

dollars. This course is injurious to the cause of Common School education throughout the province as well as discreditable to the community.

I have not dealt in statistics, as these have been already supplied *ad nauseam*, in the Abstracts and Tables. I would like, however, very respectfully, to ask if the Blank Returns could not be printed and a goodly number of items removed. As I toiled and wearied in the preparation of Abstracts and Tables, and contemplated the result of the whole, I could not shut out the thought which Horace so vigorously expresses in the famous words: *montes parturiunt, noscitur, ridiculus mus*. I think experience shows that where statistics are not prepared by adepts or the compilers are not heard in explanation of their figures, the items are comparatively few on which reliable information is secured. In the B Returns many of the figures are unquestionably guessed at. Now that auditors must be appointed and the accounts submitted to them before the annual meeting, if a form specifying the items to be submitted to the auditors, was prepared, and this form or a copy of it forwarded instead of table four, reliable information on the particulars of expenditure might be obtained. But at present sufficient information comes to the Inspectors' notice to show that the audit is very imperfect, and the Trustees report of expenditure is often made up from memory or by guesswork. What is gained by asking the Trustees estimate of the sitting accommodation of the school-house? Mills reports that a room 22x18 accommodates 36. Cambridge considers that 22x20 will only accommodate 30. Stillwater judges that 28x18 affords sufficient room for 60 scholars. Newport and Douglas finds working room for that many in 24x19; but Union thinks that 50 is enough for 28x22, and Belmont would give 50, 28x28. How little is gained in the way of stimulus from calling for information on so many points, may be seen by looking at the number of vacant places in the columns reporting school apparatus, &c. The A. Returns present a great array of figures, but every inspector knows that the number of branches really taught, to any appreciable extent, in the greater number of schools are very few.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

J. D. MacGILLIVRAY.

DAVID ALLISON, Esq., L.L. D.

PICTOU COUNTY.

D. McDONALD, Inspector.

SIR,—

The following report on the Public Schools in the County of Pictou for the year 1877, is respectfully submitted for your information:

I cordially congratulate you upon your appointment to the honorable and responsible position of Superintendent of Education of Nova Scotia, and wish you great success and much pleasure in the discharge of your duties.

I would also express my unfeigned regret at the death of your predecessor, Rev. A. S. Hunt, A. M. In all our intercourse, both private and official, I found him most affable and generous, and in business prompt and obliging.

New Schools.—Two new schools were opened during the Summer Term, in remote and small sections—the one in the north and the other in the south district.