

good teachers or with bad. The vast majority of our trustees are not educated men, but they are parsimonious. It would be a mistake to expect such to act on broad, liberal, enlightened principles. They don't do it. They won't do it. "Cheap and nasty" has been their motto hitherto. As a rule, our trustees have laid a premium on bad teaching. They have driven the best teachers out in disgust; and left the country overrun with the worst. This is the worst feature in our system. It is a disease threatening death. Where is the remedy?

Two cures have been proposed, both likely to fail of adoption. The first is a board for the Township instead of the Section; the other, a maximum salary fixed by law. The first might do good; the second would certainly do evil. It would be systematically evaded, and therefore we are better without it.

I have a simple, and I believe effectual remedy to offer. It is this: *Distribute all school moneys in proportion to the salaries paid the teachers.* Let each section receive, not according to "average attendance," but according to the salary it has engaged to pay. Were this to become law, we should soon see quite as much eagerness to procure good teachers as we now see to procure bad. Each section would strive to outdo its neighbour. The best teachers would be taken first, and the bad ones let out in the cold. There is a singular species of one-eyed rapacity in small corporations, that might thus be turned to account. All grants from the public chest they consider pure gain to them; and each will try to secure as much as possible, even at considerable outlay.

This plan is certainly the simplest, and probably the most efficacious yet proposed. It would also be popular. The "minimum salary" plan, savours too much of despotism to be acceptable to our "free and independent" citizens. The "Township Board" plan is unsavoury to the sections as seeming to deprive them of prerogatives long enjoyed. My plan leaves them exactly as it finds them; leaves them all their privileges and entire freedom to do what they please; but it adds a most powerful incentive to liberality—an incentive they can understand and appreciate. It has also the advantage of harmonizing exactly with the spirit of the school law, namely, "to help those who help themselves." It could injure none. It would furnish a more equitable basis of distribution than does the "average attendance." At present a populous section having a cheap teacher may draw three times the apportionment drawn by a thinly-peopled section paying a larger salary. I have an example in March. This is certainly not "helping those who help themselves."

This plan would render unnecessary the semi-annual returns; thus saving great labour and expense. To prevent fraud, a maximum salary might be fixed for the townships and a different one for cities; besides a few simple checks to be worked by the superintendent. But these are matters of detail.

Hoping to see this plan discussed in your paper,

I remain yours, &c.,

J. MAY, M.A.,
Local Supt. for March.

February 8, 1869.

III. Schools in Ontario.

1. HAMILTON CITY SCHOOLS.

A NINETEEN YEARS' RECORD—PROGRESS OF THE SCHOOLS IN HAMILTON—STEADY PROGRESS IN GENERAL AND AVERAGE ATTENDANCE—THE COST PER PUPIL—SYSTEM OF EDUCATION—SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION, ETC., ETC.

There is nothing in this city of which the people are more justly proud than of the pre-eminence attained by the city schools. The progress of the school system throughout the Province is a wonderful instance of moral and intellectual development—of the earnest advancement of a country in all that constitutes the true greatness of its people. From a comparatively small commencement, the school system has come to be the pride of Upper Canadians, a source of present strength, and of continued future prosperity. The sound principle that education is the great preventative of crime, and that, therefore, the education of the whole people is a common and paramount interest, has found here a development as great, if not greater than any other quarter of the globe; so great a development that, with the question of free schools, or ratebill an open one, decided from year to year by the voluntary action of the people themselves at their annual school meetings, the free school system has so signally triumphed that the opposite principle has come to be a small exception to an almost universal rule. And nowhere has this system more signally prospered than in this city. Compared with our population, the attendance at our city schools is equal to that of any other urban population of the Province.

A review of the progress of our schools, therefore, at the commencement of this New Year, cannot be otherwise than interesting to our citizens; and that the review may be as full as possible, we propose to go back nineteen years, and trace the educational advancement of this city since that time. And in order to do this more effectually we propose to refer to the progress in its various phases. Let us first look at the

FINANCIAL ASPECT.

The revenues of the schools are made up mainly from three sources: the Government grant, the fees received from pupils, the sums contributed from the taxation of the people, and in addition to these, occasional sums from other sources; and from these various sources we give the receipts for our Common Schools, since 1850, as follows:—

	Government grant.	Fees.	Municipal.	Other sources.	Total.
1850.....	\$750	\$1163	\$2375	...	\$4303
1851.....	751	1332	5967	...	8049
1852.....	1125	1367	14148	...	16640
1853.....	1352	916	36183	...	38453
1854.....	1352	1169	16938	...	19460
1855.....	1352	1817	18249	...	21419
1856.....	1776	2077	19925	20	23798
1857.....	1920	1847	17631	49	21448
1858.....	1920	2056	15073	80	19829
1859.....	2045	2422	18260	...	22728
1860.....	1812	2739	14645	39	19215
1861.....	1788	3515	10460	39	15803
1862.....	1779	3655	10262	20	15716
1863.....	1760	4075	9028	171	15045
1864.....	1874	4104	11188	403	17569
1865.....	1908	4137	11375	204	17626
1866.....	1892	4500	11343	235	17971
1867.....	1786	5286	15838	222	22632
1868.....	1702	5562	14462	1700	20816

We have left out in the above the cents, ignoring those under fifty, and counting those over that at a dollar, which will account for the totals not always being an exact addition of the particulars. The same principle we shall continue throughout our comparisons. The tables of expenditure during the same period will enable the reader to judge much more accurately of the general management of the schools, and the thorough economy with which they have been conducted:—

	Teachers' salaries.	Other salaries.	Library, apparatus, prizes, &c.	Text Books, Stationery.	Incidentals.	Permanent Improvements.
1850	\$2685	.....	.....	.....	.....	\$1620
1851	2938	.....	.....	.....	.....	5111
1852	3736	.....	.....	.....	.....	12904
1853	5476	1303	.....	.....	.....	30556
1854	6633	2061	.....	.....	.....	8378
1855	9932	2549	.....	.....	.....	7141
1856	11419	1354	.....	1888	3100	6037
1857	11665	1537	\$100	1400	3600	3147
1858	61149	1493	100	1107	2868	1911
1859	14049	1941	50	2668	2743	1218
1860	12523	1688	125	1525	2206	1068
1861	11483	1646	.....	905	1537	231
1862	11100	1489	.....	487	1378	262
1863	11155	1593	122	800	1341	.....
1864	11924	1576	160	1773	1879	250
1865	12552	1814	80	1314	1706	250
1866	12816	1596	130	1001	2089	339
1867	13650	1923	87	1138	3017	3317
1868	14163	1990	100	1065	739	4388

It will be seen that the sums expended on permanent improvements was very large, which will account for the apparent anomaly of larger receipts during the earlier period embraced in our comparison. The school buildings of Hamilton are, taken as a whole, exceedingly creditable to the taste and liberality of the people; and although they cost money, they are among the best investments of which the city can boast. The item under the head of "other salaries" includes the sums paid to local superintendent, secretary and treasurer, and the caretakers of the Central and Ward schools; while under the head of incidentals, we have fuel, printing, advertising, stoves and stovepipes, etc. Thus during these eighteen years the city of Hamilton has expended on the common school