

EDUCATION.

IT would have been indeed strange if communities so prosperous as the Austrasian Colonies had neglected the important matter of Education, and in every province of the group it will be found that the State has taken the subject in hand—to an extent, in some instances, far beyond what has been done in most of the countries of the old world. In each colony provision is made for primary education, and in all of them there are grammar and high schools, by means of which those who have the desire may qualify themselves for the higher studies of the University. So bountiful has been 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. No doubt in the very early days of colonization there was but little attention paid to education; but as soon as the sharp struggle for bare existence was over, attempts were made to provide in some degree the 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 denominations were naturally the first to build schools and provide teachers, but there was always a large proportion of persons who objected to denominationalism, especially those who belonged to denominations not subsidized by the State; and hence there arose a National or non-sectarian system, which has in the course of time almost monopolized the educational field.

Progress of
Education.

Denominational
Schools.

In all the Australasian Colonies the State system of education is secular, and Western Australia is the only one where denominational education is at all subsidised. The Education Acts of each colony contain compulsory clauses, but the enforcement of these is not everywhere equally strict. In Victoria, for instance,

Primary Educa-
tion.

compulsory attendance at school has been insisted upon with great rigour, 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, and New Zealand, education was entirely free during 1890 and 1891, and South Australia instituted the same principle at the beginning of 1892. In New South Wales, Western Australia, and Tasmania, small fees are charged, but are not enforced where the parents can reasonably plead poverty.

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

New South Wales	6 to 14 years.
Victoria	6 to 13 "
Queensland	6 to 12 "
South Australia ..	7 to 13 "
Western Australia ..	6 to 14 "
Tasmania	7 to 14 "
New Zealand.....	7 to 13 "

New South
Wales.

State aid to
Denominational
Schools.

In New South Wales there was for many years a dual system 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, equally 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 of the country towns there were 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 relating to education 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 was not brought about without much agitation, lasting over a considerable period. A League was formed, having for its object the establishment of education, secular, compulsory, and free, and in

1880, under the auspices of Sir Henry Parkes, the measure establishing the present system became law. In New South Wales education is non-sectarian, though facilities are afforded to clergymen to give religious instruction within specified school hours to those children whose parents desire it. 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. In New South Wales in 1890 there were 2,423 public schools, with an average attendance of 116,665 children, out of a mean quarterly enrolment of 170,257, or a gross enrolment of 195,241. 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, except in the case of the Sydney Grammar School, which receives an annual subsidy, amounting in 1890 to £3,650. Scholarships and bursaries have been founded in connection with many of these schools. Educational affairs are in New South Wales under the direction of the Minister for Public Instruction.

Present system
of Public
Instruction.

Schools in New
South Wales.

In Victoria, under an Act passed in 1872, a system of free, compulsory, and secular primary education is in force, under a Minister for Education, 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 additional subjects, for which a small fee has to be paid. At the end of 1890, Victoria had 2,170 State schools, with an average attendance of 133,768 scholars, out of a net enrolment of 204,497, or a gross enrolment of 250,097. Religion is strictly forbidden to be taught during school hours, and not at any time must a teacher impart it. Secondary education is principally in the hands of private or denominational establishments. The higher education is supplied by the University with its affiliated colleges.

Victoria.

Queensland.

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 last departmental report, however, hints that the compulsory provision will soon have to be applied. The primary schools at the end of 1890 were 621 in number, with a gross enrolment of 72,375 pupils, a mean quarterly enrolment of 57,640, and an average daily attendance of 40,836. Secondary education is provided for by means of grammar schools, which are liberally assisted by the State. Queensland, as yet, has no University of her own, but sends a fair proportion of students to the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne.

South Australia.

The South Australian system of primary education, which was introduced in its present form in 1878, is very similar to those already described; it is presided over by a responsible Minister, with an Inspector-General and other officials. Education is compulsory, secular, and free. To the end of 1891 a small weekly fee had to be paid by all parents able to do so, but at the beginning of 1892 education in South Australia became entirely free. At the end of 1890 there were 551 primary schools, with a gross enrolment of 49,193 children, a net enrolment of 44,804, and an average attendance of 27,552. Children who have attained a certain standard of instruction 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 at Adelaide, though small, is efficient.

Western
Australia.

Quite a different system of education prevails in Western Australia. Under the Elementary Education Act of 1871, primary

education is imparted in Government schools, which are entirely supported by the State. Private schools are also assisted from the public purse, on condition of submitting to Government inspection on secular subjects. There is a high school at Perth, and a grammar school at Freemantle, and further encouragement is given to secondary instruction by the institution of scholarships which are open for competition. At the end of 1890 there were 82 Government and 19 assisted schools in the colony, with an enrolment of 3,352 and 1,662, and an average attendance of 2,535 and 1,283 respectively. The local boards have power to enforce compulsory attendance.

In Tasmania there is no separate Minister for Education, but Tasmania. the department is under the control of the Treasurer, who has especial charge over matters relating to primary instruction. There are public schools in every country town throughout the colony, and several in Hobart and Launceston. They now number 240 in all, the average attendance being 8,898, out of a gross enrolment of 18,156 children and an average monthly number on the rolls of 12,640. The principle of compulsion is nominally in force. Secondary education is encouraged by means of superior schools and a system of scholarships; and annual examinations are held at which successful candidates may gain the degree of Associate of Arts. There is no University in Tasmania.

New Zealand has an educational system which is entirely New Zealand. secular and free. There is no separate department of education, but matters of this kind are looked after by one of the members of the Cabinet. 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 for the support of scholarships, with other grants for school buildings, training of teachers, &c. At the close of 1890 there were 1,200 public schools thus supported by the State, with an average attendance

NUMBER OF STATE SCHOOLS.

of 96,670 scholars out of a total enrolment of 117,912. High schools, colleges, and grammar schools provides the means for acquiring secondary education, and there is an University, which, like those of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, is empowered to confer the same degrees as the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, except as regards Divinity.

Maori Schools.

In addition to the ordinary primary schools the New Zealand Government maintained schools for native children in localities where there are few or no Europeans. The number of scholars altogether in 1890 was 2,659, and the teaching staff numbered 100. The net expenditure for 1890 was £17,376.

Number of State Schools.

The following table gives the number of State schools in each of the colonies during 1890, together with the number of teachers and the average attendance of scholars :—

Colony.	Number			Scholars in average attendance.		Percentage of scholars in average attendance to mean population.
	of State Schools.	of Teachers.	of Scholars in average attendance.	To each School.	To each Teacher.	
New South Wales	2,423	4,181	116,665	48	28	10·6
Victoria	2,170	*4,223	133,768	62	32	12·0
Queensland	621	1,539	40,836	66	27	10·5
South Australia	551	1,067	27,552	50	26	8·7
Western Australia	82	129	2,535	34	20	5·4
Tasmania	240	469	8,898	37	19	6·2
New Zealand.....	1,200	2,978	96,670	81	32	15·6
Australasia.....	7,287	14,586	426,924	59	29	11·4

* Exclusive of 485 Sewing Mistresses.

In proportion to population the average attendance at State ^{Attendance at State Schools.} schools is highest in New Zealand, Victoria being second, and New South Wales third. New Zealand occupies a very creditable position with regard to education, 15·9 per cent. of the whole population attending school, against 15·4 per cent. in Victoria, and 13·7 per cent. in New South Wales. Western Australia stands lowest on the list, owing, no doubt, to the sparseness of its population.

The number of children of "school age" in all the colonies for ^{Children of School age.} 1890 was 887,600. As almost the whole of the children enrolled at the different schools are over 5 or under 15 years of age, that period has been adopted as "school age" for purposes of computation in the following table :—

Number of children of school age :—

New South Wales	266,100
Victoria	244,300
Queensland	86,200
South Australia	81,900
Western Australia	10,200
Tasmania	36,000
New Zealand	162,900
	887,600
Australasia	887,600

Against the above total the gross enrolment of scholars, at ^{Enrolment of Scholars.} both State and private schools at the same period was :—

New South Wales	237,853
Victoria	290,278
Queensland	83,463
South Australia	60,059
Western Australia	5,014
Tasmania	22,576
New Zealand	133,655
	832,898
Australasia	832,898

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE.

A comparison of the two tables above shows that while in Victoria the number of scholars enrolled actually exceeds the number of children from 5 to 15 years of age by 46,000, and while in Queensland there is a deficiency of only 2,700, there is room for improvement in the other colonies. In New South Wales the number of children not enrolled at any school is 28,200, in South Australia 21,800, in Western Australia 5,200, in Tasmania 13,400, and in New Zealand 29,200. For the whole of Australasia there is thus a number of 54,700 children between 5 and 15, amounting to 6·2 per cent. of the total population of that age, which are either taught at home or receive no education at all.

Private and
Denominational
Schools.

Out of the total gross enrolment of 832,898 children, as just given, 702,837 were enrolled in schools under the control of the Governments of the various colonies, and 130,061 were on the rolls of private and denominational schools.

Average daily
Attendance.

The average daily attendance at the State schools of all the colonies was 426,924, or 60·7 per cent. of the gross enrolment. Calculated on the same percentage, the average attendance at the various private schools would amount to 79,003, and that of all schools to 505,927. Compared with the total population of each Colony, the proportion of children enrolled was as follows :—

Colony.	Enrolment per cent. of population.
New South Wales	21·6
Victoria	25·9
Queensland	21·5
South Australia	18·9
Western Australia	10·6
Tasmania	15·7
New Zealand ..	21·5
Australasia	22·3

This shows a school enrolment in Australasia of about two to every nine 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 population, showing that the advantages of education have been of late years more within the reach of the masses than formerly :—

Number of Children attending Public and Private Schools.

1861	130,060
1871	312,130
1881	670,776
1890	832,898

Population from 1861 to 1890 nearly trebled itself, but the number of school children in 1890 was about six and a half times as great as in 1861.

In the State Schools of New South Wales the cost per child was until 1888 higher than in the other Australian Colonies ; the figures for the two last years, however, show that that Colony has now reduced its expenditure per child below that of Victoria and Queensland. The following figures do not include cost of buildings :—

	Total cost per child of the average attendance.		
	£	s.	d.
New South Wales	4	2	8
Victoria	5	8	2
Queensland	4	8	2
South Australia	3	6	5
Western Australia.....	3	19	10
Tasmania.....	3	9	2
New Zealand	3	14	3

The cost per child in average attendance at State Schools in Anstralasia therefore averaged £4 7s. 11d. for the year 1890.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

The following table shows the State expenditure on primary education for 1890, school fees received, and cost of buildings:—

Colony.	Administration and Maintenance of Schools.	Fees Received.	Net Expenditure, exclusive of Buildings, &c.	Expenditure on Buildings, &c.
	£	£	£	£
New South Wales...	553,819	71,827	481,992	150,441
Victoria	*723,284	.....	723,284	112,309
Queensland	180,033	.....	180,033	†39,057
South Australia.....	116,120	†24,641	91,479	15,997
Western Australia...	11,494	1,377	10,117	.....
Tasmania.....	40,596	9,826	30,770	10,876
New Zealand	358,717	.....	358,717	39,225
Australasia	1,984,063	107,671	1,876,392	367,899

* 30th June, 1891. † £3,397 was collected locally in aid of this. ‡ Of which amount £13,413 was collected by teachers, and retained as part of salaries.

Number of Private Schools.

The number of schools, and of scholars enrolled in private schools, in 1890, was as follows:—

Private Schools.

Colony.	Number of Schools.	Number of Teachers.	Gross Enrolment of Scholars.	
			Number.	Percentage to Population.
New South Wales.....	697	2,393	42,612	3·9
Victoria	789	2,037	40,181	3·6
Queensland.....	136	499	10,188	2·6
South Australia.....	363	881	15,255	4·8
Western Australia	19	43	1,662	3·5
Tasmania.....	101	*.....	4,420	3·1
New Zealand	320	883	15,743	2·5
Australasia	2,425	†6,736	130,061	3·5

* Information not available. † Exclusive of Tasmania.

Technical instruction is given in nearly all the capital cities of each of the Australian Colonies, and there is every probability that instruction in such matters will before long be very much extended. So far the expenditure on this important branch of education can only be got for the colonies enumerated below, which was in 1890 :—

	£
New South Wales	25,439*
Victoria.....	38,613
Queensland	1,232
Tasmania	1,684

* In addition to this amount, £2,902 was collected as fees from students, which sum was retained by the lecturers.

In New South Wales, during the year 1878, a sum of £2,000 was granted by Parliament towards the organization of a Technical College, and for five years the work of the institution was carried on in connection with the School of Arts. In 1883, however, a board was appointed by the Government to take over its management, and the Technical College became thenceforth a State institution. Towards the end of 1889 the Board was dissolved, and the Technical College came under the direct control of the Minister of Public Instruction.

The college is open to students of each sex, and, during 1890, 383 female students attended for at least one term. The number of individual students in 1890 averaged 2,822 persons. The average enrolment per term was 1,686.

Branch technical schools have also been established in the suburbs, and in the northern, southern, and western districts of the Colony. In 1890 these country classes had an average of 2,126 students enrolled.

The Government have erected a new building for the technical college and technological museum at Ultimo, in the western portion of the metropolis.

Cost of technical education.

In 1890 the expenditure of the Board of Technical Education amounted to £25,439, and, in addition to this, the sum of £2,902 was contributed by the students as fees. The Parliamentary vote for the year was £29,850.

Technical education in Victoria.

Technical education in Victoria is extending rapidly, but while the Government of New South Wales has wholly borne the cost of this class of education, 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. There are now over 2,000 students on the rolls of this institution. There are besides this college, the Schools of Mines and Design, wholly supported by the Government, and other technical schools in the various important centres of the Colony.

South Australia and Queensland.

Technical Education has well advanced in South Australia. The School of Mines and Industries has, in Adelaide, about 100 students on the roll, and a branch school has been established at the important mining centre of Moonta. Also in Queensland Technical Education is active; the classes are worked in conjunction with the Metropolitan School of Arts, the number of students on the rolls being nearly 600.

Technical schools in Tasmania.

In Tasmania the foundations of new Technical Schools were laid in 1889 in Hobart, but there are branch schools in Launceston. The schools are under the direction of local Boards of Advice, the members of whom act directly under the Minister in charge of Education. The number of students in 1890 was 250, with an average attendance of 150.

Western Australia and New Zealand have not extended their educational operations so as to embrace Technical Education.

Education as shown by marriage registers.

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 :—

Marriages, Australasia.

	1861.		1871.			1881.			1890.			Marriage Register signed with marks.	
	Marriages.	Marks.		Marriages.	Marks.		Marriages.	Marks.		Marriages.	Marks.		
		M.	F.		M.	F.		M.	F.		M.		F.
New South Wales	3,222	596	989	3,953	573	768	6,284	347	525	7,876	218	208	
Victoria	4,434	*	*	4,693	342	650	5,896	171	245	9,187	138	141	
Queensland	320	*	*	970	o	*	1,703	84	169	3,195	94	115	
South Australia...	1,158	*	*	1,250	*	*	2,308	100	159	2,235	47	55	
Western Australia	149	*	*	159	*	*	197	*	*	278	*	*	
Tasmania	717	*	*	598	*	*	856	*	o	955	*	*	
New Zealand	878	*	*	1,864	*	o	3,279	105	190	3,797	62	73	
	10,878			13,487			20,523	807	1288	27,523	559	592	

* Information not available.

The percentages for those Colonies where the necessary information is available is worked out in the following table :—

Percentages of Mark Signatures.

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
1890	2.13	2.25	2.19

The percentage in 1890 was therefore less than one-tenth of that in 1861, and there is every reason to expect that in the course of another few years the proportion will be still further diminished.

Percentages of mark signatures.
Spread of education shown by Postal Returns.

LETTERS AND NEWSPAPERS.

The Post Office returns of the various Colonies point indirectly to the spread of education, through showing the wonderful increase in the distribution of letters and newspapers that has taken place. The following table shows that while in 1851 only 2,165,000 letters and 2,150,000 newspapers passed through the Post Offices, these numbers had in 1890 increased to 172,596,000 and 96,309,000 respectively. The figures for 1890 in regard to letters and newspapers differ from those on page 184, allowance having been made for intercolonial postage counted by both the receiving and the despatching colonies :—

Australasia.

	Letters.	Newspapers.
1851	2,165,000	2,150,000
1861	14,801,000	11,640,000
1871	32,122,000	18,354,000
1881	85,483,000	47,611,000
1890	172,596,000	96,309,000

Letters per
inhabitant.

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

	Letters per Inhabitant.	Newspapers per Inhabitant.
1851	4·7	4·7
1861	11·8	9·3
1871	16·6	9·5
1881	30·9	17·2
1890	46·2	25·8

In 1890 the number of letters per inhabitant was, therefore, nearly ten times, and that of newspapers five and a half times, larger than in 1851.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Public Libraries. In all the Colonies Public Libraries have been established, those in the capital cities generally going by the name of "The Public Library," while those in the country towns are known as Schools of Art, Mechanics' Institutes, &c. The Free 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 in the latest years for which returns have been furnished :—

	No. of Libraries.	No. of Books.
New South Wales.....	199	320,856
Victoria	379	688,650
Queensland.....	81	106,339
South Australia.....	134	149,470
Tasmania	38	67,390
New Zealand.....	303	292,108
Total of six Colonies	1,134	1,624,813

UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES.

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, and South Australia in 1874, each founded an 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 and Lecture Fees received by the Sydney and Adelaide Universities in 1890, and by the Melbourne University in 1889, were as follows :—

	Government Endowment.	Lecture Fees.
Sydney	£18,634	£5,365
Melbourne	16,500	14,983
Adelaide	3,182	3,348

In addition to the above annual endowment the Adelaide University has received a perpetual endowment of 50,000 acres of land from Government.

The number of students attending lectures in 1890 (Melbourne in 1889) is shown in the figures herewith :—

University.	Students attending Lectures.		
	Matriculated.	Not Matriculated.	Total.
Sydney	301	555	856
Melbourne	534	3	537
Adelaide	122	167	289
New Zealand (Affiliated Colleges)	355	251	606
Total	1,312	976	2,288

Affiliated
Colleges.

Attached to the University there are in Sydney three Colleges, while a fourth is in course of establishment for female students. In Melbourne there are also three Affiliated Colleges, and in both capitals these are connected with different religious bodies. In New Zealand there are four Affiliated Colleges—at Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland, but, except in Christchurch, which is the seat of the Senate, these are wholly undenominational in character. In Adelaide there are no Affiliated Colleges attached to the University; and in New Zealand the University itself is an examining and not a teaching body, founded mainly on the principles of the London University.

Degrees.

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, including *ad eundem* degrees, conferred by those Universities of which returns have been made are as follows :—

Sydney	859
Melbourne (to 1889).....	572
New Zealand.....	395

and there are upwards of 1,300 students qualifying for degrees at the present time.