

per head of population, being almost exactly that of Ontario. The average school attendance is 76 p.c. That does not mean that 24 out of every hundred children of school age are absent all the time, but it means that at any time during the year 24 out of every hundred enrolled pupils are absent. This is not satisfactory. It would be interesting to know how many children of school age are not enrolled at all, but this information is not given, and unfortunately is not easily obtainable. In the cities and towns there are many private schools that make no report at all. In many cases, when asked by the inspector, the proprietor refuses even to state how many pupils are in attendance. He has not been known, however, to neglect to get exemption from taxation on his whole house, on the ground that the school in the back drawing-room is an educational institution. Let us hope that hereafter he may be brought to see that, considering the benefits he receives from the state, the state is not impertinent in the person of the inspector. But, even making allowance for such cases, it is certain that the attendance leaves much to be desired as to regularity, and something as to universality.

Now, for the application, or a part of it, at any rate, if this reference to the statistics is not *couleur de rose*, if a reference has any colour at all, neither is it as blue as it might be. Taken in comparison with statistics of years ago it shows progress, not rapid, but still progress. Although there are many things to mend in our system of education to render it effective, there is not much to make. For instance, the pressing need is well trained, well paid teachers, with regular attendance at class of all children of school age. The accessories can all be provided under existing laws. While the people are declaring against their own schools, they are as a whole trying to keep down taxation in the vain hope that they will get money from some place other than their own. The school boards are empowered and required to levy a tax that shall be sufficient for all their needs, but they alone judge as to what are their needs.

In many places in this province, under progressive members of the school boards, with an intelligent and sympathetic body of rate-payers, there are schools that are a credit to this province, as they would be to any other province of the Dominion. The reason is simple, they pay for good schools—and they get them.