

3. PREPONDERANCE OF TEACHERS OF THE LOWER GRADES.

The teachers engaged in the English-French Schools show special zeal and earnestness in their work. I am convinced that they are conscientiously doing their best to train the children under their charge. Moreover, a very large percentage of them have the natural temperament and instincts of the teacher, but it is manifest that many of them are seriously handicapped in their efforts by the lack of academic and professional training. In discussions of the question of teacher supply, I have sometimes heard the opinion expressed that the employment of a teacher of high qualifications is unnecessary in the ordinary school, especially when the attendance is made up mainly of young children. This view presupposes a very narrow function for the school. It is true that now and then a first-class or a second-class teacher, through lack of aptitude, fails, while a teacher of a lower grade, of high natural attainments, is markedly successful; yet, as a rule, wherever well-trained teachers are continuously employed in a community for a period of years, the educational standards are high, while they are low where teachers of inferior qualifications are similarly employed. This principle has special application to the English-French Schools, because, as I have pointed out, unusual demands are made upon the teachers in these schools. There can be no doubt whatever but that the efficiency of the English-French Schools is seriously lowered by the employment of such a large proportion of teachers holding certificates of the lower grades. The depressing effects are intensified by the constant changes which take place in the staffs of the schools. The table giving the length of service of the teachers employed shows that nearly 60 per cent. of the total number of teachers have been in their present positions less than one year.

4. LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR ATTENDING SCHOOL.

The backwardness of the older children in the small isolated communities in the Districts is frequently accounted for by the fact that these children had no opportunity of attending school when they were younger. Through the activity of the inspectors and the missionary efforts of some of the clergy interested in education, schools, which are in part supported by the Assisted School Fund, have been organized during the last few years in many of these centres. But the children who grew up to school age before the organization of these schools were without the advantages of training in their earlier years.

5. UNCERTAINTY REGARDING THE RELATION OF THE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

The uncertainty regarding the application of the Regulations of the Department of Education to the Roman Catholic Separate Schools has had an effect upon the character of the English-French Schools of Eastern Ontario and the Districts. My meaning will be made clearer by illustrations. The principal of a large graded school was asked why she did not have the law respecting the use of English as the language of instruction observed in her school. She replied that the provisions of the Public Schools Act and the Regulations of the Department of Education do not apply to Roman Catholic Separate Schools. Another teacher in a