

Comparing the statistics of our schools one year with another, reveals a great amount of carelessness, and, consequently, of inaccuracy. If such statistics are worth gathering at all, they are worth gathering with sufficient care to make them accurate. The differences of the figures for the years 1897 and 1898, for two items, will be enough to show that for purposes of comparison the reports are not of much value:

Schools Within Bounds.											
Hfs.	L. & Y.	Inv.	Mr.	P. E. L.	St. J.	Pic.	Syd.	Tru.	Wal.	Trin.	Total.
1897...103.	17.	51.	93.	100.	42.	74.	43.	63.	37.	62.	687.
1898...100.	18.	51.	93.	100.	77.	71.	43.	90.	43.	62.	757.

Schools Reporting.											
Hfs.	L. & Y.	Inv.	Mr.	P. E. L.	St. J.	Pic.	Syd.	Tru.	Wal.	Trin.	Total.
1897...96.	17.	51.	88.	86.	33.	72.	36.	65.	37.	62.	645.
1898...74.	18.	51.	88.	98.	73.	68.	36.	90.	43.	62.	701.

These figures are interesting and suggestive of several questions which we trust the Presbyteries may ask, and try to answer for themselves. A like study of the other items might be made with profit.

Reports have been received from all the Presbyteries within the bounds, but only three of them have any notes of explanation, viz., St. John, Wallace, and Pictou.

In St. John Presbytery 73 schools reported, and the Convener gives the names of 4 schools that are known to him, but have not reported.

In Pictou town there is one general meeting for teachers; the same may be said of other places, which will, in some measure account for the small number of teachers' meetings reported. Antigonish reports a Chinese Class of four, with at least two always present.

In Wallace Presbytery there was an increase of 6 schools reporting, as compared with 1897, and at least 4 of these are new schools; one of them being in each of the congregations of Earltown, Pugwash, River Hebert, and Wallace.

As to "Union Schools," the information is not sufficient to warrant any definite statement. In several cases schools that are wholly Presbyterian, but belonging to more than one congregation, are reported as "Union," while the question is intended to cover only schools that are *interdenominational*.

The blanks being sent out for reports for this year are different from those used for some time. While they contain four questions less, they introduce three new elements, to two of which we wish to call special attention.

I. THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

Question 9 is, "Have you a Home Department?" What is its membership? The Home Department, credit for which belongs to the International S. S. Association, is destined to occupy an important place in connection with Sabbath School work. It is well that our church should avail herself of all its advantages; and this question will serve to draw attention to it. In the meantime, necessary information can be obtained from the Provincial S. S. Associations, which annually appoint Superintendents for this part of the work. Beginning with January, 1900, the "Home Study Quarterly" will be so arranged as to meet all the requirements of the "Home Department."

PRESBYTERIAL VISITATION OF SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Question 15 asks, "Has your school been officially visited by the Presbytery's S. S. Committee?" This inquiry brings to our attention a very important matter, the closer relation of our Presbyteries to their Sabbath Schools. It must be admitted that the S. S. Committees of Synod and Presbyteries have been doing really very little to advance the interests of S. S. work in our congregations. This may be a humiliating confession to make; but it is better to make it, and show repentance, than to continue in a useless round of formalities—preparing and submitting reports that accomplish little or nothing.

It was with the intention of securing better results that the recommendation was submitted to last Synod looking towards the possible formation of a Synodical S. S. Association. Such organization is not recommended this year for two reasons:

1. Presbytery warrant defining action in the definitely organized Peoples' Societies covering two and organizing field by section and Young People's Societies in Stewiacke in certain named sessions. The Presbytery Conference "spirit, meeting" will so demand, and will show some way, that will desired result.

2. In view of Committees of thought it be the securing of such other children and Committee, in organization to the sympathy of the Synod of September 6th. Naimo. The in promoting S.

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to which the As of Synods and attendance. The individual there proportion of complete may be attention is very Statistical Conv and worthy of Dominion, they Provinces.

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