

here that those gentlemen see and realize the advantages to teachers and taught of adopting such a system, but they have not, so far, faced it squarely, in fact, I almost infer that they fear it would be a hopeless task to attempt to overcome what any-one who grapples with this question, will have to encounter, i. e., what, for lack of a better name, I may style the inert mass of passive resistance, which is ever a greater obstacle to improvement than ever-determined, if intelligent, active opposition.

Mr. Campbell, indeed, in his Report for 1898, did take it up though not with the firm hand with which he usually grasps a subject. He seemed nervous about pressing it. He says:—

"In respect to those schools having a small attendance of pupils, I may say that in general, they are not doing work commensurate with the amount of money expended upon them. In fact, some of them are apparently doing very little if any good. How to deal with such, so as to secure to them efficient educational advantages, with less cost to the government, is a problem which is difficult of solution. If it were not unfair to the teachers engaged in them, probably the simplest plan would be to rank those as third-class schools, until the work being done in them would entitle them to a higher grade. The establishing of "Central Schools," if it were feasible, in sections of the country where those small schools exist, would no doubt be the proper course to pursue. This system, known, I think, as the "Concord System," or the substituting of larger districts for smaller ones, and graded schools for ungraded, would, I'm afraid, meet with strong opposition from the people, owing to the extra expenditure which they would be obliged to meet in providing school buildings suitable for schools of this kind. It is doubtful if the country is yet ripe for such a change even in part."

Now why is the country not yet ripe for such a change? Is it not simply because no attempt has ever been made to teach them what this system means as applied to schools? As I have already pointed out the method of working the Cheese Factories has already made them familiar with the principle upon which the consolidation scheme would be worked. They were not long in learning all about that method and adopting it.

As for the expense of new buildings and furniture, surely the present building and sites would go far towards realizing the cost of the single new and better place, and if the present furniture is fit for its present purpose, it could go into the new school. If it is not fit, it has no business to be where it is.