

of 280 schools. To each district is appointed by the Governor a Board of Advice, consisting generally of seven members. The powers and duties of the Board of Advice are (1) To suspend any teacher for misconduct in cases not admitting of delay, and to report immediately the cause of such suspension to the Minister of Education; (2) to exercise general supervision over the schools in the district, to visit the schools from time to time, to inspect the school registers, and to record the number of children present, and to report to the Minister twice a year the condition of the school houses, books, furniture and other appliances, and whether new schools are required; (3) to be held responsible for the safe keeping of the school furniture and appliances, and the proper cleansing of the school-room; (4) to cause any necessary small repairs to the school-house to be effected; (5) to cause fuel to be supplied; (6) to use every endeavor to induce parents to send their children regularly to school; (7) to grant exemptions from attendance at school to any child or children for any period not exceeding four consecutive weeks. Besides the duties mentioned here, the Boards of Advice have several minor duties to perform.

The cost of the erection and repairs of school houses, teachers' dwellings and art offices, of the purchase of school sites and of generally carrying on educational work in the colony, are defrayed out of moneys provided by Parliament.

In all schools the teaching is strictly non-sectarian, but a portion of time not exceeding an hour in any one day in each week is set apart when the children of any one religious persuasion may be instructed by the clergyman or other religious teacher of such persuasion, but in

all cases the children receiving such religious instruction are separated from the other pupils of the school. If two or more clergymen of different persuasions desire to give religious instruction at any school, the children of each such different persuasion are instructed on different days. In case of the non-attendance of any clergyman or religious teacher during any portion of the period agreed to be set apart for religious instruction, such period is then devoted to the ordinary secular instruction in such school. No child is required to receive any religious instruction if his parents object to such instruction being given.

By studying the principal statistics furnished by the Department of Education during the last ten years we get a very good idea of the growth of educational facilities provided and also of the general outlook of education in the colony. The last decade gives an increase in the number of State Schools of 63 (217 to 280) or 29 per cent.; but the expenditure has not increased to the same extent, for, comparing 1892 with 1897, we find that, in spite of the larger number of schools in the latter year, the Department expenditure was less by £984; that is, while 246 schools cost £37,654 in 1892, 280 schools cost £36,670 in 1897.

While during the last ten years the number of schools increased from 217 to 280, the gross enrolment increased from 17,125 to 21,763, and the average number in daily attendance from 8,730 to 12,040. The percentage of average daily attendance during the same period was on an average 72.04 per cent.; the average amount of school funds expended on each scholar reckoned on average number on rolls was £2 8s. 8d., and reckoned on average number in daily attendance was £3 7s. 8d.

The pupils in the State Schools