

EDUCATION.

IT would, indeed, have been strange if communities so prosperous as the Australasian 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 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 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. No doubt in the very early days of colonisation 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 subsidised by the State, and 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, Western Australia in 1895 being the last colony to abolish subsidies to denominational schools. The Education Acts of each colony contain compulsory clauses, but the enforcement of these is not everywhere equally strict. In Victoria, for instance, 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, New Zealand, and South Australia the education provided by the State is entirely free of charge to the parents; while 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	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 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 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 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. 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 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 the 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 additional subjects, for which a small fee has to be paid. Religion is strictly forbidden to be taught during school-hours, and not at any time must a State teacher give instruction therein. Secondary education is principally 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 thirty children, and the local district must contribute one-fifth of the cost of 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 of the necessary building, provided the proposals of the promoters are submitted to him before they are carried out. Towards the cost of administration and maintenance of this class of school the Government makes a capitation grant, equal to the average cost per head of children in State schools. Secondary education is provided for by means of grammar schools, which are liberally assisted by the State. Although steps are now being taken to secure the establishment of such an institution, Queensland has no University of its own, but sends a fair proportion of students to the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne.

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 primary instruction became entirely free. 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 being given in the schools. 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 making 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 £20,000, to be divided between the schools in like proportions to those which governed the distribution of the annual vote in 1895. There is a high school at Perth, and a grammar school at Fremantle, 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. There are public schools in every country town throughout the colony, and several in Hobart and Launceston. The principle of compulsion is nominally in force ; and special religious instruction is given by the Church of England clergy out of school-hours. 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. 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, Sciences, and Laws. The first degree, one of B.A., was taken in 1894. The Government grants the institution a sum of £3,000 annually.

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 for the 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.

In the whole of Australasia at the end of 1894 there were 7,542 State Schools, including what are termed Provisional Schools in Queensland, but excluding 65 schools maintained by the Government of New

Zealand for the Maori children in districts where there are few or no Europeans. Exclusive of 778 sewing-mistresses, of whom 71 were in New South Wales, 427 in Victoria, 104 in South Australia, and 176 in New Zealand, the teaching staff numbered 15,088; and the average attendance of scholars during the year was 462,744, giving an average number of 61 per school and 31 per teacher, and forming 11·3 per cent. of the mean population of Australasia. The figures for the individual colonies will be found appended :—

Colony.	Schools.	Teachers.	Scholars in average attendance.			
			Total.	Per School.	Per Teacher.	Per-centage of population.
New South Wales	2,508	4,382	130,089	52	30	10·5
Victoria	1,956	4,202	132,083	68	31	11·2
Queensland	696	1,429	45,050	65	32	10·3
South Australia	609	1,110	37,886	62	34	10·8
Western Australia	116	173	3,552	31	20	4·8
Tasmania	247	486	10,594	43	22	6·8
New Zealand	1,410	3,306	103,490	73	31	15·2
Australasia	7,542	15,088	462,744	61	31	11·3

It should be noted that in those colonies where secondary schools are wholly maintained by the State no attempt has been made to separate them from primary schools, and the figures given therefore refer to all Government educational institutions, with the exception of industrial and technical schools. As a rule, secondary education in the colonies is provided by private establishments, which are more or less subsidised by the State. In New South Wales, however, there are a number of Government high schools where much good work is done. The percentage of the population of New Zealand—15·2—shown as in average attendance at the State schools, it must also 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. These “Native” schools in New Zealand, of which the number has already been given as 65, had a teaching-staff of 126 in 1894, with an enrolment of 2,424 and an average attendance of 1,775 scholars, and the expenditure on the schools during the year amounted to £15,390. Of the children who received instruction at the institutions, 73½ per cent. were pure Maori, 10 per cent. were half-caste, and 16½ per cent. were European or, in the words of the Minister of Education, “inclining to the European” race.

The gross enrolment of pupils at the State schools of Australasia during 1894 was 797,728, while the net enrolment, or the number of distinct children, came to 681,695, forming 16·6 per cent. of the mean population. In most of the colonies the net enrolment is obtained in a somewhat empirical manner—by deducting a certain percentage from the gross figures; but in one or two—notably in Victoria—the actual figures are found by the Education Department. The following table gives the gross and net enrolment of each colony:—

Colony.	Gross Enrolment.	Net Enrolment.	
		Total.	Percentage of Population.
New South Wales	234,392	206,265	16·7
Victoria	231,321	203,409	17·3
Queensland	76,039	67,726	15·4
South Australia.....	64,048	57,986	16·6
Western Australia.....	5,037	4,533	6·2
Tasmania	19,967	14,476	9·3
New Zealand	166,924	127,300	18·7
Australasia	797,728	681,695	16·6

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.

The departmental reports of the various colonies show that during the year 1894 the cost of administration and maintenance of the State schools of Australasia was £1,980,387, while the revenue from fees, rents of land dedicated to school purposes in New Zealand and South Australia, and sales of books amounted to £127,757, leaving a net cost to the State of £1,852,630, excluding a sum of £153,768 expended on school premises. Assistance to private schools where primary or secondary education is given is not included in these figures. In New Zealand and Queensland assistance to such secondary schools is of a liberal character—the Government of the Northern colony subsidising

its grammar schools at the rate of £1,000 each annually. In New South Wales the only private school subsidised is the Sydney Grammar School, which is endowed by statute to the extent of £1,500. Formerly the annual grant to this institution was much larger, but in 1895 Parliament withdrew its additional allowance. The expenditure on the State schools in each of the colonies will be found below. The figures for New South Wales and some of the other provinces do not give the whole expense to the State, as most of the principal teachers enjoy residences for which no rent charge is made :—

Colony.	Expended on Administration and Maintenance.	Receipts from Fees, Rents, &c.	Net Cost to State, excluding Premises.	Expended on School Premises.
	£	£	£	£
New South Wales.....	587,263	70,693	516,570	73,792
Victoria*	620,989	1,902	619,087	6,651
Queensland	181,191	.....	181,191	5,925
South Australia	130,549	14,181	116,368	8,241
Western Australia.....	17,362	1,601	15,761	10,643
Tasmania	33,632	908	32,724	3,664
New Zealand	409,401	38,472	370,929	44,852
Australasia	1,980,387	127,757	1,852,630	153,768

* Year ending 30th June, 1895.

Against the sum of £5,925 expended on school premises in Queensland must be set local contributions of £1,405 towards the cost of buildings ; and in the case of Tasmania the revenue of £908 includes contributions from the school fees to the amount of £606, the teachers retaining £9,052 of the fees received during the year. Excluding the cost of school premises, the amount expended on each child in average attendance at the State schools of Australasia was £4 0s. 1d. Until the year 1888 the average expenditure in New South Wales was higher than in any of the other colonies ; but in 1894 it was lower than that of Victoria, Western Australia, and Queensland. For the individual colonies the net cost to the State of every child in average attendance, excluding expenditure on buildings, was as follows :—

Colony.	Net cost per child.		
	£	s.	d.
New South Wales	3	19	5
Victoria	4	13	9
Queensland	4	2	6
South Australia	3	14	4
Western Australia.....	4	8	9
Tasmania	3	1	9
New Zealand	3	11	8
Australasia	4	0	1

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

During the years 1893 and 1894 no statistics were collected of the private schools in South Australia. Taking the 1892 figures for this colony, there were 2,635 private schools in Australasia at the end of 1894, with an enrolment of 141,178 scholars. The teaching staff, inclusive of that of Tasmania, for which colony, in the absence of official returns, an estimate has been made, numbered 7,558. Hereunder will be found the return for each of the seven colonies :—

Colony.	Schools.	Teachers.	Enrolment.	
			Total.	Percentage of Population.
New South Wales.....	864	2,986	51,395	4·2
Victoria	872	2,131	44,038	3·7
Queensland	168	501	11,041	2·5
South Australia.....	254	695	11,647	3·3
Western Australia	21	73	2,381	3·1
Tasmania	154	*420	6,049	3·9
New Zealand	302	752	14,627	2·2
Australasia	2,635	7,558	141,178	3·4

* Estimated.

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 961,240 children of school age in Australasia in 1894, while 938,906 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. But these are changes which

are not accurately determinable at the present time, although they should be kept in view when considering the following figures :—

Colony.	Estimated Children of School Age.	Net Enrolment of Scholars.
New South Wales	290,792	251,493
Victoria	251,782	238,045
Queensland	96,081	77,552
South Australia	88,109	69,527
Western Australia	15,081	6,529
Tasmania	38,050	19,497
New Zealand	181,345	138,417
Australasia	961,240	801,060

There is, it will be seen, great room for improvement in all 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.

The average daily attendance at the State schools of all the colonies during 1894 was 462,744, or 58 per cent. of the gross enrolment. Calculated on the same percentage, the average attendance at the various private schools would amount to 81,883, and that of all schools to 544,627. Compared with the total population of each colony, the proportion of children enrolled was as follows :—

Colony.	Enrolment per cent. of Population.	
	Gross.	Net.
New South Wales	23·1	20·3
Victoria	23·4	20·2
Queensland	19·8	17·7
South Australia	21·6	19·9
Western Australia	10·1	8·9
Tasmania	16·7	12·5
New Zealand	26·7	20·4
Australasia	22·8	19·5

This shows a gross school enrolment in Australasia of three to every thirteen inhabitants, and a net enrolment of 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 population, as will be seen by the following

table, showing that the advantages of education have been of late years more within the reach of the masses than formerly :—

1861	130,060
1871	312,130
1881	670,776
1891	803,800
1894	801,060

Population from 1861 to 1894 more than trebled itself, but the number of school children in 1894 was nearly six and a fifth times as great as in 1861.

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, 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, and Adelaide Universities in 1894, were as follow :—

	Government Endowment.	Lecture Fees.	Other Sources.	Total.
Sydney.....	£13,200	£7,700	£12,590	£33,490
Melbourne	13,750	10,618	6,379	30,747
Adelaide	3,801	3,129	5,238	12,168

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 £2,000 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 Tasmanian University also receives an annual grant from the State, the amount in 1894 being £3,000.

The number of students attending lectures in 1894 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 64 unmatriculated students who

attended classes at the University of Sydney in 1894, there were 934 persons who subscribed to the extension lectures delivered in different parts of New South Wales and Queensland during the year :—

University.	Students attending Lectures.		
	Matriculated.	Not Matriculated.	Total.
Sydney	528	64	592
Melbourne	564	30	594
Adelaide	93	187	280
New Zealand	427	303	730
Tasmania	20	8	28
Total	1,632	592	2,224

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	1,249
Melbourne	1,652
Adelaide	353
New Zealand	638
Tasmania	7

and there are over 1,600 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	25,083
Victoria.....	11,980
Queensland	1,362
Tasmania	1,509
New Zealand	600

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 became thenceforth 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, and of the latter the attendance in some terms has been as high as 400. In 1894 the enrolment of both sexes was 2,956.

Branch Technical Schools have been established in the suburbs, and in the northern, southern, and western districts of the Colony. In 1894 these suburban and country classes had a total of 3,008 students enrolled. Technical classes are also held in connection with a number of public schools. The total enrolment in these classes during 1894 was 579.

In 1894 the expenditure of the Government on Technical Education, including the Technological Museum, amounted to £25,083, of which £3,735 was paid on account of the erection of Technical Colleges and Museums at Bathurst and Newcastle. During the year fees to the amount of £3,278 were received from the students and retained by the teachers.

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 1894 there were 25 Schools of Mines and Technical Schools receiving aid from the State, payments being made by the Government on account of 2,970 students who had attended the requisite number of meetings (seven) during the last quarter. The total State expenditure during the year was £11,980.

Technical Education has well advanced in South Australia. The School of Painting and Design in Adelaide during 1894 had 268 students on the roll, and branch schools, with an enrolment of 74 students

during 1894, have been established at Port Adelaide and Gawler. The School of Mines and Industries, founded in 1889, and worked to some extent in connection with the School of Painting and Design, had an enrolment of 688 students in 1894. There is also a School of Mines at Moonta. In Queensland Technical Education is active; the classes are worked in conjunction with the Metropolitan School of Arts, and with the Schools of Art at Ipswich, Toowoomba, Gympie, Maryborough, Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Mackay, Charters Towers, and Townsville.

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 1894 was 549, and the Government subsidy £1,509.

Western Australia is only now (1896) extending its educational operations so as to embrace Technical Education; but in New Zealand there are Technical Schools under Education Boards at Wellington and Wanganui, while technical instruction is also given at the Milton District High School and under the auspices of the Dunedin Technical Classes Association. The State assistance to these institutions during 1894 amounted to £600. In June, 1895, a Technical School was also opened in Auckland.

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	1,550	13,137	8,922	148,930
Cannot read	116,293	155,577	9,164	35,904	5,585	28,550	22,101	373,273
1871.								
Read and write	296,741	478,572	74,040	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	181,057	33,084	49,257	4,036	29,444	50,734	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	49,372	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	2,378,822
Read only	43,536	32,817	14,618	9,571	2,061	6,287	24,902	133,792
Cannot read	244,848	198,821	102,719	74,346	13,467	37,242	117,553	789,001

The figures in the preceding table refer to the total population, and the number of illiterates is therefore unduly swollen by 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	1,936,801	2,378,822	730,330	1,130,145	1,936,111	2,378,813
Read only	148,930	196,392	167,162	133,792	143,908	190,545	161,295	123,445
Cannot read	373,273	508,361	639,087	789,001	168,929	285,286	243,533	262,513
Total	1,252,659	1,922,313	2,742,550	3,801,615	1,043,176	1,605,976	2,340,939	3,369,773

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	689	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	732
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 30 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.			1894.		
	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	7,666	142	150
Victoria	4,434	..	..	4,693	342	650	5,896	171	245	8,780	110	133	7,029	62	61
Queensland	320	..	..	970	..	..	1,703	84	169	2,905	88	109	2,502	64	80
South Australia ..	1,158	..	..	1,250	..	..	2,308	100	159	2,315	40	49	2,009	38	46
Western Australia.	149	..	..	159	..	..	197	..	..	413	..	..	482	10	10
Tasmania	717	..	..	598	..	..	856	..	..	988	..	..	847	54	88
New Zealand	878	..	..	1,864	..	..	3,279	105	190	3,805	53	64	4,178	43	63
Australasia	10,878	..	..	13,487	..	..	20,523	..	..	27,663	..	..	24,803	413	448

The percentages for those colonies for which the necessary information is available is 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
1894	1·67	1·81	1·74

The percentage in 1894 was therefore less than one-fourteenth 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 correspondence passing through the Post Office points indirectly to the spread of education. The following table shows that while in 1851 only 2,165,000 letters and 2,150,000 newspapers passed through the Australasian Post-offices, these numbers had in 1894 increased to 190,919,200 and 96,044,800 respectively:—

	Letters.	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
1894	190,919,200	96,044,800

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
1894	46·4	23·4

In 1894 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.

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, for the latest year for which information is available :—

Colony.	No. of Libraries.	No. of Books.
New South Wales	243	400,000
Victoria	438	1,000,349
Queensland	76	120,031
South Australia	145	175,178
Tasmania	39	85,073
New Zealand	298	330,770
Total of six colonies	1,239	2,111,401

In Western Australia Mechanics' Institutes are to be found in most places of any importance, but no information regarding them is available. The Victoria Public Library in Perth, a Government institution, possesses 8,300 volumes.