

State Support.

The reports¹ herewith enable a comparison to be made of the cost on average to the State (including rates),² per scholar and per inhabitant, of education as between Great Britain and the Colony. When considering, however, the bearing of the result-figures (which would appear to be startling) it is requisite to remember on the one hand—

Comparative cost of State education as between Great Britain and Colony.

(a) The existence in Great Britain of voluntary schools, training colleges, and scholars' fees; and

(b) The absence there of systematic grants in favour of secondary and higher education (except to Scotland and, to a certain extent, to Wales), scholarships, school libraries, deaf-mute institution, Maori schools, and School Committees' expenses;

and on the other hand the additional expense in Great Britain³ of—

(a) The Science and Art Department;

(b) Evening elementary schools; and

(c) Pensions and gratuities for teachers.

Moreover, may not the difference of cost, which is in favour of Great Britain,⁴ be considered to be far greater in reality than it appears, in view of the superior pecuniary and sanitary conditions of the Colony as a whole, and, therefore, in view of the greater ability on average to pay fees and keep children at school?

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL,⁵ AND SCHOOL AGE.

Probably on account of "the idea," as publicly expressed by Professor Max Müller, "that parents could throw off the responsibility of educating and instructing their children, . . . a mistake which pervaded the whole system of education, particularly in England,"⁶ the Legislature placed on record the principle upon which compulsory school attendance and fees is founded.⁷

Principle of compulsory education and fees.

(1.) School fees,⁸ which in Great Britain form part of the system of compulsory education, are fixed by voluntary school managers for their schools, and provisionally settled by Boards for theirs. They differ in various districts, and even in various schools in the same district. Remission of fees and establishment of free schools are similarly controlled: except that in remitting fees the Boards need not refer to the Department.

(2.) Attendance is not enforceable against a child of ten years, or upwards, who has obtained a certificate of proficiency⁹ or of previous due attendances at a "certified efficient school";¹⁰ or who is employed¹¹ and attending school in accordance with the Factory Acts, or of any by-law mentioned in the clause of the statute according the exemption.

Further, the local authorities may, under certain conditions, temporarily

¹ G.Rs., Eng. and Scot., including 1885-86, and compare with N.Z., 1886, report.

² After debate on the London School Board Budget, a metropolitan schoolrate of 8½d. in the pound was carried on 25 Feb., 1886.

³ For percentage of cost of administration in Eng. and Scot., see Mr. Mundella's remarks, "Times," 22 Nov., 1884, and compare with data in N.Z. Report, 1885.

⁴ "It is one of the advantages which England secures by having Colonial dependencies that the smaller communities may sometimes be inclined to try social experiments which are at first impracticable on a larger scale. In this respect the majority of Englishmen do not value the Colonies at their true worth."—Prof. Sutherland.

"Tasmania was the first part of the British dominions that recognised, and enforced by legal sanction, the principle that it is the duty of the parent to educate the child."—"Tasmania As It Is," by Chief Justice Dobson; "Colonies of India," 14 May, 1886, p. 86; and see "The Education Act, 1885," sec. 14, Tasmania.

⁵ For origin of compulsory education see Sir P. J. Keenan's address, p. 65. It was established in a modified form in England in 1870, and in Scotland in 1872, p. 66.

"Assuredly it was not the poorer classes who clamoured for education to be given to them at the expense of the rich. On the contrary, the movement came from above," &c.—Art. by the Hon. G. C. Brodrick, Warden of Merton College, in "Macm. Mag.," March, 1886,

on "The Socialistic Tendencies of Modern Democracy," p. 392. "Mais tout n'est pas fini là-bas." Mr. M. Arnold's (May, 1886) report should be carefully studied, especially pp. 21-24.

⁶ See "Times," 23 Sept., 1884. See also

(a) Insp. Fitch's memo., p. 77; and

(b) Abbé Martin in "N.C.," 19 Oct., 1882, pp. 545-547.

Note Lord Macaulay's remarks on parental duties in this respect, *Essays, &c.*, 1885, p. 476, thus: "Education is the principal end of a parental relation," &c.

⁷ Note how fees are fixed, S.C., p. 19, and see E. Act, 1870, secs. 17, 74; 1873, secs. 23, 24; 1876, secs. 4-12; 1880, sec. 2; and compare with N.Z. 1877 Act, secs. 89-95, and 1885, secs. 6-8. There is no compulsory education in Ireland, see S.C.

See also Sir P. J. Keenan's address, pp. 64-67, where merits of question are fully discussed.

⁸ See E. Act, 1870, s. 17, and compare with N.Z. 1877 Act, s. 84, ss. 6.

⁹ See (a) E. Act, 1876, s. 5, ss. 2, and s. 47 and first schedule thereto, and 1880, s. 4; and

(b) G.R., 1885-86, p. xii.; 1883-84, pp. xvii. and 126-128, and compare with N.Z. 1877 Act, s. 90, ss. 4; and 1885 Act, s. 6-8, N.Z. Standard IV., Regs. of June, 1885. But note an apparent anomaly. Compare E. Act, 1870, s. 74, with 1876, secs. 48, 4, 11, 12; and 1880, s. 4.

¹⁰ For interp. read E. Act, 1876, s. 48 with s. 5, and see first schedule, clause 2. But note R.C., vol. 1, p. 537.

¹¹ See E. Act, 1876, s. 9, and R.C., vol. 1, p. 524.