

RELIGION.

THE progress of all matters relating to denominational Religion since the early years of Australasian settlement has been steady and remarkable. For the first fifteen years after the foundation of the Colony of New South Wales only a single denomination was recognized by Government, or possessed either minister or organization—the Established Church of England. In those days the whole of Australasia was ecclesiastically within the Diocese of the Bishop of Calcutta, of which it formed an Archdeaconry; this continued until 1836, when the Bishopric of Australia was constituted, and the Rev. William Grant Broughton, D.D. (formerly Archdeacon), was consecrated the first Bishop. There are now twenty Bishoprics in the Colonies, including the Sees in New Zealand. Each Colony preserves its autonomy in church matters, but the Bishop of Sydney is nominal head or Primate within the boundaries of Australia and Tasmania. In 1872 the ties between the church and the various Colonies under the jurisdiction of the Primacy were strengthened by the adoption of one common constitution. A general assembly of representatives of each of these Colonies meets in Sydney every five years to discuss church affairs in general. New Zealand is excluded from this amalgamation, as it possesses a Primacy of its own. The Synodical system of Church Government, by means of a legislative body, consisting of the clergy and representatives of the laity, prevails throughout Australasia, whether as individual Colonies or collectively as a group.

Church of
England.

Church of Rome. In 1803 a grudging recognition was extended to Roman Catholics, one of whose chaplains was then placed on the Government

establishment; but it was not until 1820 that any regular provision was made for an adequate staff of clergy. Until 1834 the Roman Catholics of Australia and Tasmania were under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Mauritius, but in that year Sydney was constituted a see, and the Rev. John Bede Polding, D.D., was consecrated Bishop, with jurisdiction over the whole of the Continent, and Tasmania. Some eight years later this Episcopate was raised to the rank of an Archbishopial See. The present Archbishop of Sydney, who was created a Cardinal in 1885, is the head of the Roman Catholic Church throughout Australasia, and to assist him in the church administration there are five Archbishops, fifteen Bishops, and four Titular Bishops throughout the Colonies.

Amongst the earliest free colonists who settled in the Hawkes-^{Presbyterian.}bury district was a small party of Presbyterians, and one of the first places of worship erected in the Colony was put up in 1810 by their voluntary exertions. Services were conducted there for years before any ordained minister of the denomination reached New South Wales; indeed it was not until 1823 that the Rev. Dr. Lang, the first Presbyterian minister in Australia, arrived in Sydney. The Presbyterian Church is united in a federated union, but the church in each Colony acts independently as regards local ecclesiastical administration, and preserves its autonomy in respect to funds and property. A Moderator is elected annually as a representative head in each Colony, but he cannot exercise independent jurisdiction.

The first Wesleyan minister came to New South Wales^{Wesleyan.} in 1815, but it was not until 1821 that a Wesleyan place of worship was erected in Sydney, and it was even later before the denomination was allowed to share in the Government provision for religion. Till 1873 the church in Australasia was affiliated with the British Wesleyan Conference, but in that year it was constituted an independent and separate conference. The church in each Colony holds annual sessions, and at triennial periods a general conference is convened for the whole body in Australasia.

State-aid.

In the eyes of the State all religions are equal in Australasia. State aid to all denominations has been for many years practically abolished in all the Colonies except Western Australia. South Australia, in 1851, was the first Colony to withdraw such aid after it had been in force only three years, and Queensland, in 1860, shortly after the assembling of the first Parliament, passed an Act abolishing any future maintenance to religion, and limited future payments to the clergy then actually in receipt of State aid. Only one of these now survives, who is in receipt of £100 per annum. New South Wales passed a similar Act in 1862, and the expenditure on this account, which in that year was over £32,000, had fallen in 1892 to £7,993. The other Colonies of the group subsequently abolished State aid with the exception previously mentioned, Victoria being the last to withdraw in 1875.

Proportion of
different bodies.

No other denominations beyond the four mentioned above were ever officially recognized, nor was any State contribution ever made towards the support of any other. This was no doubt owing to the fact that the greater portion of the inhabitants belonged to these persuasions. Nor has the enormous increase of population since then in any considerable degree altered this condition of things, though in different Colonies different bodies of Christians have represented a larger proportion of the people than in others. Thus, in New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria the proportion of Roman Catholics has been, and still is, larger than in the other Colonies, while in New Zealand it has been much smaller. Presbyterians bear a greater proportion to the population in New Zealand than in any other Colony, while Wesleyans and Lutherans are more numerous in South Australia than elsewhere. The adherents of the Church of England predominate numerically in all the Colonies.

The following tables show the number of adherents of the principal denominations in each colony at the census enumerations of 1871, 1881, and 1891 :—

Religious Denominations, 1871, 1881, and 1891.

| Colony. | Year. | Church of England. | Roman Catholics. | Presbyterians. | Wesleyan and other Methodists. | Congregationalists. | Baptists. | Lutherans. | Salvation Army. | Hebrews. | Mahomedans, Buddhists, Confucians, &c. | All other Religions. | Object to state Religion and Unspecified. | Total. |
|-------------------|-------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|----------|--|----------------------|---|-----------|
| New South Wales | 1871 | 229,243 | 147,627 | 49,122 | 39,566 | 9,253 | 4,151 | †... | †... | 2,395 | 7,455 | 9,223 | 5,946 | 503,981 |
| | 1881 | 342,359 | 207,606 | 72,545 | 64,352 | 14,328 | 7,307 | 4,836 | †... | 3,266 | 9,345 | 11,827 | 13,697 | 751,468 |
| | 1891 | 502,983 | 286,915 | 109,383 | 110,110 | 24,112 | 13,102 | 7,940 | 10,312 | 5,484 | 10,790 | 28,730 | 14,093 | 1,123,954 |
| Victoria | 1871 | 251,838 | 170,620 | 112,983 | 90,026 | 18,191 | 16,311 | †... | †... | 3,571 | 17,775 | 34,688 | 15,525 | 731,528 |
| | 1881 | 299,652 | 203,480 | 132,591 | 108,393 | 19,878 | 20,373 | 11,153 | †... | 4,330 | 11,292 | 36,149 | 15,055 | 882,346 |
| | 1891 | 401,375 | 248,585 | 166,911 | 148,429 | 22,099 | 27,878 | 15,535 | 13,519 | 6,459 | 6,987 | 59,249 | 22,814 | 1,139,840 |
| Queensland | 1871 | 43,764 | 31,822 | 15,373 | 7,206 | 2,647 | 2,897 | †... | †... | 291 | 3,188 | 10,215 | 2,701 | 120,104 |
| | 1881 | 73,920 | 54,376 | 22,609 | 14,351 | 4,764 | 5,583 | 16,889 | †... | 457 | 16,871 | 2,347 | 1,358 | 213,525 |
| | 1891 | 142,555 | 92,765 | 45,639 | 30,868 | 8,571 | 10,256 | 23,383 | 4,021 | 809 | 17,434 | 12,906 | 4,511 | 393,718 |
| South Australia | 1871 | 50,286 | 28,271 | 11,880 | 35,009 | 6,571 | 9,263 | †... | †... | 501 | 2,747 | 31,645 | 9,453 | 185,626 |
| | 1881 | 75,812 | 42,628 | 17,917 | 52,788 | 9,908 | 13,979 | 19,617 | †... | 762 | 4,151 | 28,061 | 14,242 | 279,865 |
| | 1891 | 89,271 | 47,179 | 18,206 | 60,857 | 11,882 | 17,547 | 23,328 | 4,356 | 840 | 4,255 | 27,724 | 14,986 | 320,431 |
| Western Australia | 1871 | 14,955 | 7,282 | 541 | 1,405 | 902 | 55 | †... | †... | 63 | †... | 150 | †... | 25,353 |
| | 1881 | 16,263 | 8,413 | 1,004 | 2,084 | 1,262 | †... | †... | †... | †... | 145 | 184 | 353 | 29,708 |
| | 1891 | 24,768 | 12,602 | 1,907 | 4,595 | 1,573 | 283 | 216 | 4 | 129 | 1,804 | 1,216 | 596 | 40,782 |
| Tasmania | 1871 | 54,404 | 22,657 | 9,296 | 7,371 | 4,031 | 955 | †... | †... | 238 | 4 | 2,829 | †... | 101,785 |
| | 1881 | 59,785 | 23,055 | 9,133 | 10,955 | 4,066 | 1,836 | †... | †... | †... | †... | 6,875 | †... | 115,705 |
| | 1891 | 73,169 | 25,800 | 9,756 | 17,150 | 4,501 | 3,285 | 421 | 1,216 | 84 | 968 | 5,143 | 5,174 | 146,667 |
| New Zealand | 1871 | 107,241 | 35,608 | 63,624 | 22,004 | 3,941 | 4,732 | †... | †... | 1,262 | 2,612 | 5,877 | 9,492 | 256,393 |
| | 1881 | 203,333 | 68,984 | 113,108 | 46,282 | 6,699 | 11,476 | 5,773 | †... | 1,536 | 4,936 | 12,499 | 15,367 | 489,933 |
| | 1891 | 250,945 | 87,272 | 141,477 | 62,346 | 6,685 | 14,825 | 5,616 | 9,383 | 1,463 | 3,928 | 26,088 | 16,630 | 626,658 |
| Australasia | 1871 | 751,731 | 443,887 | 262,319 | 202,587 | 45,536 | 38,364 | †... | †... | 8,321 | 33,781 | 94,627 | 43,117 | 1,924,770 |
| | 1881 | 1,071,124 | 608,542 | 368,907 | 299,205 | 60,905 | 60,554 | †... | †... | 10,351 | 46,740 | 97,942 | 60,012 | 2,742,550 |
| | 1891 | 1,485,066 | 801,118 | 493,369 | 434,355 | 79,423 | 87,176 | 76,439 | 42,811 | 15,268 | 46,166 | 161,055 | 78,804 | 3,801,050 |

* Estimated; religions were not enumerated at the Tasmanian Census of 1881.

Included in "All other Religions."

ADHERENTS OF EACH DENOMINATION.

PERCENTAGE OF EACH DENOMINATION.

The figures for 1891, in the table just given, are exclusive of aborigines, while in those for 1871 and 1881 a few civilized aborigines were included in the returns for New South Wales and Victoria.

The following table shows the percentage of the principal denominations to the total population of each Colony at the enumerations of 1871, 1881, and 1891:—

| Colony. | Church of England. | Roman Catholics. | Presbyterians. | Wesleyan and other Methodists. | Congregationalists. | Baptists. | All Others. |
|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| | per cent. | per cent. | per cent. | per cent. | per cent. | per cent. | per cent. |
| 1871 { New South Wales.. | 45·5 | 29·3 | 9·7 | 7·9 | 1·8 | 0·8 | 5·0 |
| Victoria | 34·4 | 23·3 | 15·5 | 12·3 | 2·5 | 2·2 | 9·8 |
| Queensland | 36·5 | 26·5 | 12·8 | 6·0 | 2·2 | 2·4 | 13·6 |
| South Australia ... | 27·1 | 15·2 | 6·4 | 18·9 | 3·5 | 5·0 | 23·9 |
| Western Australia .. | 59·0 | 28·7 | 2·1 | 5·6 | 3·6 | 0·2 | 0·8 |
| Tasmania | 53·5 | 22·3 | 9·1 | 7·2 | 4·0 | 0·9 | 3·0 |
| New Zealand | 41·8 | 13·9 | 24·8 | 8·6 | 1·5 | 1·9 | 7·5 |
| Australasia ... | 39·1 | 23·1 | 13·6 | 10·5 | 2·4 | 2·0 | 9·3 |
| 1881 { New South Wales.. | 45·6 | 27·6 | 9·6 | 8·6 | 1·9 | 1·0 | 5·7 |
| Victoria | 34·7 | 23·6 | 15·4 | 12·6 | 2·3 | 2·4 | 9·0 |
| Queensland | 34·6 | 25·5 | 10·6 | 6·7 | 2·2 | 2·6 | 17·8 |
| South Australia ... | 27·1 | 15·2 | 6·4 | 18·9 | 3·5 | 5·0 | 23·9 |
| Western Australia .. | 54·7 | 28·3 | 3·4 | 7·0 | 4·3 | ... | 2·3 |
| Tasmania | 51·7 | 19·9 | 7·9 | 9·5 | 3·5 | 1·6 | 5·9 |
| New Zealand | 41·5 | 14·1 | 23·1 | 9·4 | 1·4 | 2·3 | 8·2 |
| Australasia ... | 39·1 | 22·2 | 13·4 | 10·9 | 2·2 | 2·2 | 10·0 |
| 1891 { New South Wales.. | 44·8 | 25·5 | 9·7 | 9·8 | 2·1 | 1·2 | 6·9 |
| Victoria | 35·2 | 21·8 | 14·7 | 13·0 | 1·9 | 2·5 | 10·9 |
| Queensland | 36·2 | 23·6 | 11·6 | 7·8 | 2·2 | 2·6 | 16·0 |
| South Australia ... | 27·9 | 14·7 | 5·7 | 19·0 | 3·7 | 5·5 | 23·5 |
| Western Australia .. | 49·7 | 25·3 | 4·0 | 9·2 | 3·2 | 0·6 | 8·0 |
| Tasmania | 49·9 | 17·6 | 6·6 | 11·7 | 3·1 | 2·2 | 8·9 |
| New Zealand | 40·0 | 13·9 | 22·6 | 9·9 | 1·1 | 2·4 | 10·1 |
| Australasia ... | 39·1 | 21·1 | 13·0 | 11·4 | 2·1 | 2·3 | 11·0 |

From the foregoing tables it will be seen that, while there have been fluctuations in individual colonies, the relative strength of the principal denominations in the whole of Australasia has practically remained unaltered during the last twenty years. The Church of England at each Census numbered 39·1 per cent. of the population, while the Roman Catholic Church receded from 23·1 per cent. in 1871 to 22·2 per cent. in 1881, and still further to 21·1 per cent. in 1891. The Presbyterian Church also receded from 13·6 per cent. in 1871 to 13·4 per cent. in 1881, and to 13·0 in 1891, while the various Methodist bodies which have been classed together, increased from 10·5 per cent. in 1871 to 10·9 per cent. in 1881, and 11·4 per cent. in 1891. Congregationalists and Baptists taken together were equal at the three enumerations, but the former show a slight decrease during the twenty years, while the latter show a corresponding increase. The column headed "All others" also shows an increase from 9·3 per cent. to 11·0 per cent. during the period. This column contains all the minor denominations—the only ones amongst which that are at all numerous being Lutherans in Queensland and South Australia—those whose denomination could hardly be classed as a religion, and all those who, from conscientious scruples, took advantage of the clauses of the Census Acts by which the filling in of the column "Religious Denomination" was left optional.

While in 1871 the relative strength of the Church of England was greatest in the colonies in the following order:—Western Australia, Tasmania, New South Wales, New Zealand, Queensland, Victoria, and South Australia; the order in 1891 had changed to Tasmania, Western Australia, New South Wales, New Zealand, Queensland, Victoria, and South Australia.

The Roman Catholic Church in 1871 was relatively strongest in New South Wales, in 1881 in Western Australia, and in 1891 again in New South Wales, with Queensland and Victoria following closely and South Australia and New Zealand last on the list.

Relative strength of Denominations.

Church of England.

Roman Catholic Church.

Presbyterian
Church.

The Presbyterian Church has always been most numerous in New Zealand and Victoria, and weakest in Western Australia, South Australia, and Tasmania.

Methodists, &c.

The various Methodists Denominations were at each enumeration strongest in South Australia, where they numbered close upon one-fifth of the total population. They were also considerably above the average strength in Victoria, while the only Colony in which they fell much below the average was Queensland. Congregationalists and Baptists were also relatively most powerful in the Southern Colonies. The percentages shown in the column "All others" are unduly swollen in the case of Queensland and South Australia by the inclusion of Lutherans; were these omitted the numbers for 1891 would be fairly equal for all Colonies.

Salvation Army.

In the table showing the actual numbers of adherents of each of the principal denominations for 1891, the Salvation Army is a new element. Any adherents of this persuasion that may have existed in 1881 were grouped with "All other Religions."