

IS NOT SOME IMPROVEMENT POSSIBLE?

The late education act, fixing the sum total of the government grant to Nova Scotia teachers, was so crudely called into existence, as to cause a great deal more mischief than what our teachers generally complain of. As the sum total of the grant has to be divided to each teacher in proportion to his grade of license, and the number of days taught, every teacher must remain without his money until all the school sections in the province send in their returns. The whole province must wait on the most backward county, which in turn must wait for its most backward sections. Then follows a tremendous operation of figures by which the sum total is torn into some two thousand irregular fragments; and the inspector who should be attending to his duties as an inspector, is basely turned into a sort of Babbage's calculating machine. The teacher, besides having his grant reduced, must lose a month's interest on a large portion of his salary twice a year. The schools must go without inspection, and the inspectors must pass through a non-purgatorial torment, which, while it pains much, purifies them not and saves not an iota of anything imaginable for the use of the country. Why cannot a certain amount for each grade be fixed each year in advance, based on the results of a previous year? If \$60 cannot be given to a B teacher per term, make it \$59 or \$58, or any other round number which will probably fall within the estimates, or revise the figures every four or five years. A teacher could then calculate exactly what salary he is going to work for; and the difficulties referred to might, in a great measure, thereby be obviated.

There are other practicable changes possible, we think, which would reduce the amount of invaluable and necessary time taken from inspectorial duties, changes which would result in gain in several respects, and loss in none. Say for instance, the centralizing of the functions of paymaster. A cheque can travel as safely from Halifax, and as rapidly nearly, to the uttermost border section, as if it started from a county town. We offer the suggestion. Some of our readers can judge better, we have no doubt, of the advantages of the proposed modifications. The simpler the machinery, the more completely is the power transferred, and the less is the cost of wear and tear and friction.

THE free scholarships offered the Halifax Academy by the Victoria School of Art and Design, were awarded, after very close competition, to the Misses Moody, Belcher and Fairbanks.

Teachers' Associations.**ANTIGONISH AND GUYSBORO COUNTIES, N. S.**

The teachers' association, for this inspectorial district, met, according to an excellent programme previously published, in the fine convocation hall of St. Francis Xavier College, on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 9th and 10th. Ninety-six members were enrolled, which shows an educational enthusiasm in this district inferior to none in our provinces. It was resolved that the association should meet annually. Rev. Dr. McNeil, President of St. Francis Xavier College, gave an able opening address on "The Art of Teaching." Joseph A. Wall, of Guysboro Academy, gave a practical illustrative lesson in language, a department in which he specially excels, to a class drawn from the schools of Antigonish. D. C. Gillis followed, with a lesson on grammar, to a more advanced class. Miss Aggie H. Hamilton led on the second day, with a paper on reading, followed by a lesson, selecting a passage from Whittier. Charles F. Hall, Principal of the Canso schools, gave a clever address on "The Teacher at Home," that is, in his school-room. In the afternoon, Miss Mary A. Hamilton, the brilliant instructor in charge of the Dartmouth Public School Kindergarten, gave a sketch of the life of Froebel, and a charming practical lesson, with the "gifts," "occupations," and songs, all brought into play, with an infantile Antigonish class. A very important lesson was finally given in elementary arithmetic, by Mr. Martin McArt. He very aptly illustrated methods of inducing young pupils to put their mathematical knowledge into practical work, which at the same time gave a stimulus to the development of mathematical power in the abstract.

Several important matters of local and of general interest were discussed. We can only refer to a unanimous resolution, after discussion, passed in favor of having the school year consist of one term, instead of two, as at present. We are glad to see the east so clearly decisive on this question, and, if we mistake not, District No. 6 has taken the lead. We are sorry space compels our account to be so brief. The points we have noted, however, will become a part of our provincial history, by having them collected in our columns. The officers elected are as follows: President, Inspector A. G. MacDonald, M.A.; Vice-president, the Principal of Main Street school, Antigonish; Secretary, Martin McArt, of Havre au Bouche, to form an executive committee with Principal Longley, of Guysboro Academy, Principal Hall, of Canso, Principal W. A. Chisholm, of St. Ninian Street school, Antigonish, and the Principal of Sherbrooke school.