

P. A. Registrar 7/14/89

REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

The following is an abstract of the report of the Minister of Education for the year 1888, which was laid yesterday on the table of the House of Assembly:—

BUILDINGS.—During the year no school-houses were built, but a residence for the teacher was completed at Gumeracha, and a movable structure of canvas was put up at the Anna Creek Railway Camp, and at the end of the year moved with the camp to Warrina. The total cost of the above, exclusive of sites, was £166 1s. The wooden school at Mount Melville was removed to Coobowie, and the one at the Hundred of Hall was taken to Wakefield. Buildings were purchased at Hacklin's Corner, Point Sturt, Spalding, and Undalya. The amount expended during the year from loan for school buildings, sites, furniture, &c., was £1,529 10s. 5d. Considerable improvements were effected to the schools at Grote-street, East Adelaide, Gawler, Hindmarsh, Lefevre's Peninsula, Port Adelaide, and Stirling East. The cost of improvements and repairs made during 1888 to ninety-seven schools was £2,287 4s. 6d. Since the passing of the Education Act of 1875 237 buildings have been erected. The total expenditure on school buildings since the passing of the present Act amounts to £438,786 13s. 9d., of which £381,810 14s. 2d. was paid from loan and £56,975 19s. 7d. from the vote for repairs and improvements.

SCHOOLS.—At the end of the year there were 250 public and 286 provisional schools, being an increase on the total for 1887 of 2 and 17 respectively.

ATTENDANCE.—The net number of children instructed during 1888—that is, not counting more than once those who attended more than one school—was 45,236, or 163 more than during the preceding year. The average daily attendance was 28,329, being 101 less than in 1887—a decrease which is explained by the falling-off in the attendance in the copper-mining districts. The average monthly attendance was 39,036, or 372 less than in 1887, and the average quarterly number of children who actually attended school was 38,592. The percentage of attendance to number under instruction was 62·62 as against 63·07 in 1887 and 63·05 in 1886.

THE COMPULSORY CLAUSE.—The following table shows the proportion of children who complied with the requirements of the Education Acts by attending thirty-five days in the quarter, and also the proportion of unsatisfactory cases:—

	1888			
	1st Qr.	2nd Qr.	3rd Qr.	4th Qr.
Children of compulsory age in attendance ..	25,427	25,313	24,979	24,614
Attended thirty-five days —percentage	76·95	84·40	89·34	85·59
Satisfactory reasons given for not attending —percentage — ..	19·29	12·60	8·35	10·47
Cases of neglect — percentage	3·76	2·94	2·31	3·94

FREE INSTRUCTION.—The free certificates granted in 1888 were 11,550, or 731 less than in 1887. The fees paid by the department have fallen from £3,280 19s. 10d. to £3,178 0s. 3d. The number of free children in schools where the teachers are paid a fixed salary has fallen from 7,397 to 6,002, and the number of fees reduced to 3d. per week was 48 in 1888, as against 113 in 1887.

TEACHERS.—Twenty-four teachers (9 males and 15 females) passed the certificate examination, and 12 male and 18 female students left the Training College in December. Of these 22 satisfied the examiners—2 being placed in the first division, 7 in the second, and 13 in the third—while 3 failed to pass. Five did not complete the examination. Two teachers completed their examination for certificates by passing in dictation and composition or writing. One teacher took the degree of Bachelor of Arts at the Adelaide University. The following passed the University higher public examinations:—Two in mathematics (Part I.), 5 in physics (Part I.), 1 in German, 5 in organic chemistry, 1 in biology and physiology, and 2 in geology. At Easter and Michaelmas 380 pupil teachers presented themselves for examination. There were 100 boys, of whom 72 passed, and 280 girls, of whom 163 passed. At the end of the year there were 405 male teachers and 529 female teachers of all classes, making a total of 934, as against a total of 1,092 in 1887, consisting of 423 male and 669 female teachers.

INSPECTION.—The Minister gives a synopsis of the results of the examinations, but, following our usual custom, we substitute for his Mr. Hartley's briefer statement, in which the results of both public and provisional schools are combined:—

	1887.	1888.	Incr.
Reading .. { General	87·64	90·89	3·25
.. { Expression	72·99	75·35	2·36
Spelling .. { Dictation	72·23	75·61	3·38
.. { Transcription bk. ..	83·73	87·09	3·36
Writing .. { Transcription	87·03	90·85	3·82
.. { Copybook	78·04	83·82	5·78
Arithmetic { Mental	50·74	54·15	3·41
.. { Slate	51·10	55·91	4·81
Geography	70·18	72·51	2·33
Grammar	67·77	71·33	3·56
History	58·93	59·28	·35
Composition	76·30	78·43	2·13
Needlework	91·22	93·27	2·05

A further comparison may be made by exa-

mining the average percentages of all the schools, and here again it will be seen that some progress has been made. The statement is as follows:—

AVERAGE PERCENTAGE.

	1887.	1888.	Incr.
Public Schools	73.75	76.43	2.68
Provisional Schools	68.51	71.17	2.66

BOARDS OF ADVICE.—A Board of Advice has been appointed for the District of Wasleys during the year. Out of a total of seventy-five Boards fifty-one have furnished reports of their proceedings.

EVENING SCHOOLS.—During 1888 there were twenty-nine evening schools open, or two more than in the preceding year. The number instructed was 424, as against 292 in 1887.

ADVANCED SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.—During the last quarter of the year the number of pupils was 127, being an increase of thirty-four on the number attending during the corresponding period of the previous year. The income during the year, including the fees for the holders of sixteen bursaries (£209 12s.), was £1,598 4s., and the expenditure was £1,233 9s. 8d. The cash profit was £155 2s. 4d.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND EXHIBITIONS.—South Australian Scholarship—Messrs. W. A. E. Tucker, B.A., LL.B., and W. J. Walker, B.A., are studying medicine at the University of Edinburgh. It appears from the periodical reports that they are both doing credit to the colony; but, unfortunately, Mr. Tucker has been obliged to apply for twelve months' leave of absence on account of ill-health. The scholarship held by Mr. J. W. Leitch, B.A., expired on December 31, 1888. It is with deep regret that the death of a South Australian scholar has to be recorded. Dr. Sydney Ernest Holder, after a University career of unusual distinction, was drowned in the Bay of Biscay on the eve of his departure for the colony, and a life of brilliant promise was thus cut short. On the recommendation of the Council of the University three University scholarships have been awarded. There were thirty-one candidates for the six vacant public school exhibitions and ten candidates for six bursaries.

FINANCE.—The net cost of the department, exclusive of buildings, was £77,910 16s. 3d., as against £83,139 15s. 9d. in 1887 and £78,909 18s. 9d. in 1886. The amount of school fees paid by parents was £24,101 2s. 2d., of which sum £14,456 2s. 2d. was retained by teachers. The same teachers received £3,178 0s. 3d. from the department on account of free scholars. The actual cost of the schools proper, including the expenses of management, inspection, Boards of Advice, Training College, payment for free scholars, books, &c. (less fees and sundry repayments), and the enforcement of compulsory clauses, was in 1888, £89,327 17s., or £2,989 14s. 6d. less than in 1887. To this sum would, however, have been added £750 bourses to provisional teachers, only that a change had been made in the date of payment.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.—A distinct and satisfactory advance has been made during the year in this form of education, than which none is more important for a new country, wherein it is so desirable to increase the number of producers and to develop the natural resources. The Government School of Mines and Industries has been successfully established, and, by latest reports, has now upon its students' roll nearly 100 scholars, for whom the course of study will be as follows:—

—First Year—Mathematics, physics, chemistry, drawing and modelling, applied mechanics. Second Year—Mathematics, mechanics, drawing, mineralogy, geology, assaying. Third Year—Mining and metallurgy in all branches. Two scholarships, providing one year's free instruction, are offered to the most deserving students in each year's course. Classes are also formed for teaching architectural drawing, bookbinding, cabinet-making, carpentry and joinery, carriage drafting, domestic economy (including cookery, dress designing, cutting, and making), electric engineering, electro-metallurgy, engraving, fitting and turning, lithography, masonry and stone-dressing, navigation, painting and graining, pattern-making, photography, plumbing, steam and the steam-engine, surveying, and wood carving. The school is under the management of a competent and hardworking Council, consisting of six Government nominees, specially selected for their knowledge of or sympathy with technical education, two members of the University Council, two members of the Board of Governors of the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery, one member of the Chamber of Manufactures, and one from the Trades and Labour Council. These gentlemen, to whom the thanks of the whole community are due, have made the work of organizing the new institution a labour of love, and have devoted much valuable time and attention to carrying out the details; hence the success which has attended their efforts. It has been proposed to extend the benefits of technical education to some of our larger country towns, and I am endeavouring to devise means whereby this can be accomplished by the establishment of branch Schools of Design affiliated with the Institutes, which would thus perform one of their most useful and legitimate functions. Drawing has been made a compulsory subject in the State schools, and the students in the Teachers' Training College are instructed in this subject by Mr. H. P. Gill, Master of the School of Design, while arrangements are being completed to provide a specially fitted and furnished room in the College for practical scientific teaching. There can be little doubt that the good work thus fairly initiated will be productive of the best results in the near future.