

Report from Heylipol Public School, February 1883

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Heylipol
School Report
Feb:/83

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Report from Heylipol Public School for the winter months, for the perusal of His Grace the Duke of Argyll.

Attendance: The attendance during the latter end of December gradually increased till it amounted to about 70, making however an average of only about 55 daily. The uncommonly wet winter has had a very injurious effect on the averages. Often there are 2 + always one wet + stormy day in each week with barely 20 perhaps present which tells very materially when striking the weekly average. The January + February attendance shows a little better result + it is to be hoped that now during the spring the weather will settle down + better attendance will be had.

– Progress – With irregular attendance progress varies just as the child is regular or otherwise. The field gone over with the different classes this year is somewhat as follows – Grammar senior class Orthography + Etymology with a few lessons in syntax. Rudimentary Analysis Junior, the noun, adj + verbs mostly orally + practical. Geography. The 4 quarters (general) special Ireland + England. Juniors Europe + Scotland. Arith[metic]. The most that can be driven into them in the several standards, but standard 5 has made the most progress + standard 4 the least. In reading standard 5 leads + standard II is last. In writing standard 5 leads + standard 4 is last. Religious Knowledge St Matthews Gospel + Genesis are the present subject along with Gaelic Pharaphrases [sic] committed + explained. This is the first year wholly devoted to the Pharaphrases [sic] The Psalms being those committed. Altho I don't give in to the Par[aphrases]. as a whole being sound, yet a beautiful selection may be made.

– General –

To keep up a better school attendance a compulsory officer has been appointed to each school. For many years there were two one for the east end + one for the west. Last year they gave the pay of the two to one, thinking he could afford to give more of his time to the duties but it turned out to be off + on as before, now they divided the pay among 4. thinking that thus better results will be obtained. I believe the fact will remain as ever that those who are desirous of having their children educated will keep them in school + those who are careless, + also perhaps unable to support them to the full

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will weary + exhaust all the energies of compulsory officers + school Boards. The staff of Teachers remain as last year. The Ruaig Teacher got an appointment in Inveraray + when he got leave did not but stuck in to his present situation. – State of the island + c – It cannot be concealed that the wild + extravagant ideas that originally started in Ireland + latterly to a milder extent broke out in the northern islands has got a faint hold on a few here. That it began by the instigations of some parties in the island to a great extent and also by the circulation of pernicious + revolutionary literature is also plain. Altho[ugh]. certainly this year was not so abundant in every thing required by man + beast, the people would have made the best of it they could, + be contented + happy with the

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hope that better times would come next year. That discontent prevails to any alarming extent is altogether out of the question, in fact it only obtains among a very few + whole Farms with 12 or 13 crofters in them are now regretting that they ever joined the radical corps that got up that petition. Apparently they never realised what a combination of Tenants meant + I believe that the sole object of the dark iniquitous plotters was to get them united + then that they could be afterwards led to do any thing. but [sic] I can say they are now sadly disappointed. I had a conversation with a respectable man in Balevuline [sic] last week + if I relate it it will throw light on what I say. Were you among the beggars who signed yon petition for a barrel of potatoes Don^d? - I am very sorry to say to my shame that I was. What in all the world came over you who can count your money by hundreds when you degraded yourself so far as to take up the begging trade? You may well ask that. Want of thought in the first place + then there was such a cry coming along with the petition that whoever would not sign would be a marked man + without much thinking I put down my name. Was it not a very ungrateful act on the part of all to join against the Proprietor who gave them + their forefather's houses, lands + means of bringing up their families at the instigation of parties who neither could or would give you a 6^d? - It is since I did it I see through it all. Would you join again in such a business if asked? That I w[ould]^d not. Are there any more of the neighbours in the same mind as you? Everyone on this farm are mad at what they did. Sh[ould]^d you not acknowledge your sorrow ask pardon + withdraw your name? Shame w[ould]^d not allow me to do it. I c[ould]^d not show my face before the Factor. I don't say that every place is in a similar mind, indeed Barrapoll [sic] beside myself is not so, but one of the subaltern Officers of the squad is among them in the west end. The Tyree crofter has been neglected by those who ought to have led him on to take up a better system of farming than he follows. And this neglect tells against himself now when year by year the moisture of the climate increases + the fertility of the soil has decreased. If that rotation of crofts inaugurated by Mr Campbell had been persevered in wherever practicable Tyree would today be in a far better position to withstand the effects of a wet harvest or of a gale of wind. But the compulsion was withdrawn on the removal of Mr Campbell + the Tyreean allowed his own way of cultivation + the result today is choked up drains, exhausted soil + a discontented crofter. What could have been done in the way of compulsion to adopt a particular system of farming 30 years ago can hardly nowadays be tried without raising a cry of slavery or something worse. But till something is done in this line the crofters will be at the mercy of every October gale that comes. With ordinary activity every sheaf in Tyree ought to have been safely housed before the first of October.

J McFarlane

19th Feb^y 1883

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