prepared on a kind of examination-probability

27. Ibid., p.2.
REV. W. J. HABENS, B.A.
INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF SCHOOLS, 1878-1899.
basis, regardless of all true educational principles, and to the great and lasting injury of both teachers and children. 28

Where this desire for a high percentage of passes was to be found, 'cramming' became a natural feature. Habens had warned the teachers against 'cramming' and rote-learning as preparation for the inspector's examination:

Teachers should always remember that the standards represent "the minimum of attainments of which the inspector will require evidence at each stage." ... The process known as "cram" applied to one standard will render further "cram" necessary for the next and the next; and in this way the pupil will be continually harassed throughout the whole school course, without acquiring any substantial knowledge, and will probably suffer both in health and in character, and lose all interest in learning of every kind ... The standards are not meant to be used as a rack, to extort from children a broken utterance of the last facts and ideas that have begun to take hold of their memory and intelligence. 29

The difficulties that some teachers found in working to the standards were most often caused not so much by the teacher's lack of ability but by his lack of preparation of the subjects of instruction. On more than one occasion, particularly after the standards had been in operation for a few years, reference was made to the fact that the contents of the syllabus were not difficult providing the teacher was thorough in his planning. In this connection,

Mr. J. Gammell, an inspector from Southland, wrote:

Teachers often complain of the difficulty of educating their children up to the requirements of the standards. That a considerable variety of work is demanded of teachers to enable their scholars fully to meet these requirements, I do not deny; but, in my judgment, there is little or no difficulty in the subjects themselves. The knowledge required of the children is of such an elementary character that any teacher who has a thorough knowledge of the subjects needs nothing but application to insure the success of his pupils. 30

Although the standards were challenged there was no change made to them or their operation until 1885. By then, the original standards had been in use for six years, a period equal to that of the full course described in the programme, and it was felt that the time had come for a full consideration of the various recommendations that had been made for the improvement of them. In January of that year, the New Zealand Educational Institute (N.Z.E.I.), which had been formed in 1883, adopted among its resolutions three concerning the syllabus of instruction and one relating to the presentation in the standards. 31

The N.Z.E.I. desired to have history and geography reduced to 'class subjects' but Habens, aware of what was already happening in some schools throughout the country and because he had no control of the inspectorate, recognized the disadvantages inherent in such a suggestion.

30. A. to J., 1884, E. - 1B., p. 41.
31. A. to J., 1885, E. - 1C., p. 41.
In a memorandum which referred to the N.Z.E.I. resolutions he stated:

Subjects that do not count for pass are very generally neglected. The inspectors are not responsible to the department, and are at liberty to ignore any expression of its wishes that has no legal force . . . I fear the probable effect of confining the time and energies of the children to the narrowed range of "pass-subjects." I consider that the drudgery of a constant round of reading, writing and arithmetic is likely to produce disgust, and to deaden the intellect of the pupils. If they are to be kept grinding at these, it would be better, in my judgment, to shorten the school time to one half or thereabouts, and let the children spend more time in learning what nature could teach them out of doors. 32

The latter part of this statement is rather significant because it shows that Habens had no desire to keep the pupils working on a rigid and narrow timetable based on the 'pass subjects' alone. He had in fact, attempted to prevent this by including object lessons, singing, drill, needlework, drawing, recitation and elementary science in his national curriculum and had noted that:

teachers are not at liberty to regard these subjects as purely optional. None are to be omitted except as the result of actual necessity, of which the Inspector must be the judge. 33

In the other two resolutions concerning the syllabus,

32. Ibid., p.4.
the N.Z.E.I. wanted geography omitted from the second standard and history from the third standard, but Habens, in pleading for their retention, expressed the hope 'that this small quantity, which I believe has a real educational value, may not be so exceeded as to introduce a burdensome amount of detail hostile to mental growth.'

Through its other major resolution, the N.Z.E.I. hoped to give teachers the power to withhold from the standard examination, any pupil who had not 'made' three hundred attendances during the school year preceding the examination. This, it was felt, would safeguard the teachers' reputations but in his memorandum, Habens emphasized that the standards were never intended to be a test of teacher efficiency, but rather a course 'to secure symmetry and solidity at each stage for each child, and if this is borne in mind it is seen to be of more consequence to ascertain how far each child has advanced, and what he is fit for, than to obtain a precise measure of the teacher's efficiency.' This being the case he could not see the sense in excluding any children from examination.

Habens did not deny the inspectorate the right to comment on the N.Z.E.I. resolutions and after collating the replies from inspectors throughout the country, he

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34. A. to J., 1885, E. - 1C., p.4.
35. Ibid.
concluded that 'the Inspectors who express no wish to have any changes made in the syllabus, except small ones in matter of detail are in a decided majority.'36 This general support for his standards must have given Habens some satisfaction, particularly as he was establishing the first national syllabus and could not hope to please everyone.

The changes introduced in 1885 were in accordance with the general tenor of the recommendations and suggestions of the N.Z.E.I. and inspectors. The work in the new programme was arranged into three divisions - 'pass subjects,' from which history and a part of geography were excluded; 'class subjects,' including the history and geography excluded from the pass subjects; and 'additional subjects' which small schools would not be required to undertake. For reasons that are advanced when technical education is discussed in the next chapter, drawing was made a compulsory subject for a standard 'pass.' In total, these were but minor changes and hardly affected the main structure of the curriculum.

In 1887, when a Select Committee of the House of Representatives inquired into the working of the education system, Habens was given the opportunity to express his views on certain matters relating to the syllabus as it was operating at that time. With this general statement

36. Ibid., p.6.
Habens summed up his feelings:

I do not think the Syllabus, if reasonably interpreted - if interpreted, for example, in the spirit of the official notes issued by the department in June, 1887 - is too exacting. There is no subject in it that I should like to see omitted from it. The assumption that underlies it is that the Government capitation allowance is sufficient to secure the services of teachers competent to impart thorough instruction on good methods within the range of the primary school subjects. Considering that there is no means of securing accord between the authority that prescribes the Syllabus and the officers engaged in inspecting the schools, I wonder that the working of the regulations has been attended by so little dissatisfaction.37

To this same committee, Dr. John Hislop, who had been Secretary of Education from the beginning of the national system until he retired in 1886, registered his support for the standards. What is significant is the fact that in acknowledging the fairness of the syllabus and the 'undeserved discredit' it had received, Hislop noted the negligence of some teachers and inspectors in their implementation of it. He wrote:

The requirements of the Syllabus can be met fairly on the whole by a school where the organization and the method of instruction are judicious, the teacher or teachers earnest of purpose and fairly competent, and the examination by the Inspector conducted in a reasonable and wise manner. I believe that undeserved discredit has been too often brought upon the Syllabus from the examination test being out of all proportion to the demands of the Syllabus, and, perhaps, more frequently from the lack of interest and earnestness of purpose, if not of intelligence and skill, on the part of the teacher.38

In the introduction of the national standards Habens was faced with a major difficulty. He did not have control of the inspectorate whose job it was to police his regulations. The result was that throughout the country different interpretations were placed on the standards, and the inspectors who so desired could freely criticize them, because in so doing, they were attacking not the boards (their employers) but the Department.

The N.Z.E.I. appreciated the detrimental effect to education that this disharmony between some inspectors and the Education Department caused, and accordingly, amongst its resolutions, voted that periodical conferences of inspectors should be held and that the inspectorate should be placed under the Department.\textsuperscript{39} Habens' reaction to this suggestion was only to be expected. He wished to have the inspectors placed under his control but until they were he was unwilling to confer with them, probably because he feared that should they gain control of the curriculum, his control over primary education would be drastically curtailed and the Department placed even further at the mercy of the boards, which for reasons that will be given in Chapter IV, were dominant during Habens' period as Inspector-General. He noted:

Some objections to the syllabus are, at bottom, objections to interpretations put upon the syllabus by officers who are not subject to be influenced in any way by the wishes of

\textsuperscript{39} A. to J., 1885, E. - 10., p.1.
the department. As to the holding of periodical conferences of Inspectors, I have no doubt some good would arise from such conferences. But I should certainly not like a council of Inspectors who are not officers of the Government to rise into a power controlling the instruction of the country. 40

However, during the years that followed, the N.Z.E.I. and some of the inspectors continued to urge Habens to organize a conference for the purpose of reviewing the efficiency of the system of public instruction, and particularly to discuss the different interpretations of the standards then being made by the various inspectors. A conference was finally held in February, 1894, and the main purpose of it, said Habens, 'was to secure greater uniformity in regard to the valuation of the work of the schools, and to the interpretation of the various details of the standard regulations.' 41

The report of the conference was prepared by three of the inspectors present. It is interesting to record that while many of the inspectors had criticized the standards, the report acknowledged the value of the standard-pass system in the early years of national primary education. The inspectors wrote:

> We would point out that, while the members of Conference are aware that grave disadvantages attend the existing system of testing the work of our schools mainly by

40. Ibid., p. 5.
41. As to J., 1894, E. - 1C., p. 1.
means of standard passes, we highly appreciate the service the system has already done in the cause of primary education in New Zealand; and we cannot at present see our way to recommend its abolition in favour of any scheme yet proposed as an alternative. 42

The writer believes this to be a significant statement as to the worth of the standard system during the infancy of national education, and much of the credit for what had been achieved must be given to Habens. Like all new schemes disadvantages were noted but of significance was the fact that even after some fifteen years in operation, no more favourable scheme was offered as a substitute for Habens' standards.

A point of interest was the Conference's view on the centralization of the inspectorate. Following discussion it was resolved that the inspectors should remain officers of the boards. The inspectors did not in fact come under the Education Department's control until 1914, nearly twenty years later.

As was the case following the N.Z.E.I. Conference in 1885, the changes which resulted from this conference had little effect on the main structure of the standards. The examination of Standards I and II was entrusted to the teachers in order that the inspectors might have more time to devote to the work of inspection, as distinguished from examination, and in deference to the opinion of the

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inspectors, the method of reporting, which involved a statement of the percentage of passes and failures, was abandoned.

Conclusion

After playing a considerable part in the successful preparation and introduction of the Canterbury standards, Habens, as Inspector-General, was responsible for the preparation and presentation of the first national primary school syllabus and standards of instruction. With only slight internal changes that barely affected the main structure, these standards remained in operation for the first twenty-five years of national education.

It has been noted that the curriculum and the regulations governing it were criticized by educationists (mainly the inspectors) of the time. In later years, writers discussing New Zealand's history of education have continued to remark on the 'strangling effect' the standards had on education during Habens' period as Inspector-General. This may have been true in part, but this writer believes that the cause was perhaps due, not so much to the regulations themselves, but to the economic conditions of the 1880s and early 1890s, combined with the fact that the inspectorate was employed by the different boards and not by the Department.

The depressed economic conditions of the time had a
thwarting effect on education generally but on teacher training especially. Campbell in this connection wrote:

The national system had scarcely been established when New Zealand entered on the long depression of the eighties and nineties. Educational expenditure was cut in 1880 and again in 1887. One result was that enlightened plans for teacher training had to be abandoned and that the pupil-teacher system remained, until after the end of the century, the only form of training available to the great majority of intending teachers.43

With many teachers, particularly those in the smaller boards, being relatively untrained, it is understandable that Habens must have experienced some difficulty in establishing his standards in the schools. Add to this his non-control of the inspectorate and his efforts become even more creditable.

Educationists have differed as to details in Habens' standard syllabus but it must be acknowledged that it was well designed and on the whole fulfilled its purpose. As one writer has stated, 'it did produce a generation of New Zealanders most of whom could read and write and figure, however unimaginatively.'44 Further, to Habens' credit is the fact that while many educationists both in New Zealand and England were applauding 'payment by results' as the panacea for educational problems, he saved our schools from its blighting influence.

In an effort to make the New Zealand programme as broad as possible and to give the country full value for its money, Habens chose to go beyond the English curriculum which influenced his preparation of the Canterbury and New Zealand standards. It was inevitable that his scheme would not satisfy everyone and therefore in providing standards, an alternative for which had not been found at the time of his death, and which remained largely unaltered for a quarter of a century in spite of the pressures of the period, Habens' contributed much in laying the foundations for those educationists who were responsible for the production of the primary school curriculum during the early 1900s.
CHAPTER IV

HABENS - INSPECTOR-GENERAL

The purpose of this chapter, is to detail the contributions made by Habens to the various branches of education during his term as Inspector-General from 1878 to 1899. Before this is undertaken however, the 1877 Act is referred to briefly so that the subsequent events may be seen in their true perspective, and the political and economic factors which affected Habens' contributions are reviewed.

The Education Act, 1877

Attempts to introduce a national system of education culminated in the passing of the Education Act, 1877. Prior to this Act, there had been considerable dissatisfaction with the provincial systems of education, particularly those in the North Island. The lack of finance available for education was generally the cause of this dissatisfaction. For example, it was reported that in the three provinces of Otago, Canterbury and Nelson in 1869, the sum of £29,369 was spent in promoting public education, while in the other provinces which
contained one half of the population of New Zealand, only £33,436 was spent. 1 Needless to say, inequalities in the development of the provinces' education systems, arose as a consequence of their unequal wealth and resources.

It is not necessary in this thesis to outline the various proposals, draft bills and arguments which preceded the passing of the Act, but it is important to note that because of their wealth and well organized systems of education, the provinces of the South Island naturally tended to oppose the movement towards a national system. Ironically, it was the large land revenue derived from Canterbury and Otago that helped in the building of the schools of Auckland, Wellington and the smaller settlements, during the early years of the national system. In addition, the southern provinces feared that if education was not controlled locally, denominational schools might be aided and this was a situation which they desired to avoid.

Education Bills, which were introduced in 1871 and 1873, both failed because of the sharp differences of opinion that existed between secularists and denominationalists, and between centralists and provincialists. In 1876 however, following the abolition of the provincial governments, the issue of educational control was reopened. Here, at least, was a favourable opportunity for the

creation of a national system of education.

Even while the Abolition of the Provinces Act was being passed the Hon. (later Sir) G.C. Bowen was preparing the draft of a Bill which, after various changes, became the Education Act of 1877. In preparing it Bowen drew particularly on his experiences in the Canterbury provincial education system. He believed that it was most important that the control of education should remain decentralized and that it was impracticable to give religious bodies any part in the general control of education.

Following a lengthy struggle in Parliament, during which many amendments were passed, the Bill that gave New Zealand its system of free, secular and compulsory education was finally passed on 27 November, 1877. Generally, the provisions of the 1877 Act are well known to those who have studied the history of education in New Zealand. However, one amendment to the original Bill subsequently had serious repercussions for Habens, as we saw in Chapter III and will see again later in this chapter. This amendment succeeded in having the control of the inspectorate transferred from the Department to the education boards.

Long debates were caused by the religious issues. Those who opposed secular education made desperate efforts
to obtain grants for denominational schools but failed in their attempts.

In summing up the 1877 Act, Campbell wrote:

The Act gave hardly anyone precisely what he wanted. That it was passed at all is evidence that universal primary education had come to be widely regarded as a social necessity, and that men both inside and outside Parliament were prepared to make large concessions provided only that the general aims were furthered. For those who thought in this way, the Act, whatever its defects, represented a hard won victory over the provincial and religious forces which had defeated the earlier efforts and which, given another chance, could still endanger the development of a national system of schools.  

Although it was perhaps not evident at the time, the position Habens accepted— that of New Zealand’s first Inspector-General— was a difficult one. As he was to find out during his twenty-one years in office, the Act left him with very little power, and with the local boards very much in control, he was constantly hampered in his attempts to advance education in New Zealand. Add to this problem the political and financial influences, which are next to be outlined, and the difficulties under which Habens had to work become apparent.

Appointed by the Governor, Habens officially became Inspector-General on 1 April, 1878.  

2. Campbell, A.E., Compulsory Education in New Zealand, p.23.

3. New Zealand Gazette, 1878, Vol.1, p.489. The year was not 1877, the year Forsman notes on p.21 of his thesis.
Political Influences

From the middle of the 1850s until the early 1890s, New Zealand was governed almost continuously by an oligarchy comprising men from the land-owning class. Although Cabinet was reshuffled often enough, its pool of members changed so little that this Government became known as the 'Continuous Ministry.' Essentially it was 'devoted to maintaining the existing social and economic structure, and because it was unwilling seriously to tackle the problems of land hunger, and labour conditions during the slump for fear of alienating its wealthy supporters,' it deserved the label 'conservative,' in one writer's view.

Surprisingly enough, it was during the Liberals' brief term in office in the late seventies that the national system of education began. It is well known how Grey, an advocate of the provincial system, was compelled to preside over the passage of an Act which opposed his educational ideals, and how he immediately set himself to strengthen the local control of education. Grey had as his Minister of Education, John Ballance, a convinced provincialist, and he too, firmly opposed the efforts to establish a strong Education Department.

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4. The Governments of Sir George Grey (1877-9) and Sir Robert Stout (1885-7) provided the exceptions.
Understandably, it was not long before Habens and the Department were at the mercy of the education boards, most of which contained some members who had served on the old provincial boards. Indeed, in some of the districts practically no change took place in the composition of the new boards. The education boards gained further strength because they were, for most of Habens' Inspector-Generalship, very well represented in Parliament. In this connection Webb records that, 'in 1878 there was not a board in the country which did not have among its members at least one man who sat in Parliament; and boards like Auckland, Canterbury and Otago had each three or four representatives in Parliament.' With this amount of backing the boards were able to dictate until the early 1890s.

Not all of the Ministers of Education during this period were opposed to the Education Department and men like Rolleston (1879-80), Dick (1880-4), Fisher (1887-9) and Atkinson (1889) were Ministers who favoured some increase in the powers of the Department. However, as we shall see, for much of this period New Zealand was in the grip of a severe economic depression and the Government, aware of its slight majority, preferred to keep controversial matters such as the control of education

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out of Parliament. It was under these circumstances that Habens was obliged to direct the country's system of education and this proved to be a very difficult assignment.

The depression of the seventies and eighties was the undoing of the landowning class, whose prosperity and influence were somewhat reduced, leaving the way open during the 1890s for the Liberal Government to embark on a new political era. Although this Government set out to improve the social services throughout the country, little was done immediately in the field of education, principally because Ballance, the first Liberal Prime Minister, was in matters relating to education a strong supporter of provincialism. 'The Education Boards were far more efficient and economical than any central department,' he asserted in 1890.8

The real support for the Department began when Seddon became Prime Minister in 1893. He had, ten years earlier, made it well known that he favoured the abolition of the education boards.9 Along with Walker, his Minister of Education, Seddon set out to give the Department much more control in the running of the education system. Habens, however, never benefited from this, as his death resulted in Hogben becoming the Inspector-General just at the time when the Department was gaining more power.

Economic Influences

Often in the history of education, educational theories and schemes have been frustrated by other factors so that the original intentions have been distorted or curtailed. The 1877 Act, with its provisions for central financing of education, assumed a degree of prosperity which did in fact exist in the two following years, but disappeared after 1879 when the country entered a severe depression period. This depression had a serious effect on New Zealand's development, and it was unfortunate for Habens that he had to be responsible for the introduction of national education during this financial crisis, which continued for most of his period as Inspector-General.

With export prices low and the Government receiving less revenue from taxation, spending on education was severely reduced. In 1887 and 1888, when the economy seemed to have completely collapsed and the Government had to find thousands of pounds every year to pay the interest on the money borrowed since 1870, salaries of all Government employees were slashed. Habens, who had by this time been given the additional responsibility of secretary of the Education Department following Hislop's retirement in 1886, had his salary reduced by £50 per year, from £650 to £600. A further indication of the financial crisis and its effect on education is provided by the fact that in the year ending 31 March, 1889, spending on Head Office was
limited to £1,884. 9s. 1d. In this connection, Butchers noted that 'for a period of over 20 years the average annual administrative cost of the Department, including the salaries of these officers, did not exceed £2,500.'

The combination of the education boards' power and the depressed state of the economy created special difficulties for Habens. Among other things, the boards supplied inaccurate attendance figures, overestimated their building requirements and used their grants for purposes other than those for which they had been voted. The problem reached the stage where a thorough investigation was necessary to provide evidence for increasing the powers of the Education Department. Therefore, in November and December, 1887, a Select Committee of the House of Representatives inquired generally into many aspects of the education system.

The committee heard oral evidence from Habens and several others and obtained written evidence from Habens, the inspectors, the boards and the teachers' institutes. Habens was asked how, in his opinion, the system could be altered so that a reduction of expenditure of between £50,000 and £100,000 per year, could be made. He suggested the centralization of the inspectorate, the amalgamation of some of the smaller boards, that the cost of teacher

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training be handed over to the boards, some reduction in teachers' salaries and a more careful subdivision and departmental control of grants.\footnote{11}

Early in 1888, the Minister of Education, the Hon. George Fisher, made a thorough investigation into board expenditure and found among other things, that Government building grants had totalled £90,000 more than was necessary to erect buildings of a lasting and durable character (in brick or stone) and sufficient in number and capacity to accommodate the largest attendance of children yet recorded in the public school history of this country.\footnote{12}

What in fact had happened was that the boards had gone too far in establishing schools, many of them not more than two miles apart, and so this unnecessary expenditure had resulted. Here then was a very good reason for the centralization of the control of education.

The information that he gained as a member of the 1887 Select Committee and the knowledge that he accumulated from his personal investigations, led Fisher to believe that because the Department provided the finance, it should possess a more effective control over its use. To achieve this, Fisher believed it would be necessary for national education to be reorganized by the abolition of existing

\footnote{11. A. to J., 1887, I. - 3., pp.18-21.}
\footnote{12. A. to J., 1888, E. - 1C., p.9.}
boards and by the setting up of new boards more amenable to the control of the central Department.

Consequently, in August, 1889, a Public Schools Bill, to replace the 1877 Act, was given its first reading in the House of Representatives.\textsuperscript{13} That Habens would share an interest in a Bill which proposed to abolish the boards and reorganize the system under the effective control of the Department was only logical. However, it seems in fact that he drafted the Bill for Fisher. Butchers provides this evidence:

Sir E.C. Gibbes, in commenting upon this passage, states that the actual drafting of this Bill was done by Mr. Habens personally at Rotorua whither he was sent by the Minister for a month for that purpose. Although doubtless they had discussed its principles beforehand Mr. Habens took with him no detailed instructions of any kind with regard to its provisions. It may therefore be regarded as the considered result of Mr. Habens' experience as administrative head of the Department.\textsuperscript{14}

The Bill was circulated throughout the country but after opposition from the boards, the Government (many of whose members were on education boards) dropped it. It was introduced again by Fisher as a private measure in 1893,\textsuperscript{15} but again received little attention.

Fisher placed the Bill before Parliament a third time,

\textsuperscript{13} Hansard, 1889, Vol.65, p.487.
\textsuperscript{14} Butchers, A.G., Education in New Zealand, p.136.
\textsuperscript{15} Hansard, 1893, Vol.79, p.392.
in 1897. He said that it had cost Habens and him 'a great deal of trouble and labour,' but that 'there was the fact that it proposed a revolutionary change, and he was afraid that the provincial forces in the House - the members of Education Boards - were too great, too many to admit of its becoming law.'

In the ensuing debate, there was so much support for the Bill that Fisher succeeded in getting it through a second reading before it lapsed.

This mention of Fisher's three attempts to introduce changes into the system of education during Habens' term as Inspector-General, demonstrates clearly the lack of support the Education Department received from Parliament. Even in the better years towards the close of the century, when trade was flourishing, finance was not immediately available for education and so Habens was compelled to manage on a limited budget right up to the time of his death.

With the advent of a free, public education system in 1877, came the promise of central financing of education. This prospered only briefly. The depression and the strength of the boards made Habens' task extremely difficult, but he deserves some credit for the way that he

continued, unflinchingly, to discharge his responsibilities to the public as upholder of the national principle in education.

In spite of the reductions made in the money voted for education during much of his Inspector-Generalship, apart from the closing of Auckland and Wellington Training Colleges and the reduction of staff at the Christchurch Training College, the primary system suffered no grave set-backs but went on expanding year after year. Of some significance is the fact that during his administration, despite the great spread of education, Habens was able to reduce the ratio of administrative cost to teachers' salaries from 35 per cent in 1878 to 28 per cent in 1898. 17 Butchers, referring to this success commented:

Possibly if the members of Parliament had realized his true worth in this connection they would have moved to grant him a bonus rather than to reduce his stipend. At least the figures afford some justification for the nickname by which, Sir Robert Stout informs the writer, Mr. Habens was known to his contemporaries, that of "Ha'pence." 18

This consideration of the economic conditions which existed during Habens' period in office, completes the survey of the political and economic factors which affected Habens' contributions to the various branches of the

18. Ibid., p. 139.
education system.

The Inspectorate

In the Bill which Bowen introduced in 1877, provision was made for the appointment of a national inspectorate which was to be controlled by the Education Department. Although there were some who favoured this particular clause, an amendment resulted in the control of the inspectorate being handed over to the local boards. This was a decision which was later to have far-reaching effects on the introduction of the national system of education. We have already seen in Chapter III the difficulties Habens experienced in introducing the standards without the control of the inspectorate. Because the inspectors were under an obligation to the boards they served, Habens lost a power which would have added great strength to his administration of the national system.

Some of the education boards did in fact believe that the control of the inspectorate should be given back to the Department. In 1879, for example, the Wellington Education Board requested 'the Government to take into consideration the advisability of providing that the inspectors shall be appointed by and be under the direct control of the Education Department instead of the Boards.'

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Thomas Dick, Minister of Education (1880-4) was especially in favour of the centralization of the inspectorate and at the inaugural banquet of the N.Z.E.I. in Wellington, in 1884, he supported the movement towards it. We saw, in Chapter III, how the N.Z.E.I. meeting of the next year passed resolutions concerning the need for periodical conferences of inspectors, and the need for the centralization of the inspectorate. It was also noted that only one conference was held during Habens' Inspector-Generalship and that the centralization of the inspectorate did not in fact eventuate until 1914.

Although the inspectors were officers of the local boards not all of them favoured the arrangement. In their replies to a questionnaire from the 1887 Select Committee, many noted the need for a centralized inspectorate. George Hogben, for example, thought that it was logical that the inspectors should be officers of the Department.20

The fact that the various requests for the centralization of the inspectorate went unheeded provides further evidence of the boards' power within Parliament. Those Parliamentarians who were also members of the various education boards, recognized that if the Department controlled the inspectors, the independence of the boards would be greatly reduced. Consequently, no Government

20. A. to J., 1887, I. - S., p.27.
had the courage to propose such a change although Ministers of Education such as Dick, Fisher, Atkinson and Reeves all personally believed the reform was necessary.

Not having the control of the inspectorate was perhaps the greatest obstacle to Habens' administration of the education system. Although it was felt mostly in the introduction of the standards it did extend to the total administration. Without the inspectors as its agents in the various boards, the Department had little or no accurate knowledge of the activities of the boards and certainly no way of checking them. It is interesting to note that it was in fact the centralization of the inspectorate in 1914, that was the most important reason for the rapid decline of the powers of the boards. Had Habens and Hogben worked in similar conditions to those which existed after 1914, there is little doubt that their administration would have been much more easily carried out. It was therefore of some credit to Habens that New Zealand's education system received the good start that it did.

The Teaching Profession

Under the 1977 Act the Department of Education was entrusted with the task of examining and classifying teachers, employing and training the pupil teachers, and managing normal schools and training colleges.

One of Habens' first tasks therefore, was to produce a scheme for the classification of the teachers who had
held certificates under the provincial boards. Two months
before he settled in Wellington, Habens wrote to all
teachers requesting information from them as to their
classifications, so that a national scale could be
quickly framed which would place those who had certificates
fairly in order. 21 Habens soon became aware of the
difficulties of this assignment. He wrote:

The general classification of teachers
preparatory to the issue of certificates has
involved much anxiety and labour. The systems
of the Education Boards was very various. Two
Boards had issued no certificates; six had
adopted a division into three classes, with
three grades in each; in two districts the
classes were three, with two grades in the
first, and two in the second; in another
district there were two classes of three
grades each; and in one there were nominally
two classes, but a certificate was issued on
every occasion of appointment, so that a teacher
might hold a first class certificate for one
school, who if transferred to a more important
school, would receive only a second-class
certificate. In some districts the class
depended on examination, or other evidence of
attainments in learning, and the grade upon
practical skill in teaching and school
management; in others, both kinds of
qualification were considered in determining
the class, or the grade, or both. 22

From this array of schemes for classifying teachers,
Habens was required to produce a national plan. By
combining what he considered to be the best from all the
provincial schemes, he produced a system which allowed

21. See Appendix F.
for two gradings into five classes each. One grading depended on academic or educational attainments (denoted A, B, C, D or E) while the other was based on teaching experience and efficiency as estimated by the inspectors (denoted 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5). The result was a system of nine ranks as follows:23

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Although Habens did not mention salaries in his scheme, he did have definite views regarding the payment of teachers. He highly approved 'of the plan of making a teacher's salary depend partly on the class and grade of his certificate.'24

The first examination of teachers was conducted in March, 1879, and Habens hoped, that in the years that followed, his scheme would ensure a steady stream of competent teachers to man the nation's schools.

Unfortunately, the Department's powers relating to the teaching profession were gradually surrendered to the education boards. Even the Department's certificates failed to become effectively recognized. Habens, in noting this wrote:

It would be interesting to know what advantages those teachers who have certificates enjoy over such as have failed to obtain them; but I cannot arrive at an accurate statement as to the relation between certificates and salaries. I observe, however, that candidates sometimes retain their appointments after five, six, seven or eight failures; and that a teacher, with a D2 certificate and £40 a year, is assistant to a head teacher with £140 a year, who has failed three times, and has not yet passed for Class E. 25

Having no representatives at the board level, the Department could do very little to prevent anomalies such as these.

The sole power the Department retained in respect of the teaching profession was that which concerned the employment of pupil teachers. The earliest age at which a pupil teacher could be employed was thirteen years, and each board was required to have its regulations concerning pupil teachers approved by the Department (or Habens in all probability). Although the pupil teacher system, introduced in Otago and Canterbury in the provincial period, spread throughout the country, the Department's

control was of very little significance.

Bowen's Bill proposed the establishment of proper training schools throughout the colony. Habens was an advocate of such a move and it was noted in Chapter II, how he was one of those who were instrumental in the opening of the training college in Christchurch. At the national level he continued to emphasize the necessity for training facilities to be widely available, so that all schools could be staffed by competently trained personnel. With colleges already in operation in Canterbury and Otago, the aim was to establish similar institutions in Auckland and Wellington. However, because of the economic difficulties which prevailed, the grants to the colleges had to be stopped in 1888. Auckland and Wellington closed down, Canterbury continued with one lecturer, but because of 'other revenues,' Otago was able to remain in full operation.

Another factor which restricted the early development of the training colleges was the cost the students had to bear themselves. Only those who lived in close proximity to a college could afford to attend. Habens summed up the position in his report to the Select Committee in 1887. He said:

It is very difficult to devise an economical method of training teachers, or of carrying on any work while the population is so scattered. It can scarcely be said that we
have a system. There are practically as many systems as there are normal schools, for the four Boards that have such schools have an almost absolute control over them. With many imperfections they have done good service, and are still doing it. But they cannot be cheaply conducted in a country that has no metropolitan concentration of population. 26

The inequality of teachers' salaries between the boards was a matter often brought to Habens' attention, and although a colonial scale of salaries was suggested nothing was achieved. It was in fact noted that as long as the whole management of the education system rested with the boards, nothing could be done in the direction of enforcing such a scheme. 27

For much of Habens' period as Inspector-General therefore, the teachers were at the mercy of the boards and such problems as the insecurity of tenure, the uncertainty of promotion and the disadvantages of teaching in the smaller districts, made teaching a far from appealing occupation. Towards the end of the period however, the boards' strength was reduced somewhat when a Court of Appeal was established and it provided for the protection of teachers against the termination of their appointments. An Act, passed in 1895, and amended to become more powerful in 1897, recognized the fact that the

26. A. to J., 1887, I. - 8., p. 22.
organised teaching profession was a powerful force which sought the security of centralized control.

Although the period was a trying one for the teachers, Habens worked hard for their cause. Lacking the finance necessary for the implementation of a sound teacher training system, and lacking the powers to counter the strength of the boards, he had an unenviable task in trying to establish a strong, centrally controlled teaching profession. However, because of the foundations he provided, and through the efforts of the New Zealand Educational Institute, this did eventuate in the early 1900s.

**Secondary Education**

Up to this point the discussion has centred on the primary school system. It is now necessary for us to look at the other branches of education which Habens came into contact with during his period as Inspector-General. Logically, we should look first at secondary education.

The provisions for secondary schooling prior to 1877 were scanty. Apart from those in Otago, most schools were copies of the English minor public and grammar schools, were relatively exclusive and fee charging, and gave an education in the academic tradition of early, nineteenth century England. In Otago, the Scottish tradition of having secondary schools 'end-on' to elementary schools was
followed, and by the end of the provincial period there were two high schools and five district high schools in operation. Excluding the district high schools, there were nine secondary schools in the country before 1877.

In the 1877 Act, the only provisions made concerning secondary education were that education boards could establish scholarships tenable in secondary schools, and could establish district high schools (elementary schools with a secondary department) within their boundaries. Eminent politicians including Stout, Grey and Fox, were in favour of the Act covering both primary and secondary education, but the difficulty in getting it through Parliament as it was, was the main reason for limiting the provisions for secondary education to those mentioned above. The result was that secondary education remained a system in itself and Habens' sole right, as we shall see, was that of inspection.

During Habens' period as Inspector-General, the secondary schools, of which there were twenty-five in 1896, were a privileged group. Although endowed from public funds, the schools charged fees so that secondary education was restricted to the children of the well-to-do, except for those who were fortunate enough to win a scholarship. Habens welcomed these scholarships, which originally had been intended to make secondary schooling available to children of poorer parents, and noted that in some cases
they did good, but he reported that 'very often they are a money prize for a boy whose parents are in no need of the money, and then for all public purposes the money is wasted.' In other cases, the recipient of a scholarship was a pupil attending a preparatory department of a secondary school. Of these departments Habens disapproved because, in his opinion, they lent themselves 'to the perpetuation of class distinction.'

In addition to being criticized for providing education for only the wealthy few, the secondary schools during this period were criticized because of the curriculum they offered. Often, the classics and the books of Euclid were the only areas studied, a fact that Habens' reports made clear. Evidence suggests that such a syllabus, out of harmony with the requirements of a developing country as New Zealand then was, was the result of some secondary schools providing a 'university type' education. In this respect Habens was critical of Wellington College. He thought that the school should concentrate on secondary education exclusively, so that greater efficiency and a large influx of new pupils would result.

Because of their financial independence and the

28. A. to J., 1887, I. - 8., p.22.
29. Ibid.
30. A. to J., 1876, H. - 1D., p.2.
Government's unsympathetic approach to the centralization of education, the secondary schools were formidable opponents for the Department. An example of their opposition took place in 1887. Sir Robert Stout, who had described the want of continuity between the primary schools and secondary schools, and the secondary schools and the university college, as 'a blot on our secondary school system', joined Habens in writing to the headmasters of the high schools, proposing the institution of a scheme of general examinations to replace individual school examinations. It was noted that the Education Department was prepared to act as the medium of correspondence and cooperation among the headmasters of the schools, if they were willing to act together as joint examiners of the fourth, fifth and sixth forms of the strongest schools, and of such forms in smaller schools as were doing the same work as any of these three forms. In making these proposals, Habens emphasized that they were part of his design to prepare the way for the eventual institution of a good leaving examination, which would 'render unnecessary several of the examinations with which our young students are now harassed.'

32. *A. to J.*, 1887, E. - 1., p. xxi.
Although nineteen headmasters replied to Habens' letter only six of them favoured the scheme. Two signified a qualified approval but the remaining eleven opposed it. Habens therefore, had no alternative but to conclude that 'while such great diversity of opinion exists as is shown by these replies to my circular it would not be wise to attempt to establish a general examination.' 34

Those schools which opposed this scheme did so because they wished to retain their freedom. Rather than risk any form of departmental control, they preferred to accept the entrance examination of the New Zealand University as their external standard. The subject was reviewed at a conference of headmasters held in Nelson, in February, 1888, but there was no change in policy.

Reference must briefly be made to the district high schools which Butchers aptly referred to as a 'kind of Cinderella.' These schools, which were connected with ordinary public schools, did not develop as rapidly as might have been expected, and by 1896, there were only fourteen in all, and of these twelve were in the South Island. However, for the most part they provided free education, and for the whole of Habens' period as Inspector-General, supplied secondary schooling for

34. Ibid.
thousands of pupils who would have otherwise been denied it.

It was noted earlier that Habens' sole right relating to secondary education was his right to inspect the schools. However, as he had no authority to enforce any recommendations that he might make, this privilege was merely a token gesture to his office.

From Habens' reports, which were noted for their fair and constructive criticism, we can obtain some idea of what he considered to be important attributes for teachers and pupils in the secondary schools. In this connection, his early report on Christchurch Girls' High School provides a good example. Of the teachers he expected cordiality amongst staff, punctuality, careful and judicious time-tabling, careful planning of lessons and care in marking. From pupils, Habens desired good manners, cheerfulness and obedience. He also considered that one way pupils could be kept active in their own education, was for them to work to a system of marks based on diligence, accuracy and progress in school work.

Not all his reports were as full as this one but Habens did attempt to visit as many schools as his time would allow. It is interesting to note that he did not

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believe in reporting the minor defects and weaknesses that came to his notice during the course of any inspection. He felt that only harm could come from entering such things in a public report. Instead, he regarded such defects and weaknesses 'as matters for subsequent conference with the headmaster.'

From time to time Habens presented general reports on the secondary schools. Two such reports indicated the state of the available secondary education in 1885 and 1894. In the latter he wrote:

I have observed great progress during the last sixteen years in methods of instruction in high schools, especially in the substitution of class teaching for wasteful superintendence of individual work, in the employment of concrete illustrations of abstract principles, and in the rearrangement of the parts of a subject to facilitate the apprehension of the several parts and of their inter-relations.

In spite of this apparent improvement in the available secondary education, enough has been said to demonstrate the inadequacies of the 1877 Act's provisions in this field. Given no power at all Habens had little hope of developing secondary education. Therefore, apart from his contributions as an inspector, it is understandable why his efforts in this branch of the education system did not amount to much. However, the foundations were provided for rapid progress in the early 1900s when Hogben, because

of the increased finance available to education, was able to attract the schools into a secondary system which gradually became an integral part of the whole education system. The problem of articulation has nevertheless remained to a certain extent, right up to the present time.

Technical Education

In discussing Habens' contributions to technical education, it is necessary to understand that he viewed it as a very wide field. He defined technical education as:

(a) The special studies for the professions of theology, law and medicine.
(b) The courses of study adapted to qualify proprietors and managers of large manufacturing and industrial concerns.
(c) The training of foremen and artisans in the principles involved in their several trades.
(d) The instruction of children in the use of tools, and in the elements of scientific knowledge and in drawing.38

Although the 1877 Act failed to provide for technical education, Habens did make provision for it in his primary school curriculum. However, it is to other developments that we must turn first.

Professor Bickerton, who had been a teacher with the

38. Contained in a memorandum to the Hon. G. Fisher, on 2 November, 1887.
Science and Art Department in England, proposed the institution throughout the country of evening classes in freehand drawing, practical geometry, linear perspective, principles of design, drawing (for carpenters, builders and machinists), theoretical and practical mechanics, physics, chemistry, biology and geology. Habens, after visiting Christchurch and discussing the relevant proposals with Bickerton, was so impressed with Bickerton's scheme, that he reported the details to the Minister and suggested that the Department should undertake the duties of a Science and Art Department based on the English model. Habens noted that the proposed classes could function in connection with the existing Government schools. He was in 'no doubt that a scheme on these lines would confer great benefit on the community.'

Although Habens submitted his scheme in 1881 and 1883, nothing eventuated, mainly because of the lack of interest in technical education compared with the other branches of education, and because of the lack of finance which might have been required to support the scheme.

In a further attempt to attract support for technical education, Habens, in 1885, placed before the Government a report from the English Royal Commission on technical education. He emphasized that what was needed was 'a scheme

on the model of the Science and Art Department classes, which would require a Parliamentary vote, small at first, and not likely to become large at any time. 40

Sir Robert Stout, at that time Minister of Education, was interested in Habens' recommendations and he responded in two ways. Firstly, he allowed Habens to amend the primary school curriculum to make drawing a compulsory subject in all standards, and secondly, because manual work was not possible in the primary schools, Stout made advances to the secondary schools and universities to take up this work. Hislop wrote to the secondary schools but apart from Timaru High School, whose headmaster was then Hogben, none turned from their academic bias.

In February, 1887, Habens wrote to the three universities then in existence, suggesting a scheme designed to promote the study of technical science. 41 Although Auckland and Otago replied affirming their willingness to cooperate, this was all the progress that was made, simply because at that time the economy was at its lowest ebb and finance was just not available. The correspondence initiated in February, 1887, in the hope of engaging the interest of the colleges in a scheme for promoting the study of technical art and science has been

40. Ibid., p. 3.
41. A. to J., 1887, E. - l., p. xxi.
temporarily suspended, on account of indications of probable expense to the Department,42 the Minister was forced to conclude in his report for 1883.

Habens did provide for technical education in his curriculum but the provisions were never fully realized, principally because he had no control over the inspectorate whose job it was to police his regulations. Answering a question regarding technical education, put to him by the 1887 Select Committee, Habens outlined his views as follows:

I think that for the present and for some time to come elementary science taught experimentally, and in the spirit of the standard regulations, and such drawing as the regulations prescribe, constitute the proper amount of technical training for the primary school. I have been grievously disappointed at the reluctance of the mass of the teachers to take up the so-called "elementary science" in earnest, and I am persuaded that if the Boards and the Inspectors would insist upon an improvement in this respect the result would be more beneficial.43

In Stout, Habens had a Minister of Education who agreed with his desire for the furtherance of technical education and who was prepared to do something about it. However, Stout was Minister only until 1887. Habens therefore, forced to continue his battle alone, could progress only slowly and seven years later, in an address

42. A. to J., 1883, E. - I., p.xxii.
43. A. to J., 1887, I. - S., pp.21-2.
to the conference of school inspectors in 1894, made this further plea for technical education:

I am of opinion that the most important service the primary school can render is to give instruction - as far as possible in the form of object lessons - in that primary knowledge of the laws of nature which in our schools goes under the name of "elementary science," and to ground all pupils in elementary drawing, and especially in elementary geometrical drawing. I believe that the educative influence of practical geometry is of a very high order, and that its practical uses will have an ever-increasing value.44

The major reason for the slow progress in the development of technical education during Habens' Inspector-Generalship, must inevitably be blamed on the lack of finance. Financial assistance for technical education was practically nil although from 1889 onwards, small grants (never over £1,000 in any one year) were made. Slight improvements occurred after 1895 when the Manual and Technical Elementary Instruction Act was passed.45

This Act authorized the expenditure of up to £2,000 per annum in this field. One clause of the Act was a minor triumph for the Department and was indicative of the trend towards the centralization of the control of education, which occurred gradually during the next two decades. This clause allowed the Department to withhold payments in any cases where its regulations were not

44. A. to J., 1894, E. - L.C., p.3.
observed. The act itself however, accomplished little, because the boards could see that the financial gain was hardly enough to warrant their asking the teachers to extend their teaching to include 'manual instruction.'

While Habens can not be given any great credit for his part in technical education in New Zealand, it is fair to conclude that he fought hard for its introduction during his term as Inspector-General. Certainly, he prepared the way for Hogben to introduce his scheme. However, because of the negative attitude of the secondary schools and the universities to proposals regarding technical education, even Hogben's efforts were only partially successful.

University Education

As was noted in Chapter II, New Zealand's pioneer in university education was the University of Otago, which was established as a teaching university in 1869. However, the foundation of the New Zealand University in 1870 and the failure of the two bodies to agree on the arrangements for a national university, ended in a compromise that gave the people a university that did neither teaching nor research, and affiliated colleges that taught but had little voice in courses and examinations. This situation led to higher and secondary education being investigated by a Royal Commission in 1879.

It was as secretary to this Commission that Habens
made his greatest contribution to university education during his term as Inspector-General. The Commission, appointed on 23 December, 1878, was strong in personnel containing men from the House of Representatives, the University Senate, Otago University and Canterbury College, and other positions of educational importance. "The Commissioners between them knew Oxford, Cambridge and London, the Scottish, Irish and German universities; in O'Rorke they had an admirable chairman and in Habens an extremely able secretary."\(^{46}\)

Instruction was given to the Commission to report by the end of June, 1879, but this task proved impossible. However, it did submit an interim report containing most of its recommendations, four hundred pages of evidence and another one hundred of appendices, on 9 July.\(^{47}\) The Commission completed its investigations on 24 April, 1880, and in its final report re-emphasized the main recommendations and included a carefully drafted Bill for making the necessary legislative alterations.

In the Commission's inquiries Habens was an active participant, and his questions reflected the knowledge he had obtained, as a member of the Canterbury College Board of Governors, during the provincial period. As the

\(^{46}\) Beaglehole, J.C., *The University of New Zealand*, pp. 124-5.

\(^{47}\) A., to J., 1879, H. - l.
Commission's secretary, Habens must have had a mammoth task if the lengths of the interim and final reports are any indication of the work involved. It is a reflection of his devotion to duty that, in addition to carrying out his normal responsibilities as Inspector-General in the recently formed Department, Habens was still able to honour, so very thoroughly, his obligations to this Commission.

Among its recommendations the Commission proposed that university colleges be founded at Wellington and Auckland, that the affiliated institutions other than the four university colleges should cease to be recognized as such, and that a federal teaching university in which the staff was to have an important voice in deciding courses and examinations be established. Another recommendation suggested that degree examinations should in the future be conducted in New Zealand but the Senate rejected this, preferring to adhere to its policy of appointing its examiners in Britain. Generally, the practical effects of the Commission's recommendations were small because of the Government's reluctance to spend money. Butchers, in this connection concluded:

The financial obligations of the Commission's far sighted proposals blinded the short-sighted Government to their importance, and the report, like so many other equally admirable and expensive enquiries, was printed with all its evidence
to be for ever a dusty monument to the folly of our favourite political pastime of obtaining and ignoring the opinions of experts."48

So it was that the Commission's recommendations were received but not adopted by Government. This was unfortunate because they may well have enabled the establishment of a strong university system in our country during the early years of national education. Instead, the years from 1877 to 1900 produced little of significance in the field of higher education. Habens' contributions to the Commission did not go unrewarded however. He was appointed to the University Senate in 1880 and "assiduously took part in its deliberations."49

Maori Education

Habens had a most sympathetic understanding for Maori education, and we shall see how his foresight and wisdom were invaluable in the establishment of a strong Maori School system during his period in office. Firstly however, we must briefly take note of the events which took place prior to 1879, the year the Department was given control of the system.

In 1867, the Native Schools Act, which gave the

49. A. to J., 1899, E. - L., p.xxii.
Government the responsibility for the administration of a system of Maori village schools, was passed. However, because of the Maori Wars it was not until 1871, when an amending Act granted the control of these schools to the Department of Native Affairs, that the system of Native Schools got under way. Then, in 1879, the administration of these schools was formally transferred from the Native Department to the Education Department.

This new responsibility was one which Habens met with enthusiasm. With Hislop, the secretary to the Education Department, he visited as many as possible of the Native districts in which schools had already been established and concluded that if an efficient and successful administration of Maori education was to be obtained, then a highly competent organizing inspector would be required. To this position was appointed James H. Pope, at that time an inspector for the Taranski Education Board, and he became one officer, at least, who was obliged to obey Habens' orders.

Because of his personal knowledge of the Maori race, Habens immediately addressed to Pope a memorandum (extracts from which follow) which outlined some of the duties that were expected of him, and which suggested some of the decisions that would have to be reached after careful deliberation. Habens wrote:
There are at present about sixty Native schools maintained by the Government, most of them in the North Island. Many of the teachers have no knowledge of the technicalities of teaching and school-management beyond that which they have acquired in the course of their experience in the positions which they now occupy. It will be necessary for you to advise and guide them in the performance of their duty, and, as far as possible, to train them in the use of right methods as well as to inspect their schools and examine their pupils... Among the most important questions which will have to be settled I may mention the following: The use and abuse of the Maori language in imparting instruction to Native children; the best kind of English reading book for children who have very little knowledge of European customs and ideas; and the policy of encouraging Maori children to attend the ordinary "public schools"... In the work you are about to undertake you will have a splendid opportunity of doing good to the Maori race - an opportunity which I feel assured you will value very highly, and use with enthusiasm as well as with tact and ability.50

It is interesting to record that Habens believed that the language used, and the dress worn by the teachers, were important aspects in the early development of Maori education. In his report on certain Native Schools made following his visits late in 1878, Habens noted that while 'a master of a Native School should be able to speak Maori, that language ought to be very little if at all, used in the school, except in dealing with the children who have been only a short time in attendance,' and he questioned whether 'a shirt and a blanket or shawl' as clothing, was wise.51

In 1880, Habens and Pope drew up the Native Schools' Code. This was a code of rules and regulations for the guidance of Native School teachers and of others concerned in the education of the Maori race. In framing the regulations, the Department's aim was 'the establishment and maintenance of village-schools in the midst of the Maori families, under teachers who will not confine themselves to the mere instruction of the children, but who, by their kindness, and their good example and counsel, will exercise a beneficial influence on all around them.' Incorporated in the Native Schools' Code were standards of education, but Habens ensured that these were simpler than the corresponding ones in the national school system.

Thus, the teachers became missionaries whose duties extended beyond the classroom, and under the Department's influence steady progress was made in the development of Maori education. Indeed, in 1892, so much had the system advanced, that the syllabus of these schools was brought more into parity with the syllabus of the public schools. It was not until 1928, 'that the same syllabus applied to Maori as to the other state schools.'

In 1892, Habens sent a circular to the teachers designed to stimulate and guide them in their teaching of English. Having analysed that the contrast between Maori

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52. A. to J., 1880, H. - 1F.
and English was a main source of difficulty for teachers, Habens offered sound advice which must have been readily welcomed by the teachers of the time and for some years following.

Maori education then, developed steadily under Habens' leadership and when he died, Pope acknowledged the great service that Habens had given to the Maori race:

Mr. Habens was a very active and faithful friend of the Maori people; he never considered time wasted that was spent in connection with Native school affairs. Although Mr. Habens never had an opportunity of learning to speak Maori fluently, he had a very surprising grasp of the genius of the language, and was often able to explain difficult points that had caused experienced Maori linguists much trouble and perplexity. He was for several years president of the Polynesian Society. With quite characteristic thoroughness Mr. Habens always made it a point to reach the very bottom of all business that concerned the Maoris, and he appeared to take an independent and peculiar interest in it. Hence it came about that all Maoris who visited the office and had interviews with the tino Kai-tirotiro went away deeply impressed with his power of understanding their concerns, and feeling grateful for his kindness and sympathy. To say that the acumen, the foresight, and the wisdom of Mr. Habens were almost invaluable to Native Schools and to all the officers connected with them is to put the case quite soberly. The memory of our departed chief will be, and ought to be, green for all of us for many a day, and especially my colleague Mr. R.B. Kirk, M.A., and myself, seeing that we saw most of him and knew him best.\(^56\)

A tribute such as this, from one who worked so closely with Habens, is a testimony in itself and provides evidence

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56. [J.], 1899, E. - 2., p.15.
of Habens' valued contributions in the establishment of Maori education in New Zealand.

It is important to record that the successful establishment of Maori education was a triumph for the Department. There were those, during Habens' period as Inspector-General, who for various reasons were critical of the amount of money spent on Maori education, but they could not deny the progress achieved. As an indication of successful control by the Department, the development of Maori education must have impressed many - even ardent provincialists.

Special Education

To complete this survey of the branches of the education system that were in operation at the time of Habens' death, brief reference must be made to two provisions for special education, namely, Industrial Schools and the Deaf and Dumb Institution.

The nine Industrial Schools that were in existence prior to 1879, were placed under the control of the Education Department in 1880. Immediately, Habens visited Australia to investigate the 'boarding out' system, so that it could be compared with all other methods of dealing with the class of children for whom industrial schools and orphanages made provision.57 He also submitted to the

57. A. to J., 1881, E. - 6., p.1.
Minister an extract of a circular which outlined how Massachusetts State dealt with its juvenile offenders. The Industrial Schools Act, 1882, was based to a large extent on the information that Habens provided from these two sources. The details of the events that followed are of little significance to this thesis, but what is important is the fact that the effective control of these schools represented another success for the Education Department. Butchers, in this connection wrote:

It is impossible not to emphasize the fact that, notwithstanding that the industrial schools were situated in both Islands at various distances from headquarters, the system was developed and administered directly by the Central Department, with the assistance of local visitors, and without the intervention of the Education Boards, in a manner that reflected the utmost credit upon those concerned.

Another tribute to the work of Habens and the Department, was the successful establishment, in 1880, and subsequent control of the Deaf and Dumb Institution at Sumner.

Habens' reports on these special schools were included, from time to time, in the Minister's report to Parliament, and they showed that during his visits to the State supported homes, schools and orphanages, he paid special attention to the children's welfare.

58. A. to J., 1881, E. - 6A., pp.6-7.
60. Butchers, A.G., Education in New Zealand, p.78.
61. A. to J., 1881, E. - 6A.
Like Maori education, these special schools were often the target for criticism from those who opposed any efforts to centralize the control of education. Such people were not prepared to accept that successful direct administration by the central Department, as was demonstrated in these cases, was possible.

**Habens' Death**

An obituary, printed on 4 February, 1899, gives the following details of Habens' death:

The deceased was seized with an apoplectic stroke some months ago, but partially recovered, and was enabled to take a holiday at Rotorua, and even to resume to some extent his duties as Under-Secretary for Education. As recently as Saturday afternoon last he was playing on the green of the Thorndon Bowling Club, of which he was a member. Shortly after returning, however, he sustained another apoplectic seizure, the third, and it was then felt that his recovery was practically hopeless. And so it proved. The Rev. gentleman lingered on in a semi-unconscious state, and although rather better on Thursday, he displayed serious symptoms yesterday morning, and passed quietly away at 6 o'clock in the evening ... The deceased was a man of solid parts, somewhat quiet and reserved, but courteous and kindly by nature, and one who earned the respect and esteem of all with whom he came in contact. His death removes from the Civil Service one who has worked hard and successfully in the cause of education, and whose influence will be long felt in the department. Deceased, who was 50 years of age, leaves a widow but no family. 62

Although an evaluation of Habens' contributions to

education at the national level is the purpose of part of the following chapter, it would not be right to close the present chapter without some small testimony of his work as Inspector-General. In this connection, the Minister of Education noted that Habens' duties brought him into contact with every branch of the educational system of the colony; and his thoroughness in method and detail, his perspicacity, and his untiring energy and faithfulness of service have rendered lasting benefits to the State.63

63. A. to J., 1899, E. - l., p.xxi.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

Having recorded Habens' contributions to education in Canterbury during the latter half of the provincial period, and as Inspector-General in the first national Education Department, it is now possible to evaluate these contributions. This is done by briefly summarizing Habens' activities in the education system during his life in New Zealand, and then by assessing his efforts in the light of the influences that affected his decisions and contributions in Canterbury between 1864 and 1878, and as Inspector-General from 1878 until 1899.

Habens' Contributions Summarized

On 10 January, 1864, Habens arrived in Christchurch to become its first official Congregational Minister. His early activities were confined to the establishment of this religion within the city, and apart from giving an occasional address to an outside organization, he devoted himself entirely to this task for the next year.

Early in 1865, Habens offered his services as a private tutor prepared to give a 'plain English Education' to a
small number of pupils, and then, three years later, he became Classics Master at the Christchurch Academy of which he was subsequently appointed Superintendent. In 1866, Habens was appointed to examine candidates for Provincial Government Scholarships and in 1872, he became an Inspector of High Schools. He was chosen to examine and classify the teachers and candidates for teaching certificates in 1874. Meanwhile, in 1871, Habens delivered a lecture on 'Education' and in 1872, was admitted to the degree of B.A. (New Zealand).  

In the Ordinance which established Canterbury College in 1873, Habens was named a member of the first Board of Governors, and in the same year he was elected to the first school committee of the Christchurch East Educational District. He became chairman of the latter in 1875.

In 1876, Habens accepted an invitation to become the secretary of the Canterbury Board of Education, a position he held from 1 January, 1877, until 31 May, 1878. During his term as secretary, Habens continued to serve on the Board of Governors of Canterbury College, but because of a possible conflict of interests he gave up his seat on the East Christchurch School Committee.

In 1877, the Education Act was passed and it provided

1. The Press, 26 April, 1872.
for the appointment of an Inspector-General of Schools. Habens was appointed to this post in 1873, and remained in office until his death in 1899. On Dr. Hislop's retirement in 1886, the offices of Secretary and Inspector-General were combined as an economy measure and were held by Habens.

In 1879 and 1880, Habens was the secretary of the Royal Commission on University and Secondary Education appointed by Parliament, and in 1880, he was appointed to the Senate of the University, a position he held until his death. In the early 1890s, Habens played an important part in the founding of the Public Service Association and was subsequently appointed its president.

In addition to the contributions outlined thus far, we have seen how Habens, as Inspector-General of Schools, had contacts with every branch of the education system of New Zealand during his period as Head of the Education Department.

On 3 February, 1899, Habens, who was 59 years old, died leaving a widow but no family.

Habens' Contributions Evaluated

The various acknowledgements presented in Chapter II suggest that Habens' contributions to education in Canterbury, between 1864 and 1878, were considerable. It
is clear that he became involved in the Canterbury system gradually, and that this involvement can be divided into two periods with his lecture on education being the dividing point.

During the first half of his fourteen years in Canterbury, Habens concentrated on the establishment of the Congregational Church, although he did give lectures on various topics to outside organizations. His interest in education was restricted to some teaching and later to the examination of pupils who sought Government Scholarships. Of special note is the fact that Habens was appointed to the latter position after only two and a half years in Canterbury. It would seem that even at this early stage, his knowledge and ability were recognized to be such, that he was considered suitably qualified for the position.

Habens' interest in Canterbury's education system was advanced significantly in 1871, when he delivered a lecture which dealt with various aspects relating to the control of education. Influenced no doubt by the failure of Voluntaryism in English education, by the fact that he was the leader of a numerically small sect which would benefit most from a secular system, and by the problems that the dual system of education had created since its introduction in Canterbury in 1864, Habens advocated a secular system of education as the fairest system for all. What is perhaps most important to note is that much of what Habens advocated in his lecture
subsequently became standard practice in the Canterbury provincial system. It is not suggested that it was Habens who was responsible for the reform of Canterbury's education system during the early 1870s, but it would seem that his views, made public at that time, and the resulting discussions, must have been influential in providing some rationalism to the controversies that were then raging between secularists and denominationalists.

The year 1873, was for Habens significant for two reasons. Firstly, it was the year in which he commenced his term as a member of the original Board of Governors of Canterbury College. His representations with Bowen, to the University of Otago and the University Council at Wellington, concerning the affiliation of Canterbury College to the New Zealand University, was a major contribution in Canterbury College's first year. Add to this the fact that Habens was responsible for the introduction of a good deal of the early policy of the Board of Governors during his five years' membership, and the evidence is sufficient to support the claim that in the field of higher education he served Canterbury well.

Secondly, 1873 was the year in which Habens was elected to the first school committee for the Christchurch East Educational District. By this time his reputation in the field of education was well known, and men of his calibre were needed to administer the schools of the district
which provided education for approximately one-eighth of the total number of pupils then attending district schools in Canterbury. With typical enthusiasm Habens set about the task of establishing the secular system of education within the district. As secretary he did much to obtain sites, buildings, teachers and equipment for the schools that the committee controlled. It was fitting that by the time the large East Christchurch School was opened in 1875, he had become the chairman of the committee. It may be assumed that the manner in which Habens led his committee at the district level was one reason why he was invited to become the secretary of the Canterbury Board of Education in 1876.

It was in this administrative post that Habens did much for education in Canterbury. His duties were immense. He was responsible for the handling of all correspondence to and from the Board; for the introduction of recording systems for school attendance, teacher classification, school buildings, grounds and equipment; for the distribution of finance and the associated bookwork; for the promulgation of the standards of education; and for the many other duties that his position demanded of him from time to time. In addition, his activities as an examiner of pupils and teachers were continued. However, in just seventeen months, Habens was able to organize an efficient system for the administration
of the public schools, so that when Canterbury handed over its system of education to the national system following the 1877 Act, it could not be bettered by any other province. It will be recalled that what Habens did, according to Mr. Inglis, was to bring 'the Board business out of the state of chaos in which it was previous to his appointment.'

It was an organizing ability such as this, that was required to administer the 1877 Act and so Habens and the position of Inspector-General of Schools, seemed exceptionally well fitted for each other. In this connection a newspaper editorial stated:

Everyone must perceive of what consequence it is that the post of Inspector-General should be filled by a man who at once understands thoroughly what is required to be done and is fully competent to do it. Mr. Habens admirably fulfils this qualification in both respects. 2

Later, the same editorial paid tribute to Habens' services, and it seems logical that in evaluating his contributions to education in Canterbury, the thoughts of someone who must have known Habens well are important:

The greater part of Mr. Habens' labours as Secretary to the Board of Education in Canterbury is of course known directly only to those with whom he has been more immediately in contact; and the public evidences reposed in him by the Board would not of themselves show to outsiders the real character and weight of the position he has acquired. But the fact is that the present admirable condition of the Education Department in Canterbury is entirely due to Mr. Habens. It

2. The Press, 5 April, 1878.
is owing to his talent for organization, and to his unremitting exertions, that the difficulties involved in the expansion of the educational system have been overcome, and the department brought out of chaos into smooth and efficient working order. His abilities are now to be tested in a wider sphere . . . He will be much missed in Christchurch. The Board of Education and the Canterbury College will feel the loss of his services. But the colony has larger claims upon him, and we recognize that it may fairly be regarded as a matter of public duty for him to accept his present appointment. 3

In 1878 then, Habens took up his appointment as the first Inspector-General of Schools in New Zealand, understanding that what he had done for Canterbury's system of education, he was now called upon to do for the national system. Upon the responsibilities of this office little need be said, except that it was one of the most important positions offered by the Government in those days and upon its proper discharge depended the efficiency of the whole system of education.

The 1877 Act had been passed in spite of every apparent obstacle, and so it became Habens' duty to plan and carry through the entire organization necessary to the accomplishment of its objects. He was required to frame the regulations necessary for administering the Act, draw up the first national standards of instruction for primary schools, devise the scheme for the classification of teachers, prepare the registers for use in the schools and

3. Ibid.
act generally as the engineer of the Department. In addition, Habens was to be the Minister of Education's adviser in all matters connected with the practical working of the school system, and when all this was done, he was to ensure by a constant supervision of the inspectors themselves, that the plans and requirements of the system were everywhere maintained in effective operation.

However, he did not have the freedom he had had in Canterbury where there was little to hinder his administration. As Inspector-General he was constantly frustrated by five factors. Firstly, the 1877 Act which dealt almost entirely with primary education, restricted Habens' authority (which was in fact minimal) to that branch of education alone. Secondly, the 1877 Act provided for the inspectorate to be controlled by the education boards, so that in effect, Habens had no representatives directly responsible to him at the board level.

The third factor which affected Habens' administration was the strength of the education boards. Containing as they did, a large number of members who were also members of the House of Representatives, and having the control of the inspectorate, enabled the boards, particularly the larger ones, to completely disregard if necessary, the orders of the Education Department. Fourthly, for much of the period Habens was required to work under Governments
which, because of their slender majorities, were opposed to the introduction of controversial subjects into Parliament. Therefore, issues such as the abolition of the education boards or the transfer of the inspectorate to the Department, never gained much ground because of their controversial nature and because of the boards' strength in Parliament.

Finally, a most significant factor during Habens' Inspector-Generalship was the state of the economy. For much of the period New Zealand was in the grip of a severe depression and so many plans suggested by Habens, for the advancement or establishment of education in one form or another, had to be put aside.

As we saw in Chapters III and IV, these factors mainly affected Habens' administration of the primary system. Following his part in the successful introduction of the standards in Canterbury, Habens confidently produced the national standards, basing them on the former. In doing so, he was no doubt influenced by the fact that as the Canterbury standards had satisfied from most points of view, then he could safely expect his national standards to be accepted too.

However, as with all new schemes, the provisions did not please everyone, but generally the criticisms came from the inspectors of the smaller education boards. This might well have been expected. It was these boards which, because
of their comparative isolation and their lack of finance, attracted very few trained teachers and in many cases had to rely on untrained teachers to staff the schools. Little wonder then, that often the pupils could not satisfy the inspector's requirements. The inspectors, because they were the boards' spokesmen, had in some way to justify the poor performances. Rather than attack their employers (the boards) for not staffing the schools with competent teachers, the inspectors chose to make the standards the target at which they aimed their dissatisfaction.

Another problem, the effect of which was felt throughout the country, was that the total public school roll for New Zealand increased some 100 per cent during Habens' Inspector-Generalship. Understandably, many classes were extremely large making the teachers' task in introducing the standards, correspondingly more difficult.

In Chapter III, evidence was presented which suggested that there were those who acknowledged the success of the standards. Therefore, in this writer's opinion, had the finance been available for the employment and adequate training of a large teaching force, had the classes been smaller, had the inspectorate been centralized, and had Habens' regulations been followed as he had intended them to be, then the primary school standards would not have received the adverse criticisms they did.

Thousands of New Zealanders did learn to read, write
and calculate under the system. Also of some significance is the fact that even although there was opposition to the standards, no other curriculum was proposed as an alternative during Habens' term in office. It must be appreciated that although the first standards may have been somewhat formal, this was the obvious way in which to unify the country's schools and to provide, for those who were later to be responsible for the curriculum, a solid foundation upon which to make changes. In producing the standards, which received only slight alterations that barely affected the main structure of them and which remained in use for over twenty years, Habens' contribution was invaluable.

Under the 1877 Act, the Department was to be responsible for the certification and training of the teachers. Habens, therefore, set out to organize a unified and coordinated scheme for supplying a steady stream of educated and professionally trained teachers for the national system. However, his efforts in this important branch of the primary system were also affected by the conditions that existed during his Inspector-Generalship, and so the provisions for the training of teachers, for the establishment and management of training colleges and for the examination and classification of the teachers, which should have been kept under the Department's control, were gradually surrendered to the boards.
Although the inadequacies of the 1877 Act and the political and economic factors had most consequences for primary education, they also affected the progress of other branches of the education system, so that Habens' contributions in these areas were severely handicapped. Regarding secondary education for example, Habens did examine many secondary schools and in this respect provide a useful contribution, but he had no authority to enforce any suggestions he might make. His efforts to provide a scheme of general examinations to replace individual school examinations, as the first step in a plan to organize a good leaving examination for the secondary schools, can only be described as a failure brought about by the secondary schools' reluctance to accept any form of central control. Although he disapproved of the growth of a class system, which he saw develop in some of the secondary schools of the time, Habens could do little to stop it because these schools were financially independent, and were unsympathetic towards the Education Department.

Habens tried in vain, for the whole of his Inspector-Generalship, to introduce some aspects of technical education into the schools, but approaches to the universities, secondary schools and primary schools, were generally turned down because finance was not available to support the scheme. He did include elementary science in his standards in the hope that some children, at least,
would receive a small amount of technical education, but because it was not a compulsory 'pass subject' and the inspectors took little account of it, the teachers, in most cases, neglected it. Therefore, although he kept the issue of technical training to the fore, having drawing made a compulsory 'pass subject' in 1885, was perhaps Habens' only real contribution to this field of education.

Habens made a significant contribution to university education when he acted as the secretary of the Royal Commission in 1879-80, and when he served on the Senate of the University from 1880 until his death.

Apart from his introduction of the national standards, Habens' most impressive contribution as Inspector-General, was his administration of the Native and Special Schools. From the time the Department was given the control of these schools, Habens worked actively to establish them within the education system. Being directly under his control, Habens was able to organize these branches of education according to his ideals. Therefore, the successful establishment of them, was a tribute to Habens' administration and an indication of the effective control, of part of the education system, by the central Department.

Although this thesis is concerned with Habens' contributions to education, it is important to record that he did not sever his ties with the Congregational Church. On becoming secretary of the Canterbury Board of Education,
he continued as pastor of the Congregational Church until he left Christchurch in 1873. As a result of his efforts in Christchurch, it was reported that 'his name is held in affectionate remembrance, and the influence of his teaching and character is still potent for good.'

From the same source, we learn of Habens' religious activities during his Inspector-Generalship:

Though withdrawn from active ministerial labours, Mr. Habens was always ready to render any service to the churches of his power. He was a constant and loyal Congregationalist, but his heart was large enough to embrace all who love and serve Christ. For over twenty years he was a highly esteemed and helpful member of the Terrace Congregational Church, serving for many years as deacon and Superintendent of the Sunday School. To the last he was a loyal and liberal supporter of the church and a constant worshipper at its public services.

The total amount of work and time involved in Habens' educational and religious activities was immense and so his health became indifferent, and his zeal for long hours of work further undermined his constitution. However, in spite of this deterioration in health, Habens never ceased in his efforts for the general cause of education, right up to the time of his death.

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5. Ibid.
When the history of education in New Zealand is considered, it is unfortunate that Habens' contributions are often underestimated because of the achievements of his successor, Hogben. Hogben had a great advantage over Habens. Because he was the first Inspector-General, Habens was required to do much of the exploratory work in the various branches of the education system and Hogben was able to benefit from Habens' successes and failures. But more significantly, Hogben took charge of the Education Department at a most propitious moment. The early 1900s was a time when the sounder state of the economy allowed the Government to spend more freely in the field of education. The vote for education almost doubled during Hogben's term in office and with this growth went a corresponding increase in the Government's interest in the Department. It is a reasonable inference that had Hogben worked under the same limitations as Habens, it is doubtful whether his achievements would have been any more significant than were Habens' achievements.

An interesting comparison of Habens and Hogben was supplied by a close friend, the Rev. W. Saunders, and quoted by Roth, Hogben's biographer:

Like the Rev. W.J. Habens, Hogben could do with little sleep. Both these educationalists loved late hours, and yet could get up early perfectly refreshed. Mr. Habens and Mr. Hogben in turn, when on official visits to Dunedin, spent many hours at my expense. Both smoked - and
it seemed matches chiefly, for their pipes were for ever going out during their monologues. Mr. Habens always rose to leave at midnight but actually left a half hour later; Mr. Hogben got on his feet at half past 12, but reached the door at 1.7

In nature, perhaps the two men were similar, but in their approach to the office of Inspector-General they were required, of necessity, to be different. Habens, given little power, was forced to adopt a reasonably passive role compared with Hogben, who, because of the increased control that was given to the Department during his period in office, was able to lead 'from the front.'

It is interesting to note that three leading administrators during the first forty years of our national system of education - Habens, Hogben and Sir George Fowlds (Minister of Education, 1906-11) - were all prominent Congregationalists.

A special talent as an organizer, tact, originality, independence of thought, and thoroughness in attention to detail, were the attributes which Habens displayed in his association with the respective education systems of Canterbury and New Zealand. That he was highly regarded by all is evident from the tributes that were paid to him at the time of his death: An example of the general tenor of the tributes is provided by this one, from the chairman of the Marlborough Education Board:

7. Roth, H., George Hogben; a biography, p.118.
The Board cannot conclude this report without some reference to the great loss the cause of education has suffered in the lamented decease of the late William James Habens. The deceased gentleman may really be described as the foster father of the education system of New Zealand, as the Hon. C.C. Bowen may be styled its father. Although the experience of more than twenty years and the onward march of educational improvement have rendered necessary some amendments of the system, the colony is none the less indebted to him who has gone for the many excellencies which distinguished and still do distinguish it. His unremitting devotion to duty, his invariable impartiality, and his constant courtesy to all, even the very humblest, who had occasion to approach him officially, are affectionately remembered.8

To perpetuate his memory, the 'Habens' Prize' is still awarded by Auckland, Victoria, Otago and Canterbury Universities, the recipients being students of Education.9

The purpose of this thesis was to record and evaluate the contributions made by Habens, to education in New Zealand. Evidence has been submitted which suggests that in Canterbury, particularly from 1871 to 1878, Habens' contributions were considerable, but as New Zealand's first Inspector-General, his contributions were restricted, not because of any lack of personal ability, but because his administration was severely affected by the inadequacies of

8. A. to J., 1899, E. - 1., p.74.
9. See Calendars (for 1969) of these Universities as follows:
   University of Auckland, p.995.
   Victoria University of Wellington, p.413.
   University of Canterbury, pp.394-5.
   University of Otago, p.87.
the 1877 Act, and by political and economic influences. His contributions at the national level have, therefore, tended to be underestimated.

In this writer's opinion, Habens was a most intelligent man and an extremely able administrator. Because of what he did contribute to education in Canterbury, and as New Zealand's first Inspector-General, Habens deserves to be rated with the other great figures of New Zealand education to date.
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Memorandum from Wm. Jas. Habens, concerning the meaning and application of the term 'Technical Education,' to the Hon. G. Fisher, Minister of Education. 2 November, 1887.


'The Letter Books of the Canterbury Board of Education.' January, 1877 - May, 1878. These books are at present stored in a room in the old Normal School, Cranmer Square, Christchurch.

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APPENDIX A

HABENS' LECTURE ON EDUCATION

The Rev. W.J. Habens commenced his address by defining the word "Education." He said it meant "a drawing out," a drawing forth of the native power of the child, conducting him out of the weakness of infancy and its narrow sphere, into the broader and higher sphere of science, literature, and art. It included all the various influences which went to make up and develop the formation of the character of the child; but his subject that evening was of a much narrower kind, that which simply bore upon the training of the child by the teacher, and he would not touch upon the equally important subject of the education of the child by the parent - simply the schoolmaster's part in the education of the youth. The Rev. lecturer quoted an extract from the writings of Ruskin on the subject as bearing upon the broader view of education, and stated that his address would be confined to that which referred simply to the education of the child in his relation to the schoolmaster. The lecturer then went on to give the arguments for and against State education. One of the former was that man had a right to education - that every child had a right to be educated. He was inclined to think, with Dr. Arnold, that they had no such rights. They had all of them duties to perform one to the other, certainly, and some of them of so imperative a nature as almost to be said to be the due of those they affected. Supposing there was a right, was it against the parent or against the community? If the former, they must compel the parent to do his duty. If it was admitted that the right lay against the State, in that case a great many other rights would be brought forward, such as the right for clothing, the right for food, and others of equal importance. Were those granted, it involved Communism, which was in itself pure and simple, not a bad thing, but French Communism was. But good or bad, Communism was involved in the idea that a child had a right to get education from the State. State education was simply, in his opinion, a miserable makeshift for the doing of our duty to our fellow creatures. In Christian England many people would starve were it not for the interference of the State, but the support given was not given as a matter of right. Even then no one would assert that the State should do more than simply provide the necessaries of life,
and not even those things which to a refined mind were absolutely necessary. Another argument, and a safer one, in favour of State education was, that it was necessary for the general well being of society that the child should be educated, as education tended to decrease crime. Another was, that it was the duty of the State to see that education of a proper quality was provided, as many parents were not able to discriminate between a good and bad education. But was it not possible for the operation of the law of supply and demand, to bring into existence a class of teachers fitted for their work without Government interference; and would it not be better to wait for a natural growth than force it in this way; and did Government, as a rule, manage matters better than private individuals? Opposition was a good thing, and private firms generally did their work better than Government departments did. Another argument against State interference, was the danger of such meddling on the part of Government being carried too far; for instance in the teaching of erroneous political and other doctrines through the means of school books. Another argument was the danger attending the centralising of any kind of work of decreasing its efficiency. A State education would also develop a selfish spirit, but he would not enlarge further on this part of his address, as State interference in the matter of education was really a foregone conclusion. In Prussia and France, in America and Switzerland, the thing was done by rule and method, and in England also the idea was acted upon. Taking it for granted that State interference was desirable, they were met with the religious difficulty — which was a serious one. It was impossible for the State to take that in hand without doing injustice. Most religious people were of opinion that religion should be taught in schools — by that they meant their distinctive creeds. Some did not go so far, but simply said that the master of the school should be a pious man, and that the Scriptures should be read daily for practical ends, and not for doctrinal purposes, but Roman Catholics would not be satisfied with that. Another class objected to the teaching of the Scriptures on the ground that the Bible was a mere remnant of superstition and a series of fables. There were several ways attempted to meet the difficulty, one of which was that the State should support all those views, but he had one objection to that, viz., that it virtually pledged the State to a declaration that its creed was latitudinarian, that one creed was as good as another. There were churches to which he would not contribute one farthing, and he considered it was wrong to take the money of a whole community to distribute in such a latitudinarian way. That was what he meant by the concurrent endowment. He did not intend to discuss the
exclusive endowment scheme, by which one religious body should have the full and exclusive charge of schools, as he considered it was too late in the day to entertain such an idea. The opinion of the world was now in favour of a separation of Church and State. He was in favour of the establishment of schools for secular instruction alone. Many people thought it was dreadful not to teach religion in schools. He did not think so. He did not mind whether he received his goods from Christian tradesmen or not, provided he received goods of an equal quality. He did not see why parents should object to grammar or other subjects taught by Christian teachers or the opposite, as long as it was taught properly. After all it was very absurd to make so much of the matter of religious teaching. He would like to know how many teachers were fitted to meddle with religious teaching, or to put their hand to the work. It was little better than a farce to think that they could give such. It was also a question whether the discipline that was necessary on the part of teachers would have the proper effect in bringing the truths of Christianity home to the minds of children; besides, he did not see that teachers had the time at their disposal to give the children such religious instruction as would benefit them. He should not be sorry to see religion left out of the teaching of a school if the teacher were not a Christian man, and he should not be sorry to see the reading of the Bible omitted if it were an offence to any one. The purely secular system might not be practicable. His idea was that the Government should have nothing to do with denominational schools, but that it should confine its attention to teachers, and let all such as had been approved, enrol themselves as officers of the State. Let the Government fix a minimum of salary, and let any school that required a master engage such from the Government, guaranteeing to pay to the Government one-half of the salary of the teacher. It should not be the business of the Government to enquire as to the religious opinions of the masters, but simply as to their character; and if the denominational schools wanted masters, they should take care that some of their own body were trained for the task. The objection against the denominational system was, that the energies of half-a-dozen masters were wasted on the same number of schools, whereas half-a-dozen masters in one large school would do much more. That was the reason why he wished to see municipal schools established. It was a great pity — and it prevented the proper carrying out of education — that those religious differences existed. With regard to compulsory education, he thought that if the State was compelled to provide education, parents should be compelled to send their children to school. The rev. lecturer then proceeded to notice the qualifications requisite in a good teacher; for instance, that he should be a well-informed
man, patient, kind, firm, consistent, judicious, able to
discriminate character, just, free from provincial
peculiarity, a gentleman, and able to lower himself to the
intellects of the children under his charge. The lecturer
next touched on the stipend of teachers, and argued that
no one should be paid a less salary than £150, with a bonus
to those teachers who were qualified from their attainments
for higher branches than those taught in the primary schools.
The lecturer then proceeded at some length to speak of
school studies, the methods of instruction that should be
followed by all teachers, and the class of school books that
should be used. He complained that many of the text books
now used in schools were inaccurate in many of their details,
were too lengthy and expensive, all of which were obstructive
to the spread of education. He considered that what were
urgently wanted were good teachers, and cheap, good, and
compendious text books.

This report was printed in The Press, on 18 August, 1871.
The lecture was repeated, by request, on 22 August, 1871.
APPENDIX B

TWO LETTERS AS BOARD SECRETARY

First Letter

January 29th, 77.
Edward H. Tate, Esq.,
Timaru.

to inform you that the Board sanctions the Committee advertising for a mistress.

With reference to the erection of the Master's house I have to state that the Board cannot undertake to build a house the cost of which would exceed £1000 until the requirements of all the Districts are known and compared. - The Committee may call however for tenders for minor works according to specifications which will be forwarded in a day or two.

Wm. Jas. Habens.

Last Letter

May 31, 78.
A. H. Cunningham Esq.,
Rangiora.

I have the honour to remind you that in recommending Mr. Robinson's tender you stated that it amounted to £67. 13. 8. Will you be so good as to explain how it is that the account is for £70. 13. 6?

Wm. Jas. Habens.

Reproduced from 'The Letter Books of the Canterbury Board of Education.'
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>APPENDIX C</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE ENGLISH REVISED CODE, 1862</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard I</th>
<th>Standard II</th>
<th>Standard III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrative Monosyllables.</strong></td>
<td>One of the narratives next in order after mono-</td>
<td>A short paragraph from an elementary reading book used in the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td>syllables in an elementary reading book used in the school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Writing</strong></th>
<th><strong>Arithmetic</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form on blackboard or slate, from dictation, letters, capital and small, manuscript.</td>
<td>Copy in manuscript character a line of print.</td>
<td>A sentence from the same paragraph slowly read once and then dictated in single words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arithmetic</strong></td>
<td>Form on blackboard or slate, from dictation, figures up to 20; name at sight figures up to 20; add and subtract figures up to 10, orally, from examples on blackboard.</td>
<td>A sum in simple addition or subtraction, and the multiplication table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Standard IV</td>
<td>Standard V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A short paragraph from</td>
<td>A few lines of poetry from a reading book used in the first class of the school.</td>
<td>A short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper, or other modern narrative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a more advanced reading book</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>used in the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time from the same book, but not from the paragraph read.</td>
<td>A sentence slowly dictated once, by a few words at a time, from a reading book used in the first class of the school.</td>
<td>Another short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper, or other modern narrative, slowly dictated once by a few words at a time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## THE CANTERBURY STANDARDS (1875)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard I</th>
<th>Standard II</th>
<th>Standard III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>Child's easy reading book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>composed of words of not more than one syllable to be read intelligently.</td>
<td>containing easy words of two syllables.</td>
<td>(as Nelson's third book).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words of one syllable.</td>
<td>Words of two syllables.</td>
<td>From the same reading book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short letters (i.e. letters not extending above or below the line of writing) and the ten figures - on slates.</td>
<td>Short words in Copy Book.</td>
<td>Large and neat hand. Writing on slates from reading book of Standard III.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX D (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard I</th>
<th>Standard II</th>
<th>Standard III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arithmetic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counting and oral addition by twos, threes and fours, up to 100.</td>
<td>Oral addition by small numbers up to 1000.</td>
<td>On slates; addition; subtraction; short multiplication and short division.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeration and notation not more than three figures.</td>
<td>Numeration and notation to four figures on slates:</td>
<td>Numeration and notation generally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiplication table to 5 x 12.</td>
<td>Addition of not more than five figures in a row either way, and easy subtraction.</td>
<td>Tables to 12 x 12. Easy mental arithmetic to cost of dozen and score.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tables to 6 x 12.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geography</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of geographical terms; of the meanings of a map, and of the leading features of a map of the world.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td>The distinguishing of the nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and verbs in easy sentences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX B (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Standard IV</th>
<th>Standard V</th>
<th>Standard VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prose (narrative</td>
<td>general</td>
<td>extracts from general</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and dialogue)</td>
<td>information.</td>
<td>literature.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and verse.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Spelling         | Standard V  | Standard VI         |                                              |
|------------------|-------------|---------------------|                                              |
| Spelling and     | Spelling and| Spelling and        |                                              |
| dictation from   | dictation   | dictation           |                                              |
| the class reading book. | suited to this stage. | suited to this stage. |                                              |
|                   |             |                    |                                              |

| Writing          |             | Same as Standard V  |                                              |
|------------------|-------------|---------------------|                                              |
| Large text, and  | Small hand in | with the addition of |                                              |
| round hand.      | addition to  | letter writing and  |                                              |
|                  | work of     | the making out of    |                                              |
|                  | Standard IV.| bills.              |                                              |

<p>| Arithmetic       |             | Fractions, proportions, |                                              |
|------------------|-------------|-------------------------|                                              |
| Long multiplication and | The compound | practice, and interest. |                                              |
| long division and | rules and   |                          |                                              |
| the money rules except | reduction; |                          |                                              |
| long division generally. | mental |                          |                                              |
| of money. | Money tables. | Mental arithmetic to simple interest. |                                              |
| Money tables. | Mental arithmetic to | simple interest. |                                              |
| Mental arithmetic to simple interest. | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard IV</th>
<th>Standard V</th>
<th>Standard VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Names, dates,</em></td>
<td><em>The place in</em></td>
<td><em>History of</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>English</em></td>
<td><em>history of</em></td>
<td><em>England.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>houses of</em></td>
<td><em>the principal</em></td>
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*Canterbury Provincial Government Gazette, 26 June, 1875, pp. 227-8.*
APPENDIX E

THE NEW ZEALAND STANDARDS (1878)

The following were the standards for which individual passes were required:

Standard I

Reading - Sentences composed of words of one syllable, and common words of two syllables, to be read intelligently.

Spelling - Easy words of one syllable.

Writing - The small letters and the ten figures, on slate, at dictation.

Arithmetic - Counting, and oral addition by twos, threes, fours and fives, up to 100; numeration and notation to 999; addition sums of not more than three columns, multiplication of numbers not exceeding 999 by 2, 3, 4, and 5.

(Note. The numeration must be applied to the addition and multiplication, and the multiplication known to be a compendious method of addition.)

Standard II

Reading and Definition - Sentences containing words of two syllables, to be read intelligently, and the meanings of the words to be known.

Spelling - Easy words of two syllables.

Writing - Short words in copy books, not larger than round-hand. On slate: Capital letters and transcription from reading book of Standard II.
Arithmetic - Numeration and notation of not more than six figures; addition of not more than six lines, with six figures in a line; short multiplication, and multiplication by factors not greater than 12; subtraction; division by numbers not exceeding 12, by the method of long division, and by the method of short division; mental problems adapted to this stage of progress; multiplication tables to 12 times 12.

Geography - Knowledge of the meaning of a ground-plan, and of a map; of the principal geographical terms; and of the positions of continents, oceans, and larger seas.

Standard III

Reading and Definition - Easy reading book, to be read fluently and intelligently, with knowledge of the meanings of words, and with due regard to the distinction of paragraphs, as well as of sentences.

Spelling - From the same book; knowledge of words having the same sound or nearly the same sound, but differing in meaning; dictation of easy sentences from the reading book of a lower standard.

Writing - Longer words and sentences, not larger than round-band; transcription from the reading book of Standard III, with due regard to punctuation and quotation marks.

Arithmetic - Numeration and notation generally (one million to be taken as the number of which one billion is the second power, one trillion the third power, and so on); long multiplication and long division; the four money rules (excepting long multiplication of money); money tables; and easy money problems in mental arithmetic.

Grammar and Composition - The distinguishing of the nouns (and pronouns used in the same way as nouns) and verbs in easy sentences; also of articles and adjectives (and pronouns used in the same way as adjectives); and very simple exercises in composition, to test the pupil's power of putting his own thoughts on familiar subjects into words.

Geography - Knowledge of the chief towns of New Zealand, and of the principal features of the district in which the school is situated; of Australian Colonies and their chief towns; of the countries and capitals of Europe; and of the principal mountains and rivers of the world.
English History - Knowledge of the chronological order in which the following periods stand: Roman, Saxon, Norman, Plantagenet, Tudor, Stuart, Brunswick; and a few of the more interesting facts connected with each period.

Standard IV

Reading and Definition - An easy book of prose and verse.

Spelling and Dictation suited to this stage, as represented by the reading book in use; the dictation to exhibit a knowledge of the use of capitals and of punctuation, but (at inspection) to be confined to prose.

Writing - Good copies in a hand not larger than round-hand, and transcription of poetry.

Arithmetic - Long multiplication of money; reduction; the compound rules applied to problems in weights and measures; practice, and the making out of bills of account and receipts; tables of weights and measures, mental arithmetic to correspond.

Grammar and Composition - The distinguishing of all the parts of speech in easy sentences; the inflections of the noun, adjective, and pronoun; letter writing on prescribed subjects; addressing of letters and envelopes.

Geography - Knowledge of the countries of the world, with their capitals, and of the principal seas, gulfs, mountains, rivers, lakes, capes, straits, islands, and peninsulas on the map of the world; geography of Australia in outline; and the drawing of rough maps of New Zealand, with one set of principal features (as capes, or towns, or rivers). (In this and the subsequent standards, scholars will be expected to know the situation of places mentioned in their reading books.) Mathematical geography: The form of the earth, day and night, the seasons, the zones, meridians, and parallels, and climate in this connection.

English History - The succession of Houses and Sovereigns from 1066 A.D. to 1485 A.D., and the leading events of the period known in connection with the reigns and centuries to which they belong, and in their own character. (Precise dates will not be required, though a knowledge of them may assist in referring each event to the proper reign.)
Standard V

Reading and Definition - A book of general information, not necessarily excluding matter such as that prescribed for Standard IV.

Spelling and Dictation suited to this stage.

Writing - Small-hand copies in a strict formal style, and text-hand; transcription of verse in complicated metres, and of prose exhibiting the niceties of punctuation.

Arithmetic - Proportion; simple interest; the easier cases of vulgar fractions, and problems involving them; mental arithmetic.

Grammar and Composition - Inflections of the verb; the parsing (with inflexions) of all the words in any easy sentence; a short essay or letter on a familiar subject, or the rendering of the sense of a passage of easy verse into good prose; analysis of a simple sentence.

Geography - Knowledge of places of political, historical, and commercial importance in New Zealand, in Great Britain, and on the European Continent; and the drawing of outline maps of New Zealand, Great Britain, and Europe. Physical Geography: Distribution of land and water; mountain and river systems; changes affected by the agency of water; and climate as influenced by mountain, plain, and sea.

English History - The period from 1485 A.D. to 1714 A.D., treated as the former period is treated in Standard IV.

Standard VI

Reading - A book containing extracts from general literature.

Spelling and Dictation suited to this stage.

Writing - The copying of tabulated matter, showing bold headlines, and marking distinctions such as in letterpress require varieties of type (e.g., the copying of these printed standards, or of a catalogue showing division into groups).
Arithmetic - Vulgar and decimal fractions; interest and other commercial rules; square root, and simple cases of mensuration of surfaces; mental arithmetic generally.

Grammar and Composition - Complete parsing (including syntax) of simple and compound sentences; prefixes and suffixes, and a few of the more important Latin and Greek roots, illustrated by a part of the reading book; essay, or letter; analysis of easy complex sentences.

Geography - Knowledge of places of political, historical and commercial importance in Asia, North America, and the British Possessions. Physical geography: Atmospheric phenomena, winds, rain, ice; distribution of the animals and plants of greatest value to man.

English History - The succession of Houses and Sovereigns, and the leading events of each reign, from the earliest times to the present (precise dates not required); also the elements of social economy.

APPENDIX F

HABENS' LETTER TO TEACHERS

Inspector-General's Office,
Wellington.
April, 1878.

Sir,

"The Education Act, 1877" provides that no person shall be eligible for appointment as Teacher of a Public School who does not produce a certificate of competency from the Minister of Education. A scheme must therefore be framed, as soon as possible, for the classification of Teachers who have hitherto held certificates from the several Boards of Education. The Minister desires that all possible respect may be paid to existing certificates; and, with a view first to the framing of a scheme, and then to the ascertaining of your place in it, I have now to request you to furnish me, as soon as you conveniently can, and in any form that you please, with full information on the following points:—

1. Your present classification under your Board.

2. Whether you attained to this wholly by examination, or partly by examination and partly by promotion, or by the value assigned to certificate or certificates from any other Board or body entitled to issue certificates.

3. The date and character of the examination (if any) by which you obtained your certificate; and especially any optional subjects in which you were examined.

4. Any earlier classification which you have held under your Board, with dates showing your progress.

5. The nature of the certificates (if any) which were accepted instead of examination, and of any certificates which you hold from any Board or University, or other learned body. (Please not to send the certificates.)
6. The length of your experience as a Teacher, and the distribution of the time according to stages of classification.

Be so good as to let me have your reply with as little delay as possible, and address to me at "Christchurch," as I do not expect to be settled at Wellington till June. Letters upon the Public Service, addressed to "The Inspector-General of Schools," do not require to be stamped.

Wm. Jas. Habens,
Inspector-General.

Copy held by Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.