

child comes regularly for his educational heritage".

The most common and, to the uninformed or superficial reader, the most effective argument against a School Attendance Act has been the claim that Quebec's record of attendance ranks second in Canada, being higher without an attendance law than that of all but one of the other provinces, all of which have now attendance laws. To opponents of compulsion who are under this impression a compulsory law is not merely a vexatious measure, an interference with so-called parental rights, but what is far less defensible, a needless interference with such rights.

Now to a body of educationalists and teachers who know from daily observation and contact with the situation the pitifully inadequate amount of education of a large number of the children who leave our schools and enter the ranks of industry or work on the streets, the need of some measure that will secure an improvement is at once apparent. The same is true of the social workers and court officials who daily come into painful contact with the product of these conditions. But for others to whom these facts are not so self-evident, your Committee will present some data and especially comparative statistics that reveal things as they are.

For this purpose a considerable correspondence was necessary to procure the recent educational reports from the several provinces and later on to get interpretations of terms, statistics, and methods of procedure. For the unflinching courtesy and generous co-operation of the various Departments of Education in the different provinces by prompt and full reply, and particularly for the courtesy of our own officials at Quebec and for their readiness to furnish us with all possible information, your Committee wishes to express its thanks.

Educational investigation would be greatly facilitated by the use in all provinces of a standard method of reporting statistics and the definition of terms used in educational reports, as they are explained in the reports from Nova Scotia or New York City.

In this connection it may be said that there is a movement in the western provinces tending towards the introduction of certain standardized statistics in educational reports. After the experience your Committee has had during the past year, we wish to bring this movement to the attention of Convention and to express our conviction that educational reports would be of greatly enhanced value, and infinitely more intelligible to the ordinary reader, if the statistics from different provinces were given under the same general terms, based on the same general data, and

made out in the same manner; or failing that, if the terms and methods used were explained, as in the Nova Scotia reports. It is the earnest hope of your Committee that this report, by showing up the differences of method and the inadequacy of our own method, may do something toward bringing about the accomplishment of standardized statistics.

From the Quebec report there is one notable and very serious omission: it does not give the Grand Total Days' Attendance made by all the pupils of the various classes of schools. The Department of Public Instruction does not seem to have this information, nor does it seem to have ever suggested itself to our officials to ask the schools at the end of the year to furnish the Aggregate Attendance, though a casual glance at the reports of the U. S. Commission of Education or of the other provinces of Canada might have suggested the idea. Our average attendance is made up from the Inspectors' Bulletins, but at the end of the year the Secretary Treasurer of each School Board or of Trustees sends in an application for the government grant, and certain statistics for the whole year are given in this application form, but nowhere is the Aggregate Attendance given. There is no reason why it should not be given on this form. It is very difficult for your Committee to understand why this figure has been omitted for so long in our reports. It is an item generally recognized elsewhere as of such fundamental importance that it is published in most of the other provincial reports; other information is given in the Saskatchewan and Manitoba reports from which this item can be calculated. It is computed for all the States of the United States of America, so far as your Committee is aware. When the Grand Total Days' Attendance is given, it is possible to compute the average number of days each enrolled pupil attends per year. This latter figure is of the greatest importance, much more important than the per cent of average attendance; the former shows clearly just how much schooling per year each pupil is getting, the latter figure as made up in Quebec and in several other provinces absolutely ignores the length of the school term and is not based on the same set of factors in the various provinces. At present there is no way of calculating this item which is such an interesting factor as indicating the need or otherwise of compulsory measures. Your Committee suggests that Convention should respectfully request the Protestant Committee to take measures to obtain and have published in the annual reports the Grand Total Days' Attendance made in the various classes of schools.

With reference to the often repeated claim that this province with its voluntary system of attendance ranks second among the provin-