

equipment and their failure to meet the wants of modern times were set forth in my last annual report, and need not be repeated here. I would, however, respectfully solicit the attention of the legislature to them, and again recommend that better provision be made for our secondary education.

Concerning a normal school curriculum, there is the following:

Whatever may be the true theory of normal school training we are not yet in a position to dispense with the teaching of academic subjects. Very few of our common schools or even high schools have the facilities for imparting such instruction, both as respects its amount and character as teachers require, and unless their scholarship is supplemented at the normal school, the common schools of this country must suffer. When the province is supplied with schools sufficiently equipped to give the necessary academic training, much of the general instruction which is now given at the normal school may be dispensed with. As it is, less and less attention is being given to such subjects as are at least fairly mastered at the public schools; *e. g.* arithmetic, geographical topography, technical parts of grammar, etc.

The Superintendent, after enumerating the increasing duties of inspectors, and the efficient manner in which these have been performed, recommends the appointment of an additional inspector.

Compulsory education is recommended, and the following substantial showing urged in its favor:

The enrolment of pupils was higher for the year 1888 than in any former year except 1879. This is so far satisfactory, but the highest number yet enrolled fails to reach large numbers of the youth of the country. We have fully 15,000 children in our midst growing up in ignorance, and very probably acquiring habits ruinous to themselves and liable to become troublesome to the state. With such facts before us it is clear that some provision ought to be made whereby these children may be brought under the advantages which the state has provided for them. There are, no doubt, difficulties in the way of effectively carrying out a law compelling the attendance of children at school in all parts of the province, but if the legislature is not at present prepared to adopt the principle universally, I respectfully recommend that it pass a measure empowering boards of trustees in cities and incorporated towns at least, to enforce such attendance as shall ensure due attention to the education of all educable children within the limits of their jurisdiction. The Board of Trustees of St. John has repeatedly solicited that such authority be granted them, as likewise has the School Board of St. Stephen; and the Board of Fredericton in their report in Appendix C recommends that "a compulsory attendance clause be inserted in the Common Schools Act, so that no children may be allowed to grow up to manhood without the possession of sufficient knowledge to enable them to become good citizens." The inspectors, too, who are painfully cognizant of the defects in the system in this respect, have time and again recommended the adoption of some remedial measure.

Teachers' Salaries.

We commend to all concerned the careful consideration of the following apothegmatic comment upon this subject, which we quote from the report for 1888, of the Superintendent of Education in Nova Scotia. In no other direction can we look for a remedy for the evil of low salaries. The teacher must acquire the skill, that is education and the power of educating. The educational mind is a evidently moving in the direction of some progress such a development. But no government in this country could ever compel the people to continue paying for anything, even education, for education itself, more than it is worth. The profession of teaching, to support life, must become a life's work, just as in other noble professions.

In most of the grades there have been slight reductions in the average rate of salary. As the excess of supply over demand has continued to increase, this fact ought not to excite surprise. It is becoming clear to every one who chooses to think on the subject that the most effective way to improve the remuneration of teachers lies in surrounding their work with the pre-emptions and safeguards that are the prerogatives of skilled labor. An elevation of the standards of admission in the direction of a specific professional training would benefit no one interest so much as the teaching body itself. Until a closer equation of supply and demand is brought about, recommendations on the subject of salaries, whether given to employers or employed, can produce but little effect."

We clip the following from the *New York Independent*, so that our readers may judge to what extent our public school courses of study are, in their scientific outline, abreast of the best taught in the republic. The grammar schools in the States correspond somewhat to grades VI., VII. and VIII. of the Nova Scotian "common" schools.

The committee appointed by the American Society of Naturalists to "develop a scheme of instruction in natural science to be recommended to the schools," have made a report in which they say that instruction in natural science should begin in the lowest grades of primary schools and continue throughout the curriculum; that in the lower grades the instruction should be chiefly by object lessons; that a more systematic course should be arranged for in high schools; and that an elementary acquaintance with one or more departments of natural science should be required for admission to college. In the primary and the lower grades of the grammar schools the committee recommend that the study of plants and animals should be the main part of the scientific work. The botanical instruction should commence with such simple exercises as drawing and describing different forms of leaves, and should gradually advance to the easier and more conspicuous flowers, and later to the more obscure and difficult forms of flowers, the fruits and seeds. The committee add: