

The Canada School Journal.

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THE CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL.

An Educational Journal devoted to the advancement of Literature, Science, and the teaching profession in Canada.

—o—TERMS.—o—

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The annual report of the Minister of Education for Ontario lays great stress on the evil of irregular attendance. Nearly nine per cent. of the pupils on the school rolls attended less than twenty days during 1884, and nearly one-half of them attended less than half the teaching year. The compulsory clauses of the School Act seem to be a dead letter. Why, does not appear. In Victoria, Australia, we note in 1884 there were, under the compulsory clause of the Act in force there, 7,236 prosecutions, 6,408 convictions, and \$8,500 netted in fines. Have our cousins over there better machinery for enforcing the Act, or are their Minister and his officials more in earnest in the matter?

One of the most encouraging features of the Ontario Report is the steady increase indicated in the proportion of teachers holding first and second class, as compared with those working under third-class certificates. It would be an unhealthy symptom were the teachers of the lower grades not continually pressing onward and upward, and so raising the standard of average qualification from year to year. As the *Globe* well observes: "This implies more than higher culture; it implies also increased permanency in the profession. Men who have worked up to second and first-class are less likely to turn away

to other pursuits than those who have never got beyond third-class." In New Brunswick, we are sorry to observe, the tendency seems to be in the opposite direction, the Superintendent's report showing a decrease of ten in the number of first-class male teachers during the last year. The low salaries given are, no doubt, the chief cause. The average salary of first-class male teachers in the latter Province was \$511.80. The average for male teachers of all classes in Ontario was \$426, the highest \$1,200.

The report of the New Brunswick Superintendent shows that progress is being made in other respects, if not in advancing the grade of teachers employed. From the statistics given it appears that there were, for the summer term of 1884, 1,508 schools, increase 57; number of teachers 1,601, increase 74; pupils 57,068, increase 2,185. For the winter term 1,549 schools, increase, 135; number of teachers 1,695, increase 193; pupils in attendance, 63,001, increase 9,492.

The number of female teachers greatly predominates, as out of 1,601 teachers, 1,151 are females, and out of the remainder there are only 116 males who hold first-class licenses—not including the teachers of the Grammar Schools. The average salary of first-class male teachers per annum is \$511.80. There are 14 Grammar School teachers receiving an average salary of \$817.71 each per year. The average salary for first-class female teachers is \$333.33.

A singular and discouraging feature in the Ontario Educational Report is the steady falling off shown in the number of pupils. The school population, if the tables of the report may be relied on, has fallen from 502,250 in 1876, to 471,287 in 1884, and the number of pupils on the rolls in the same period from 490,536 to 466,917. The school population is given at 7,504 less in 1884 than in 1883, and the corresponding falling off in the number of pupils registered is 7,452. Here is a problem for our statisticians and other public men. Surely our Province is not decreasing in population. How are the figures to be explained?

The institution of "Arbor Day" was a new departure in our schools last year. It seems to have been as successful as could reasonably be expected the first year. The total number of trees planted was 30,648 in 38 counties, Simcoe heading the list with 3,560, Wentworth coming next with 2,700, and Middlesex next with 2,100. All the others planted less than 2,000, the metropolitan county of York having only a petty 1,200 to show.

The report of the Minister of Public Instruction for Victoria, Australia, gives evidence of good progress in educational work. About \$3,000,000 were expended for State School purposes in 1884, an increase of \$120,000 over the expenditure of the preceding year. About \$150,000 was devoted to higher and art