

" In the first place therefore it must be attributed to the progress of the public customs themselves, to that invincible faith in the virtue of education which characterized the years that followed the Ferry law, and also to free instruction, as well as to the multitude of public and private schools which were established on the passage of that measure.

" Every year, the reports of the Academy inspectors reveal in the case of most of the departments irregularity in the school attendance and further the insufficient length of the period of school attendance.

" What is responsible for this defective state of things ?

" A double cause, it seems : firstly, the inefficiency of the measures instituted by the law-makers of 1882 to secure a good attendance and then to the liberty left to parents to shorten the period of compulsory schooling as soon as the child has successfully passed the examination for a certificate of study.

" The legislators of 1882 had enacted two series of measures in order to compel parents to assure the punctual attendance of the child at the school : penalties in the case of neglectful or culpable parents and help in that of the families too poor to send their children to school.

" To attain this twofold object, two institutions were created : School boards and school benefit funds.

" To the school boards the law entrusted the task of preventing and repressing all shortcomings in the school attendance.

" To the managers of the school benefit funds was allotted the mission of discreetly assisting indigent families and