

EDUCATION.

IT would have been strange if communities so prosperous as the Australasian colonies had neglected to provide for the education of the children. This duty, so vitally affecting the welfare of the people, has been recognised as one of the most important which the State could be called upon to discharge. In every province of the group, ample provision has been made for public instruction, such provision, indeed, in some cases, extending far beyond what has been done in most of the countries of the old world. In addition to a system of primary education, in all the colonies there are grammar and high schools, by means of which those who have the desire may qualify for the higher studies of the University. So bountiful is the provision made by the State that in most cases the cost of education is merely nominal, and the poverty of the parents ceases to be an excuse for the ignorance of the children. It is true that in the very early days of colonisation but little attention was paid to education; but as soon as the sharp struggle for bare existence was over, attempts were made to provide means of instruction for the rising generation, and the foundations were laid of an educational system that is in the highest degree creditable to these young communities. The religious bodies were naturally the first to build schools and provide teachers; but there was always a large proportion of persons who objected to denominationalism, principally those who belonged to denominations which were not subsidised by the State; hence there arose a National or non-sectarian system which has in the course of time almost monopolised the educational field.

In all the Australasian colonies the State system of education is secular. Compulsory clauses find a place in the Acts of the various provinces; but the enforcement of these is not everywhere equally strict. In Victoria, for example, compulsory attendance at school has been rigorously insisted upon, while in Queensland the principle of compulsion has been allowed to remain almost in abeyance, and in the other colonies it has been enforced with varying degrees of strictness. In Victoria, Queensland, New Zealand, and South Australia the primary education provided by the State is entirely free of charge to the parents; in New South Wales, Western Australia, and Tasmania small fees are charged, but these are not enforced where the parents can reasonably plead poverty.

The statutory school-age of each colony is as follows :—

New South Wales	over 6 and under 14 years.
Victoria	„ 6 „ 13 „
Queensland	„ 6 „ 12 „
South Australia	„ 7 „ 13 „
Western Australia	„ 6 „ 14 „
Tasmania	„ 7 „ 13 „
New Zealand	„ 7 „ 13 „

In New South Wales, for many years, a dual system of education was in existence. The four State-aided denominations—the Church of England, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and Wesleyan bodies—had schools supported by annual votes from Parliament, administered under the control of the head of each denomination for the time being. There were also National schools, likewise supported by the State, but under the control of a Board appointed by the Government. This plan was found to be costly and wasteful in the extreme, for in many country towns there were in existence several small and inefficient competing schools where the total number of children was not more than sufficient for one well-conducted establishment. So strongly was this evil felt that changes in the law were made from time to time, until at length the denominational system was abolished altogether, and one general and comprehensive plan of Public Instruction adopted in its place. This reform was not accomplished without much agitation, extending over a considerable period. A league was formed with the object of securing the establishment of secular, compulsory, and free education, and in 1880, under the auspices of Sir Henry Parkes, the measure establishing the present system became law. Education in the public schools is now non-sectarian, though facilities are afforded to clergymen to give religious instruction within specified school-hours to children whose parents belong to their denomination and desire that this instruction shall be given. It is compulsory, and free to all who cannot afford to pay, while a merely nominal fee is charged to those who are in a position to contribute towards the cost of the teaching of their children. For secondary education there are a number of superior and high schools entirely supported by the State, besides numerous colleges, grammar schools, and denominational schools which obtain no assistance from the Government, excepting the Sydney Grammar School, which receives a statutory endowment of £1,500. Scholarships and bursaries have been founded in connection with many of these schools. The University of Sydney, which is liberally endowed by private individuals as well as the State, grants degrees which rank with those of Oxford and Cambridge. Educational affairs in the colony are under the direction of a Minister for Public Instruction.

In Victoria, under an Act passed in 1872, a system of free, compulsory, and secular primary education is in force, under a Minister of Public Instruction, who is responsible to Parliament. The compulsory clause is very strictly enforced, especially in the large towns, and education is entirely free as regards the ordinary subjects of primary

instruction, while the teachers are allowed to impart instruction in additional subjects, for which a small fee is payable. Religion is strictly forbidden to be taught during school-hours, and at no time must a State teacher give instruction therein. Secondary education is almost entirely in the hands of private or denominational establishments. The higher education is supplied by the University, with its affiliated colleges.

The Education Department in Queensland is administered by the Secretary for Public Instruction. The Act now in force was passed in 1875, and is of a tolerably liberal character, primary education being secular and free. The compulsory clause has not been put into operation, as it would be a very difficult thing to enforce its provisions in the scattered and sparsely-populated districts of the interior. The public schools are divided into two classes, termed State and Provisional schools. A State school must have an average daily attendance of not less than thirty children, and the local district must contribute one-fifth of the cost of establishing, maintaining, repairing, and making additions to the building. In the case of the establishment of a Provisional school, the Minister may grant a subsidy towards the cost of erection and equipment of the necessary building, not exceeding one-half of the cost and in no case exceeding £50, provided the proposals of the promoters are submitted to him before they are carried out. Towards the administration and maintenance of this class of school the Government make a capitation grant, equal to the average cost per head of children in State schools. Secondary education is provided by grammar schools, which are liberally assisted by the State. The colony has no University of its own, but sends a fair number of students to the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne. The system of extension lectures in connection with the University of Sydney has been extended to Queensland; and the Government of the colony have agreed to a proposal to establish a University in Brisbane.

The South Australian system of primary education, which was introduced in its present form in 1878, is very similar to the systems already described. Public instruction in the colony is presided over by a responsible Minister, with an Inspector-General and other officials. It is compulsory, secular, and free. Until the end of 1891 a small weekly fee was payable by all parents able to do so; but at the beginning of 1892 primary instruction was made free until the scholar reached the age of 13 years or had been educated to the compulsory standard, and in 1898 the remaining fees were abolished by the Minister for Education. Children who have attained a certain standard of education are exempt from compulsory attendance. Religious instruction is not allowed to be given except out of ordinary school-hours. Secondary education is in the hands of private and denominational establishments; and the University of Adelaide, though small, is efficient.

Under the Elementary Education Act of 1871, primary education in Western Australia is imparted in Government schools, which are entirely supported by the State. An Amendment Act passed in 1893

placed educational affairs in the colony under the control of a responsible Minister, and afforded facilities for special religious teaching, half-an-hour per day being allotted to clergymen for the instruction of children of the same denomination. Another Amendment Act which came into force in 1894 abolished payment by results, and gave powers for the enforcement of compulsory attendance. Until 1895, private schools were also assisted from the public purse, on condition of submitting to Government inspection in secular subjects ; but towards the end of that year an Act was passed abolishing the system of annual grants to denominational schools, and providing that during the year 1896 the State should hand over, as compensation for the abolition of these subsidies, the sum of £15,000, to be divided between the schools in like proportions to those which governed the distribution of the annual vote in 1895. Under the regulations of 1895, children can claim free education on account of inability to pay the fees, of living more than 1 mile from school, of having made 400 half-day attendances in the previous year, or of other reasons approved by the Minister. There is a high school at Perth, which is subsidised by the State ; and further encouragement is given to secondary instruction by the institution of scholarships which are open to competition.

In Tasmania the Chief Secretary holds the portfolio of Education, and has especial charge of matters relating to primary instruction. The permanent head of the department is styled Director of Education. There are public schools in every country town throughout the colony, and several in Hobart and Launceston. The principle of compulsion is in force in these two towns ; and special religious instruction is given by the Church of England clergy out of school-hours. Secondary education was at one time encouraged by exhibitions, but none have been granted since 1893. The University of Tasmania was established in 1890, and at first was merely an examining body, but in the beginning of the year 1893 a building was acquired and teaching provided for the purpose of enabling students to graduate in Arts, Science, and Laws. The first degree, one of B.A., was taken in 1894. The Government grants the institution an annual subsidy, the amount voted by Parliament in 1896 being £2,500.

New Zealand has an educational system which is entirely secular and free. There is a separate Department of Education, presided over by one of the responsible Ministers of the Crown, as in the other colonies. The whole colony has been divided into school districts, each presided over by a local Board, and a capitation grant of £3 15s. per head is paid by the State for every child in average attendance, and, in addition, 1s. 6d. per child in support of scholarships, with other grants for school-buildings, training of teachers, etc. In districts where there are few or no Europeans, native schools are maintained for the Maori children. High schools, colleges, and grammar schools provide the means for acquiring secondary education ; and the University of New Zealand, like those of the other colonies, is empowered to confer the same degrees

as the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, except as regards Divinity. It is, however, only an examining body, the undergraduates keeping their terms at the affiliated colleges—the University of Otago, the Canterbury College, and the Auckland University College.

STATE SCHOOLS.

Exclusive of the native schools established by the New Zealand Government for the instruction of the Maori children, there were 7,809 public schools in Australasia at the close of the year 1896. The number in operation in each of the seven colonies will be seen on reference to the table given below. As a rule, secondary education is provided by private institutions, and the figures quoted may be taken as representing primary schools; but in New South Wales there are five high schools, which it is customary to include with the others. The secondary schools in New Zealand are excluded from the returns:—

Colony.	State Schools.	Teachers employed, exclusive of Sewing Mistresses.		
		Males.	Females.	Total.
New South Wales	2,574	2,332	2,043	4,375
Victoria	1,886	1,760	2,352	4,112
Queensland	759	798	917	1,715
South Australia	639	396	736	1,132
Western Australia	150	103	157	260
Tasmania	268	215	274	489
New Zealand	1,533	1,424	2,091	3,515
Australasia	7,809	7,028	8,570	15,598

In all the colonies, with the exception of Victoria, there has been a steady increase in the number of State schools during the past few years. In Victoria the reverse has been the case, for since 1891 the number in operation has decreased from 2,233 to 1,886. This is the result of a scheme of retrenchment, initiated at that time, by which there has been an amalgamation of schools in large centres of population; and in other districts schools have been closed and the pupils conveyed to other institutions at the cost of the State. Under the first part of this scheme no fewer than 69 schools have been converted into adjuncts to others in the neighbourhood, at an estimated annual saving of £43,900. At these adjuncts—which are not included in the number of schools set down in the table—instruction is now imparted only to young children, in junior classes. The system of conveyance, brought into operation under the second part of the scheme, has been the means of closing 241 schools, an allowance being made by the State to parents to defray the cost of conveyance of their children to schools further removed from their place of abode. After deducting the cost of con-

veyance, the net annual saving to the State is estimated at £14,170. Although, in comparison with 1895, the number of schools in operation shows the diminution which has been characteristic of the last five years, yet the number of localities served in 1896 actually showed an increase during the twelve months, the explanation being the conversion of a number of full-time into part-time schools, two of which are regarded as equivalent to one school, and so enumerated by the department.

The 759 schools in Queensland include 385 State schools, and 374 "provisional" schools, as they are termed, to the administration and maintenance of which the Government make a capitation grant, equal to the average cost per head of children attending State schools. No fewer than 64 of these provisional schools have a permanent average daily attendance beyond the number of thirty, which justifies the establishment of a State school; and the non-substitution of State schools for these overgrown provisional schools is no doubt due to the fact that the inhabitants of a district have to find one-fifth of the cost of such schools before the work can proceed. For Western Australia, the returns for years prior to 1896 included State-aided denominational schools. From these establishments the Government subsidy was withdrawn at the end of 1895, and thenceforth they were placed outside the sphere of the operations of the Education Department. This point should be borne in mind when comparing the figures with those given for previous years, otherwise the extension of public instruction in that colony would seem to be incommensurate with the growth of population. As a matter of fact, the progress has been rapid, and 17 new State schools were opened in 1896.

As shown in the previous table, the total number of teachers employed in the 7,809 State schools was 15,598—7,028 males and 8,570 females—exclusive of sewing-mistresses, of whom there were 67 in New South Wales, 385 in Victoria, 32 in South Australia, 21 in Western Australia, and 191 in New Zealand. New South Wales is the only colony where employment is afforded to a greater number of male teachers in comparison with females; in all the other provinces there is a large preponderance of female instructors. In most of the colonies provision is made for the training of teachers. In New South Wales, the Fort-street Training School for male students had 26 students in training in 1896, 16 of whom held full-scholarships, 9 half-scholarships, and 1 attended at his own expense; while at the Hurlstone Training School for female students there were 29 students in residence, 15 of whom held full-scholarships, 10 half-scholarships, and 4 attended at their own charge. Special classes for the training of pupil-teachers in Melbourne and suburbs are carried on at the Working Men's College. In 1896 there were 269 students in attendance at these classes, namely, 30 in Class III, 116 in Class II, and 123 in Class I. There were 17 students in the training college in South Australia. In New Zealand, the Education Boards of North Canterbury and Otago have institutions for the training of teachers.

ENROLMENT AT STATE SCHOOLS.

The gross enrolment of pupils at the State schools of Australasia during 1896 was 845,114; while the net enrolment, or the number of distinct children, came to 727,052, forming 16·98 per cent. of the mean population. In most of the colonies the net enrolment is obtained in an empirical manner—by deducting a certain proportion (about 12 per cent.) from the gross figures; but in Victoria the actual figures are found by the Education Department. The appended table gives the gross and net enrolment for each colony. During the last five years there has been an increase of 5·96 per cent. in the net enrolment at the State schools of Australasia. Of the individual colonies, the largest proportional increase has taken place in Western Australia, where, excluding the State-aided denominational schools, it reached 152·61 per cent. In South Australia the increase has been 27·29 per cent.; and in Queensland, 20·35 per cent. For New Zealand, Tasmania, and New South Wales, the increase has been respectively 9·63 per cent., 8·43 per cent., and 2·75 per cent. The only colony which exhibits a diminution in the number of scholars in State schools since 1891 is Victoria, where the number has fallen from 253,469 to 235,617, or to the extent of 7·04 per cent. Reference has already been made to the policy of retrenchment adopted in that colony. The decline in the number of children attending school is attributable to this cause. In order to avoid expenditure on additional buildings as much as possible, children below the statutory school age of six years have been excluded, as well as those above the age of thirteen who have gained a certificate of standard proficiency. The actual number of children of the statutory age in attendance has rather increased:—

Colony.	Gross Enrolment.	Net Enrolment.	
		Total.	Percentage of Population.
New South Wales	251,821	221,603	17·21
Victoria	235,617	209,015	17·74
Queensland	90,780	81,754	17·53
South Australia.....	65,908	59,944	16·71
Western Australia.....	9,008	7,927	6·63
Tasmania	20,826	15,772	9·65
New Zealand	171,154	131,037	18·55
Australasia	845,114	727,052	16·98

It will be seen that the largest percentage of the population enrolled at State schools was to be found in New Zealand, and the lowest in Western Australia. Such a comparison, however, is of very little value, because the proportion which the children of school age bear to the

total population varies considerably in the different colonies, being as high as 27 per cent. in New Zealand, as compared with 24 per cent. in New South Wales and 21 per cent. in Victoria, while in Western Australia, which is still at its pioneer stage, there must of necessity be a much smaller percentage of dependent children than in the more widely settled colonies. Farther on in this chapter will be found a comparison of the children of school age, taken for this purpose as between 5 and 15 years in all the colonies, with the number enrolled at all institutions, both State and private. This will give a better view of the relative strictness or laxity with which the attendance of children at school is enforced in the different provinces.

More important, perhaps, than the number of children enrolled is the average attendance. This, for scholars at the State schools during the year 1896, was 502,429, representing about 64 per school and 32 per teacher, and 11·74 per cent. of the population of Australasia. The figures for the individual colonies will be found appended :—

Colony.	Scholars in average attendance.			
	Total.	Per School.	Per Teacher.	Per-centage of popula-tion.
New South Wales	142,192	55	33	11·04
Victoria	138,241	73	34	11·73
Queensland	54,316	72	32	11·65
South Australia	40,449	63	36	11·27
Western Australia	6,470	43	25	5·41
Tasmania	11,508	43	24	7·04
New Zealand	109,253	71	31	15·47
Australasia	502,429	64	32	11·74

According to the official returns, the proportion of the net enrolment of scholars in average attendance was highest in New Zealand, the percentage for which colony was 82·1. This was closely followed by Western Australia with 81·6 per cent., while Tasmania was third with 73 per cent. The percentage for South Australia was 67·48; for Queensland, 66·44; for Victoria, 66·14; and for New South Wales, 64·16. Comparing the first with the last year of the latest quinquennial period, Tasmania is the only colony where the average attendance has not improved, Queensland especially showing a great advance in regularity of attendance. The percentage of the population of New Zealand—15·47—shown as in average attendance at the State schools, it must be remarked, is rather higher than it should be, on account of a number of Maori children attending the ordinary schools in districts where there are none established for the “natives,” while the basis on which the proportion has been calculated is the population exclusive

of aborigines. Still, when full allowance has been made on this score, the percentage is much higher than is found in any other colony. The "Native" schools in New Zealand, of which the number was 74, had a teaching-staff of 136, exclusive of 16 sewing-mistresses, in 1896, with an enrolment of 2,862 and an average attendance of 2,220 scholars, and the expenditure on the schools during the year amounted to £18,603. Of the children who received instruction at these institutions, 77 per cent. were Maori, 9 per cent. were half-caste, and 14 per cent. were European or, in the words of the Minister of Education, "inclining to the European" race.

COST OF PRIMARY EDUCATION.

The official reports of the various colonies show that during the year 1896 the cost of administration and maintenance of the State schools of Australasia was £1,984,870, while the revenue from fees, rents, sales of books, etc., amounted to £101,589, leaving a net cost to the State of £1,883,281, excluding a sum of £181,740 expended on school premises. Assistance to private schools where primary or secondary education is given is not included in these figures. The expenditure for each of the colonies will be found below. In the case of New Zealand, the amounts given in the table represent the disbursements of the Education Boards, and not the actual capitation grant received from the Government during 1896, as the former figures more accurately represent the cost of the State schools for the twelve months. From the total cost to the State in that colony, the receipts from the Education Reserves, £37,160, have not been deducted, as the capitation grant is now reduced by an amount equivalent to the rents derived from these reserves, so that practically they are paid into the Consolidated Revenue. The figures do not give the whole expense to the State, as most of the principal teachers enjoy residences for which no rent charge is made. In the case of New South Wales, the annual value of these residences is £35,000 :—

Colony.	Expended on Administration and Maintenance.	Receipts from Fees, Rents, &c.	Net Cost to State, excluding Premises.	Expended on School Premises.
	£	£	£	£
New South Wales.....	594,555	74,866	519,689	56,752
Victoria*	583,273	5,817	577,456	10,897
Queensland	181,556	.....	181,556	14,232
South Australia	137,315	13,796	123,519	7,172
Western Australia.....	32,567	2,353	30,214	33,769
Tasmania.....	33,113	1,134	31,979	5,384
New Zealand	422,491	3,623	418,868	53,534
Australasia	1,984,870	101,589	1,883,281	181,740

* Year ending 30th June, 1897.

In the colonies of Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, and New Zealand, primary education is free; in the other three colonies a small fee is charged, but, as will be seen from the table, the revenue derived from this source is very small in Tasmania and Western Australia. In New South Wales the fee charged is 3d. per week for each child, the sum payable by one family being limited to one shilling; and the receipts amount to a considerable sum annually, totalling £74,866 in 1896. Free education is, of course, given to those children whose parents cannot afford to pay for them, and the number of children so treated during last year was 28,420—equal to 11·29 per cent. of the gross enrolment of distinct pupils. In Tasmania, the teachers are allowed to retain the bulk of the fees collected, their salaries being fixed accordingly. Thus, in 1896, the fees amounted to £9,794, of which the Government took £1,134, as shown above, and the teachers retained the balance of £8,660. In the smaller schools the fees go wholly to the teacher, and in the larger the State takes a small share where the amount received is moderate, but a more substantial part where the fees amount to hundreds per annum. Free education is, as in New South Wales, granted in cases of necessity, and for this purpose free public schools were established in Hobart and Launceston; but as it was considered that this system affixed a brand of pauperism to the children making use of them, they have now been abolished, and the pupils find free education at the ordinary schools. The other colony where a fee is still charged for primary education is Western Australia; but there free instruction is granted for a number of reasons, such as inability to pay the fee, living over a mile from the nearest school, and having made over 400 half-day attendances in the previous year; and in 1896, out of a gross enrolment of 9,008 pupils, free education was granted to 3,006, of which inability to pay the fee was assigned in only 741 cases. Further, the Secretary of Education has recommended the abolition of fees in the case of all children under 14 years of age. The receipts, amounting to £2,353, set down in the above table, consisted exclusively of fees.

Although primary instruction is free in Victoria, South Australia, and New Zealand, yet Queensland is the only colony where no fees were received in 1896; but, as pointed out on a previous page, the State receives contributions from local districts towards the construction of school buildings, the amount of such contributions in 1896 being £2,905. In Victoria fees are charged for instruction in extra subjects, such as book-keeping, shorthand, algebra, Euclid, French, Latin, and science. During last year extra subjects were taught in 128 schools, and the fees collected represent £1,780 of the sum of £5,817 shown above, the balance consisting of £3,435 derived from the sale of departmental publications, and £602 from rents, which, although not applied towards the reduction of the departmental expenditure by the Government, has been so treated here. In South Australia the receipts during 1896 included £7,295 from rents, £3,835 from sale of

books and school material, and £2,633 from fees. Towards the revenue from fees, the Advanced School for Girls contributed £1,400, the balance of £1,233 representing fees which were payable in 1896 by pupils in the fifth class who had passed the standard of education, but which have now been abolished by the new Minister for Education. The receipts of £3,623 in New Zealand were made up of fees, donations, rents, sales, etc., received by the Education Boards, and represent the whole local contributions.

It will be seen from the above table that, excluding the expenditure on school premises, the net cost of public instruction in Australasia in 1896 was £1,883,281. This is equivalent to £3 15s. for each child in average attendance during the year; while, if the expenditure on buildings is taken into account, the amount reaches £4 2s. 2d. per child. The figures for each of the seven colonies are presented below:—

Colony.	Net Cost to State, per scholar in average attendance.	
	Excluding School Premises.	Including School Premises.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
New South Wales	3 13 1	4 1 1
Victoria	4 2 1	4 3 7
Queensland	3 6 10	3 12 1
South Australia	3 1 1	3 4 8
Western Australia.....	4 13 4	9 17 9
Tasmania	2 15 7	3 4 11
New Zealand	3 16 8	4 6 6
Australasia	3 15 0	4 2 2

In the matter of expenditure per child in average attendance, New South Wales now occupies a medium position, although a few years back the cost of public instruction in that colony was higher than in any of the other provinces. Careful retrenchment has been effected in the department, without impairing the efficiency of the service. Most of the colonies, however, show a reduction in their expenditure on education. Comparing the first with the last year of the quinquennial period ended 1896, there has been a reduction in the expenditure on administration and maintenance equal to 7s. 4d. per child in average attendance in New South Wales, £1 1s. 5d. in Victoria, 14s. 11d. in Queensland, and 5s. 2d. in South Australia.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Before passing to the consideration of private schools, reference may be made to the encouragement of secondary education by the State, apart from grants to the Universities. In New South Wales there are numerous private colleges of a high class, but the only one now receiving assistance from the Government is the Sydney Grammar School, which has a statutory endowment of £1,500 per annum. There are, however, five State High Schools in the colony—two for boys and three for girls—where higher education may be obtained at a moderate cost; as well as 100 Superior Schools, in the higher classes of which pupils are prepared for the public examinations. In 1896 the expenditure on the High Schools amounted to £6,579. Of the High School pupils, 84 secured passes at the junior and 13 at the senior examinations, while 53 qualified for matriculation; and 4 senior and 298 junior passes were secured by the Superior Schools, as well as 57 junior passes by other public schools not classed as such. A scheme of scholarships for High and Superior Schools, and for the University, is in existence. In 1896, 110 candidates were successful at these examinations. Fifty-seven secured scholarships and 41 bursaries for High and Superior Schools; 2, bursaries at the Sydney Grammar School; and 10, University bursaries.

In Victoria, as previously pointed out, extra subjects are taught for a small fee at 128 of the public schools. Secondary education was also liberally encouraged by the State by annually granting 200 scholarships at private colleges, tenable for a period of three years, to State school pupils. The retrenchment scheme, to which reference has been made, has, however, seen the abolition of these scholarships; but the pupils have not been left to their own resources entirely, for the principals of the private colleges have stepped in and now offer a large number of scholarships to the children attending State schools. At the examination for such scholarships, held in December, 1896, 425 candidates from State schools and 12 from private schools presented themselves, and 127 scholarships were awarded. The Department annually bestows a number of exhibitions to the University on pupils who have gained scholarships at secondary schools. At the examinations for these exhibitions, held in January, 1897, 28 candidates were successful. There are at present 49 exhibitions.

Steps have recently been taken in Queensland to add to the curriculum of the State schools, in order that they may be brought more into line with the superior public schools of New South Wales. The State Education Act Amendment Act of 1897 extends the field of instruction in the two highest classes of those schools, adding Euclid and Algebra, a branch of science, the study of an English classic, and a fuller course of English history, to the subjects taught. Secondary education, however, has long been provided for by the liberal endowment of the private grammar schools, and by a system of scholarships for these schools, which at present number ten. Each is subsidised to the extent of £1,000 annually; and the total amount of endowments and grants by

the State to these institutions to the end of 1896 was £226,535. The scholarships at these schools annually awarded by the Government to State school pupils were formerly 128 in number. In 1896, 279 children presented themselves for examination, and 95 boys and 33 girls were successful. The total number of State scholars attending grammar schools in that year was 231, of whom 169 were boys and 62 were girls. In 1897 it was thought desirable to make some changes in the system, with the object, first, of bestowing the scholarships only upon children possessed of more than ordinary ability; second, of allowing the successful candidates to select the school at which they wished to study; third, of granting additional aid in cases where it was necessary for the child to leave home in order to attend school, and the parents were unable to pay for his maintenance except under their own roof; and, fourth, of granting some encouragement to students at Agricultural Colleges. With these objects in view, it has been decided in future to grant, instead of 128 scholarships at specified schools, 36 scholarships, providing free education at any grammar school; 8 bursaries, providing free education at any grammar school, with an allowance for board not exceeding £30 per annum; and 4 bursaries, providing free board and instruction as resident students at Gatton Agricultural College. These are all tenable for a period of three years.

In South Australia the Advanced School for Girls was attended by 110 pupils in 1896. The fees amounted to £1,400, and the expenditure to £1,200, so that there was a profit on the year's transactions of £200. There are four bursaries for this school annually awarded to State school pupils. Scholarships to public schools, six in number, are also awarded annually by the State, as well as nine University scholarships, namely, three entrance scholarships, three first-year undergraduate scholarships, and three second-year undergraduate scholarships. In Western Australia there is a high school for boys at Perth, which is subsidised by the Government to the amount of £500 annually. In 1896 the number of pupils on the roll was 124, and the average daily attendance was 101. Two State scholarships for this school, valued at £75 each and tenable for three years, are awarded annually. The Government also offers annually ten bursaries of the value of £10 to children attending the elementary schools of the colony—five to boys, and five to girls. In Tasmania a system of exhibitions was at one time in force, but none have been granted since 1893. New Zealand has 24 incorporated or endowed secondary schools, with a regular teaching staff of 132, and a visiting staff of 49. At the end of 1896 there were 2,614 pupils on the rolls, of whom all but 168 were over 12 years of age. For that year the receipts amounted to £57,643, including £26,935 derived from interest on investments and rents of reserves, and £22,451 from fees. These schools, it should be noted, are not supported directly by the State. Some have endowments of land, and others receive aid from the rents derived from the Education Reserves administered by the School Commissioners.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

At the end of 1896 there were 2,774 private schools in Australasia, with a total teaching staff estimated at 8,057. The total number of pupils on the rolls was 151,009, and the average attendance, 117,049. Below will be found the figures for the individual colonies. For the first time, the returns for Western Australia include those schools which were assisted by the State, and from which the Government subsidy was withdrawn at the end of 1895. Prior to 1896 these schools were included in the returns of the Department of Education:—

Colony.	Schools.	Teachers.	Enrolment.		Average Attendance.
			Total.	Percentage of Population.	
New South Wales...	893	3,087	53,967	4.19	43,069
Victoria	939	2,357	46,288	3.93	30,615
Queensland	185	619	12,953	2.78	11,208
South Australia ...	232	670	11,458	3.19	9,984
Western Australia	56	176	4,032	3.37	3,074
Tasmania	186	420	8,364	5.12	6,912
New Zealand	283	728	13,947	1.97	12,187
Australasia ...	2,774	8,057	151,009	3.53	117,049

* Estimated.

In New South Wales there has been a large increase in private schools during the past five years. Since 1891 the number of schools has increased from 704 to 893, and the enrolment from 45,018 to 53,967. Of the private schools in the colony, 293 are Roman Catholic, as compared with 51 connected with the other Churches, while 549 are undenominational; but of the scholars enrolled, more than two-thirds—36,552—are in attendance at Roman Catholic schools, while 3,099 attend Church of England schools; 543, schools belonging to other denominations; and 13,773, the undenominational schools. Since 1891 the pupils of the Roman Catholic schools have increased by 19 per cent., which is rather less than the general rate of increase. Many of these private schools are institutions of a high class. Only one—the Sydney Grammar School—is assisted by the State, which provides a statutory endowment of £1,500 per annum. In 1896 the staff of this school consisted of 17 teachers; the total enrolment was 458; the average enrolment, 378; and the average daily attendance, 362. The receipts for the year totalled £8,163, of which £6,550 represented fees; while the expenditure was £7,865.

The increase in the enrolment in the private schools of Victoria during the last five years has not been great, only amounting to 2,200.

In this colony the principals of a number of the private colleges have granted scholarships at their institutions to State school pupils since the Government retrenched in this respect. These colleges are not subsidised by the State.

Of the 185 private schools in Queensland, the principal are the ten grammar schools, which are situated at Brisbane, Ipswich, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Townsville, and Toowoomba. In each of the first four towns there are two schools—one for girls and one for boys. In 1896 the teaching staff of the grammar schools consisted of 50 permanent and 16 visiting teachers; the aggregate number of pupils on the rolls was 797; and the average daily attendance, 698. As previously mentioned, each of the ten schools receives an annual grant of £1,000 from the State. During 1896 the total receipts amounted to £23,494, and the expenditure to £22,689, of which salaries and capitation fees absorbed £13,995.

There is no special information available with respect to the private schools in South Australia. In Western Australia the principal private institution is the Perth High School for Boys, which receives an annual subsidy of £500 from the Government. The school is under the supervision of a Board of Governors. In 1896 the teaching staff numbered 5; the total number of pupils enrolled was 124, of whom 22 were boarders; and the average daily attendance was 101. The receipts for the year amounted to £1,909, and the expenditure to £1,846.

Included with the 186 private schools in Tasmania are 13 grammar schools and colleges, 6 of which are undenominational in character, 3 are connected with the Church of England, 2 with the Roman Catholic Church, 1 with the Wesleyan Church, and 1 with the Society of Friends. There were 92 permanent teachers at these institutions in 1896, and accommodation was provided for 2,252 students. The average attendance during the year was 1,452, of whom 461 were of the age of 15 years and upwards. As in New South Wales, the majority of the pupils at private institutions in New Zealand are enrolled at the Roman Catholic Schools. In 1896 the number of schools belonging to this denomination was 115, at which 9,590 scholars were enrolled, with an average daily attendance of 8,240.

STATE AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

As almost the whole of the children enrolled at the schools of Australasia are over 5 and under 15 years of age, that period may be taken as the school age of the colonies; and assuming that the proportion which the children of such ages bear to the total population is the same now as it was when the last census was taken in 1891, there were 1,001,050 children of school age in Australasia in 1896, while 878,061 pupils were enrolled in the State and private schools. The estimated number of children of school age and the net enrolment of scholars in each province will be found below. It should not be forgotten, however,

that the composition of the population of some of the colonies has considerably changed during the past few years. It is quite obvious, for instance, that the percentage of children must be very much less now in Western Australia than it was in 1891, while the proportion in other colonies must be higher, on account of the departure of many bread-winners in search of employment. Some allowance has been made on this account; but they are changes which are not accurately determinable at the present time, and should be kept in view when considering the following figures :—

Colony.	Estimated Children of School Age.	Net Enrolment of Scholars.
New South Wales	300,923	275,570
Victoria	259,266	255,303
Queensland	102,233	94,707
South Australia	90,471	71,402
Western Australia	19,535	11,959
Tasmania	39,905	24,136
New Zealand	188,717	144,984
Australasia	1,001,050	878,061

It is estimated that, of the scholars enumerated above, 619,478, or 70·55 per cent. of the net enrolment, are, on an average, in daily attendance. There is, it will be seen, great room for improvement in most of the colonies in the attendance at school of children of ages at which they might very well be receiving instruction. Of course, many such children are exempt by law from school attendance, the maximum school age in Queensland, for instance, being 12 years. Compared with the total population of each colony, the proportion of children enrolled was as follows :—

	Net Enrolment per cent. of Population.
New South Wales	21·40
Victoria	21·67
Queensland	20·31
South Australia	19·90
Western Australia	10·00
Tasmania	14·76
New Zealand ..	20·52
Australasia.....	20·51

This shows a net school enrolment in Australasia of rather more than one in every five inhabitants—a proportion as favourable as that of any European country.

The number of children attending school has increased at a far greater rate than the actual number of children of school age, showing that the advantages of education have been of late years more within the

reach of the masses than formerly. The number of children attending school in various years since 1861 was as follows :—

1861	130,060
1871	312,130
1881	670,776
1891	803,800
1896	878,061

From 1861 to 1896 the children of school age increased by 306 per cent., but the number of children in attendance at school increased by no less than 575 per cent. during the same period.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

The advance of education is hardly more clearly indicated by the institution and success of Colleges and Universities than is the progress of wealth or the attainment of leisure. In Australia the earliest attempts to provide for what may be termed the luxuries of education were made in New South Wales in 1852, and in Victoria in 1855, when the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne respectively were established. No other colony of Australasia was at that time sufficiently advanced in wealth and population to follow the example thus set; but New Zealand in 1870, South Australia in 1874, and Tasmania in 1890, each founded a University. In all cases the Universities are in part supported by grants from the public funds, and in part by private endowments and the fees paid by students.

The Government endowment, lecture fees, and income from other sources, received by the Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Tasmanian Universities in 1896, were as follow :—

University.	Government Endowment.	Lecture Fees.	Other Sources.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
Sydney.....	11,400	8,171	11,923	31,494
Melbourne	12,250	15,359	828	28,437
Adelaide	3,201	4,064	4,305	11,570
Tasmania.....	2,500	112	266	2,878

In addition to the above annual endowment, the Adelaide University has received a perpetual endowment of 50,000 acres of land from the Government of South Australia. The University of New Zealand has a statutory grant of £3,000 a year from Government, and an additional income of about £2,500 from degree and examination fees. Of the affiliated colleges, Auckland University College is in receipt of a statutory grant of £4,000 a year from Government. The University of Otago derives a sum of about £5,500 annually from rents of reserves.

The number of students attending lectures in 1896 is shown below. In New Zealand the students keep their terms principally at the University of Otago, the Canterbury College, and the Auckland University College. In addition to the 16 unmatriculated students who attended classes at the University of Sydney in 1896, there were 396 persons who attended extension lectures during the year :—

University.	Students attending Lectures.		
	Matriculated.	Not Matriculated.	Total.
Sydney	438	16	454
Melbourne	536	132	668
Adelaide	105	215	320
New Zealand	430	247	677
Tasmania	28	9	37
Total	1,537	619	2,156

Attached to the University of Sydney there are three denominational colleges for male students, and a fourth, undenominational in its character, for female students. In Melbourne there are three affiliated denominational colleges, one of which contains a hall for the accommodation of female students. In Adelaide and Hobart there are no affiliated colleges attached to the University; and in New Zealand the University itself is an examining and not a teaching body, the students keeping their terms at three undenominational colleges at Dunedin, Christchurch, and Auckland, besides several smaller institutions which have supplied a few graduates.

The Australasian Universities are empowered to grant the same degrees as the British Universities, with the exception of degrees in Divinity. In all the Universities women have now been admitted to the corporate privileges extended to male students; and at the Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide Universities this includes qualifying for degrees in medicine.

The number of degrees conferred by the five Universities, including those bestowed on graduates admitted *ad eundem gradum*, is as follows :—

Sydney.....	1,471
Melbourne	2,452
Adelaide	394
New Zealand	746
*Tasmania.....	14

* Not including *ad eundem* degrees.

and there are over 1,500 students qualifying for degrees at the present time.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Technical instruction is given in nearly all the capital cities of the Australasian colonies, as well as in many other parts of the country, and there is every probability that instruction in such matters will before long be still further extended. The State expenditure on this important branch of education, in five out of the six colonies where technical instruction is given, will be found below ; similar information for South Australia is not available :—

	£
New South Wales	24,815
Victoria.....	12,000
Queensland	2,157
Tasmania	842
New Zealand	1,928

In New South Wales, during the year 1878, a sum of £2,000 was granted by Parliament towards the organisation of a Technical College, and for five years the work of the institution was carried on in connection with the Sydney School of Arts. In 1883, however, a Board was appointed by the Government to take over its management, and the Technical College thenceforth became a State institution. Towards the end of 1889 the Board was dissolved, and the institution came under the direct control of the Minister of Public Instruction. The College, which, with the Technological Museum, is housed in a fine building at Ultimo, Sydney, is open to both male and female students. Branch technical schools have been established in the suburbs of Sydney and in many of the country districts, and technical instruction is also given in some of the public schools. In 1896 there were 200 technical classes in operation, of which 83 were held in Sydney and suburbs, 97 in the country districts, and 20 in connection with the public schools. The enrolment at these classes was 7,119, namely, 3,880 in Sydney and suburbs, 2,285 in the country districts, and 954 at the public schools. The number of individual students under instruction during the year was 5,396. In 1896 a Technical College was opened at Newcastle, and a new College at Bathurst in June, 1898. During the year the expenditure by the Government on technical education amounted to £24,815, of which £20,976 was expended on the Technical College and branch schools, and £3,839 on account of Technological Museums. Fees to the amount of £3,611 were received from the students.

Technical education in Victoria has extended rapidly, but while the Government of New South Wales has wholly borne the cost of this branch of instruction, that of Victoria has received great assistance from private munificence, the Hon. F. Ormond, M.L.C., having given £15,500 to assist in the establishment of a Working Men's College. At the end of 1896 there were 18 Schools of Mines and Technical Schools receiving

aid from the State. This number is less than that of the previous year, in consequence of a decision of the Department to restrict technical instruction in Melbourne and suburbs to the Working Men's College. The total State expenditure during the year was £12,000.

Technical education has well advanced in South Australia. The School of Design in Adelaide during 1896 had 354 students on the roll, and there were branch schools at Port Adelaide and Gawler with an enrolment of 15 and 36 students respectively. The School of Mines and Industries, founded in 1889, had an enrolment of 805 students in 1896. Also, manual instruction is imparted in the public schools.

In Queensland technical education is active. There are eleven Technical Colleges in existence, for the most part having connection with the Schools of Art. They are situated at Brisbane, South Brisbane, Bundaberg, Charters Towers, Cooktown, Gympie, Mackay, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Townsville, and West End, Brisbane. The State grants a subsidy of £ for £ of fees contributed by students. In 1896 the total payments of the State to these institutions amounted to £2,157. The total receipts of the Colleges during the year reached a sum of £4,453; and the expenditure was £3,878, of which salaries of teachers absorbed £2,206. The number of individual students receiving instruction was 1,501, namely, 782 males and 719 females. Legislative powers have been taken for the establishment of a School of Mines, but the work has not yet been commenced.

In Tasmania the foundations of new Technical Schools were laid in 1889 in Hobart, and there is a branch school in Launceston. The schools are under the direction of local Boards of Advice, the members of which act directly under the Minister in charge of education. The number of distinct students in 1896 was 334, of whom 115 were under tuition at Hobart, and 219 at Launceston. The State aid during the year was £842. Western Australia is only now extending its educational operations so as to embrace technical education. A site has been selected and plans are being considered for the erection of a Technical College at Perth.

In New Zealand there is a School of Mines in connection with the University of Otago, and other two Schools of Mines in mining districts; a School of Engineering and Technical Science, in connection with the Canterbury College; and an Agricultural College at Canterbury. Under the Manual and Technical Elementary Instruction Act of 1895, State aid is granted to classes established for the purpose of imparting instruction in such branches of science and art as are encouraged by the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, and the City and Guilds of London Institute. Workshops have been established in connection with some of the public schools, and part of the school day may be given to elementary manual instruction. In connection with the South Kensington Museum and the City and Guilds Institute examinations, 615 passes were secured in 1896. For the financial year ended March, 1897, the expenditure on technical instruction was

£1,928, of which £1,832 represented grants in aid of technical classes. At the three mining schools, the number of students is about 230. There are 43 students at the Canterbury Agricultural College, and 87 at the School of Engineering and Technical Science in connection with the Canterbury College.

GENERAL EDUCATION.

Striking evidence of the rapid progress made by these colonies in regard to education is afforded by a comparison of the educational status of the people as disclosed by the four census enumerations of 1861, 1871, 1881, and 1891. In those years the numbers who could read and write, read only, and who were unable to read were as follow :—

Degree of Education.	New South Wales.	Victoria.	Queensland.	South Australia.	Western Australia.	Tasmania.	New Zealand.	Australasia.
1861.								
Read and write	188,543	327,800	17,181	72,207	8,446	48,281	67,998	730,456
Read only	46,024	56,945	3,714	18,629	1,559	13,137	8,922	148,930
Cannot read	110,293	155,577	9,164	35,994	5,585	28,559	22,101	373,273
1871.								
Read and write	296,741	478,572	74,940	115,246	18,703	55,939	177,419	1,217,560
Read only	56,391	70,999	12,080	21,123	2,614	13,945	19,240	196,392
Cannot read	150,849	181,957	33,084	49,257	4,036	29,444	59,734	508,361
1881.								
Read and write	507,067	651,567	136,718	200,057	19,697	74,967	346,228	1,936,301
Read only	49,872	49,535	13,631	15,267	2,429	9,605	27,323	167,162
Cannot read	195,029	161,244	63,176	64,541	7,582	31,133	116,352	639,087
1891.								
Read and write	835,570	908,767	276,381	236,514	34,254	103,138	484,198	2,878,822
Read only	43,536	32,817	14,618	9,571	2,061	6,287	24,002	133,792
Cannot read	244,848	198,821	102,719	74,346	13,407	37,242	117,558	789,001

The figures in the preceding table refer to the total population, and the number of illiterates is therefore swollen by the inclusion of children under school-going age. If the population over 5 years of age be considered in comparison with the total population, the results for the whole of Australasia will be as follow :—

Degree of Education.	Whole Population.				Population over 5 years of age.			
	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.
Read and write	730,456	1,217,560	1,936,301	2,878,822	730,339	1,130,145	1,936,111	2,878,813
Read only	148,930	196,392	167,162	133,792	143,908	190,545	161,295	128,445
Cannot read	373,273	508,361	639,087	789,001	168,929	285,286	243,683	262,515
Total	1,252,659	1,922,313	2,742,550	3,801,615	1,043,176	1,605,976	2,340,989	3,269,773

The following table affords a comparison of the number of each class in every 10,000 of the population for the same periods :—

Degree of Education.	Whole Population.				Population over 5 years of age.			
	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.
Read and write	5,831	6,334	7,060	7,573	7,001	7,038	8,270	8,804
Read only	1,189	1,022	610	352	1,380	1,186	639	393
Cannot read	2,980	2,644	2,330	2,075	1,619	1,776	1,041	803
Total	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000

It will be seen, therefore, that while in 1861 there were only 7,001 persons who could read and write out of every 10,000 people over 5 years of age, the number in 1891 had increased to 8,804, while those who were totally illiterate had in the same period decreased from 1,619 to 803.

Looking at the matter still more closely with reference to age, it will be seen that the improvement in education is most marked in the case of the rising generation. The following table shows the degree of education of all children between the ages of 5 and 15 years in 1861, 1871, 1881, and 1891, numerically and per 10,000 :—

Degree of Education.	Total between 5 and 15 years.				Per 10,000 children.			
	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.
Read and write	114,353	288,154	482,719	674,012	4,637	5,911	7,058	7,565
Read only	68,038	102,316	86,574	69,640	2,759	2,099	1,266	782
Cannot read	64,237	96,986	114,654	147,280	2,604	1,990	1,676	1,653
Total	246,628	487,456	683,947	890,932	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000

The proportion of those able to read and write has, therefore, grown from 4,637 to 7,565 in every 10,000 children during the thirty years which the table covers, while the number of those able to read only in 1891 was not much over one-fourth of what it was in 1861, and the wholly illiterate had decreased by more than one-third during the period.

The Marriage Register affords further proof of the advance of education, and it has the further advantage of giving annual data, while the census figures are only available for decennial periods.

The numbers of those who signed the Marriage Register by marks were as appended. Where a blank is shown the information is not available.

Colony.	1861.			1871.			1881.			1891.			1896.		
	Marriages.	Marks.		Marriages.	Marks.		Marriages.	Marks.		Marriages.	Marks.		Marriages.	Marks.	
		M.	F.		M.	F.		M.	F.		M.	F.		M.	F.
New South Wales..	3,222	596	989	3,953	573	768	6,284	347	525	8,457	273	248	8,495	198	173
Victoria	4,434	..	..	4,693	342	650	5,896	171	245	8,780	110	133	7,625	56	50
Queensland	320	..	..	970	..	..	1,703	84	169	2,905	88	109	2,823	61	79
South Australia ..	1,158	..	..	1,250	..	..	2,303	100	159	2,315	40	49	2,183	25	38
Western Australia.	149	..	..	159	..	..	197	..	..	413	..	..	1,077	33	31
Tasmania	717	..	..	598	..	..	856	..	..	988	..	..	964	53	43
New Zealand	878	..	..	1,864	..	..	279	105	190	3,805	53	64	4,843	30	34
Australasia	10,878	..	..	13,487	..	..	20,523	..	..	27,663	..	..	28,010	456	448

The percentages for those colonies for which the necessary information is available are worked out in the following table :—

Year.	Males.	Females.	Total.
1861	18.50	30.69	24.60
1871	10.58	16.40	13.49
1881	4.14	6.61	5.38
1891	2.12	2.27	2.20
1896	1.63	1.60	1.61

The percentage in 1896 was, therefore, less than one-fifteenth of that in 1861, and there is every reason to expect that in the course of another few years it will be still further diminished.

The wonderful increase which has taken place in the quantity of postal matter carried points indirectly to the spread of education. The following table shows that while in 1851 only 2,165,000 letters and post-cards and 2,150,000 newspapers passed through the Australasian Post-offices, these numbers had in 1896 increased to 201,264,900 and 113,613,000 respectively :—

	Letters and Post-cards.	Newspapers.
1851	2,165,000	2,150,000
1861	14,061,000	10,941,400
1871	30,435,300	17,252,700
1881	80,791,700	43,802,000
1891	183,694,900	95,879,760
1896	201,264,900	113,613,000

The following are the numbers of letters and newspapers per head of population in each of the six years mentioned :—

	Letters per Inhabitant.	Newspapers per Inhabitant.
1851	4·7	4·7
1861	11·3	8·8
1871	15·7	8·9
1881	29·1	15·8
1891	47·8	24·9
1896	47·0	26·5

In 1896 the number of letters per inhabitant was ten times, and that of newspapers more than five and a half times, larger than in 1851.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

In all the colonies public libraries have been established. The Public Libraries in Melbourne and Sydney are splendid institutions, the former comparing favourably with many of the libraries in European capitals. The following table shows the number of libraries which furnished returns, and the number of books belonging to them, for the latest year for which information is available :—

	No. of Libraries.	No. of Books.
New South Wales	324	510,000
Victoria	424	1,029,743
Queensland	86	129,883
South Australia	156	242,189
Western Australia	25	34,558
Tasmania	40	78,075
New Zealand	304	409,604
Australasia	1,359	2,434,052

In Western Australia, there are 17 Agricultural Halls, 13 Mechanics' Institutes, 5 Miners' Institutes, and 6 Miscellaneous Institutes, as well as 8 Associations meeting in rented premises. The returns, which were collected for the first time in 1896, show that 39 of these institutions were possessed of libraries, containing approximately 19,548 volumes. The Victoria Public Library in Perth, a Government institution, possesses 15,010 volumes.