

pay small tuition fees; but in cases where the parents are not able to pay the fees the children are educated free of charge. Last year the free scholars numbered 2,418, and the school fees collected by the teachers amounted to £9,934 2s. 11d., being an increase of nearly £140 over the collections of the previous year.

Last year there were fourteen night schools for men and boys over age in operation, with a total of 136 scholars. Besides the Government Schools there are 187 Private Schools, attended by 8,691 pupils.

In 1895 it was found that 4,800 did not attend any school. Last year it was estimated that those who have not been under instruction at any time during their childhood did not then exceed two thousand.

The 280 Government Schools open at the end of the last school year may be classed as follows:

1. Full-time schools—	
(a) With normal average attendance of 20 or more scholars.....	197
(b) Provisional Schools.....	39
(c) Assisted Schools.....	11
2. Half-time schools.....	30
3. One-third time schools.....	3
	280

Last year the average number of pupils on the rolls from month to month was 16,125; 34 per cent. of these were in Grade I., 19 per cent. in Grade II., 19 per cent. in Grade III., 14 per cent. in Grade IV., 9 per cent. in Grade V., and 5 per cent. in Grade VI.; 24 per cent. were 4 years of age; 2.37 per cent., 5 years; 6.79 per cent., 6 years; 10.57 per cent., 7 years; 12.90 per cent., 8 years; 13.87 per cent., 9 years; 13.85 per cent., 10 years; 12.87 per cent., 11 years; 11.68 per cent., 12 years; 8 per cent., 13 years; and 6.86 per cent., 14 years or over.

Teachers' salaries are on the decrease. The head teachers of the largest schools now receive from £300 to £450; some few years ago they received from £500 to £700 per annum. In 1897, 2 head teachers received salaries above £400; 4 received salaries of between £300 and £400; 16 received salaries of between £200 and £300; 35, salaries of between £150 and £200; 100, salaries of between £100 and £150; 82, salaries of between £70 and £100; 11, salaries of between £60 and £70; 10, salaries of between £50 and £60; 8, salaries of between £40 and £50; and 2 received salaries of between £30 and £40. Of the 244 head teachers employed by the department, 170 are males. The highest salary paid a male head teacher was £416 9s. 2d., the lowest £52 10s. 11d. The highest salary paid a female head teacher was £127 18s., the lowest £35 4s. 3d.

A few years ago a "Penny Savings System" was established for the encouragement of thrift among school children, but as yet it seems that not many teachers have shown much interest in it. According to the last returns sent to the Education Office, accounts have been opened in 97 schools. The total deposits of the year 1897 were £202 18s. The withdrawals during the year were £62 11s. 6d., leaving £346 5s. 2d. of a balance on deposit at the end of the year.

Tasmania is divided into two inspectorial districts, the northern and the southern. One inspector has his headquarters at Hobart; the other at Launceston.

The visits to State Schools during 1897 are thus tabulated:

Visits by—	
Members of Boards of Advice.....	839
Ministers of Religion to impart instruction.....	1823