

Schools themselves. Were the School Sections reduced to two thousand, and only the same amount expended for their support which is now expended for the support of 2,736 Schools, there would doubtless be a superior order of men as School Masters, the Schools would be more efficient in every respect, and much more knowledge would be imparted than at present. It is, undoubtedly, better for a pupil to go a long distance to a good School than a short distance to a poor one; and extensive enquiries have shown that the average punctuality and improvement of pupils living from one to two miles from the School exceeds that of pupils living at a less distance.

II. NUMBER OF CHILDREN TAUGHT IN THE COMMON SCHOOLS.

No returns have yet been obtained as to the number of children taught in private, or in the District Grammar Schools; nor, as to the comparative number of children attending School in winter and in summer. The number of children between the ages of five and sixteen years attending the Common Schools in 1845 is 110,002,—being an increase of attendance over the year 1844 of 13,246,—not by any means equal to the natural increase of population. The whole number of children in Upper Canada, between the ages of five and sixteen years, is 202,913. There are, therefore, nearly 92,911 children of School age attending no School whatever;—a statement too startling and alarming to require any reflections from me, and sufficient to account for much of the crime that swells our criminal calendar, and entails vast expense, besides numberless other evils, upon the country.

III. AVERAGE PERIOD OF TUITION IN THE COMMON SCHOOLS.

The average time during which the Schools have been kept open in 1845 is 9 2-5 months; the average period of Tuition, for the year 1844, was 7 1/4 months. The lowest average period of Tuition in any municipal District exceeds eight months, and, in several Districts, eleven months; and, in respect to most of these instances, in which the School has been kept open for a period of less than six months, (the period now fixed by law,) it is stated to have arisen from the indifference of the inhabitants to School instruction, rather than from their poverty. Indeed, it is questionable whether there is a School Section in Canada West,—containing sixty children of School age,—the inhabitants of which, with the aid of the Legislative grant, cannot support a Schoolmaster more than six months of the year. It is gratifying to observe that the average period of tuition has not only increased, but that it considerably exceeds that required by law in order to secure the bounty of the Legislature.

IV. COMMON SCHOOL TEACHERS AND THEIR SALARIES.

The number of Common School Teachers is not given in the local Reports. Allowing one Teacher for each School, there are 2,736 Teachers. The amount of salaries paid to them, for the year 1845, is £71,514 2s. 6 1/2 d.,—giving an average salary, for twelve months' service, of £29; but for the average period of tuition, only £26. In these returns, no allowance is made for the few cases in which Teachers board among, (or are allowed a house by) their employers. In some Municipal Districts, the average salaries of Teachers considerably exceed the amount here stated. The whole sum paid to Teachers in 1844 was £51,714,—being an increase in 1845 of £19,800—that is, an increase of nearly twenty per cent. in favour of 1845. It is, however, to be remarked, that there are 136 more Schools in 1845, than there were in 1844. While there is a manifest improvement in the salaries of Teachers, it is obvious that the remuneration allowed them is not sufficient to secure competent persons as Teachers. It is stated in several of the local Reports that the qualifications and efficiency of the Teachers are in exact proportion to the salaries paid them. The chief remedy, therefore, for the incompetency of Teachers is in the hands of the people themselves. If they want able Teachers, they must pay them, as they do able Lawyers, Physicians, etc.