

teachers, and of those who are removed for trifling or no causes at all, the education of the country would be in a most prosperous condition. Well, we have shewn, from the very figures furnished to us by the Minister of Education himself, that this is far from being the case.

Of the 499,501 pupils that attended the Public Schools of the Province, the average attendance only amounted to 228,615, being only 45 per cent. of the whole; and of the 10,486 pupils who attended the 103 High Schools of the Province, there was only an average of 56 per cent., or about 5,872, or altogether 234,487. It is a sad commentary on the compulsory law that 27,415 attended no school whatever during the year 1878. These absentees were between the ages of seven and twelve years, respecting which School Boards and trustees are required by the Public Schools Act to see that all the children in their school districts attend school for four months in the year. Very nearly as bad is the fact that 42,096 attended for less than twenty days; and that 87,634 attended for periods ranging between fifty and one hundred days—that is fifty per cent. of the whole attendance might as well, for all the benefit they obtained from their attendance at school, be placed in the same category as those who attended no school at all. This is not a pleasant commentary on our schools being made free. When a rate bill was charged a much better record was shewn.

Dr. Ryerson and the Council of Public Instruction established the school system of this country on a basis which endeared it to the hearts of the people. To their wisdom, forbearance and practical good sense may be attributed the success of our system of education in times gone by. Now centralization and martinetism reign rampant, but very little good,

after all, has resulted from them. Nay, positive evil has sprung from the introduction of the foreign features that pervade the school laws of 1871 and 1874. The operation of these laws is inordinately elating those who have passed the examination ordeals with which they are characterised, and are correspondingly depressing to those who have failed to succeed. Youth is a period of enthusiasm. All are not equally bright, quick or sharp. The educationists of the world agree in condemning those systems of rewards which depress or damp the ardour of young people. It is useless, they say, for them to contend; and, therefore, becoming hopeless, they cease to exert themselves, and will not even strive to attain that which is easily within their reach.

Examinations do a great deal of good, but they do a vast amount of mischief also. Without altogether condemning them, if we had our way, we would be far from giving them the prominence they at present hold. These examinations have resulted in withdrawing from the agricultural enterprises of this country hosts of the youth of both sexes, to engage in a calling both precarious and unremunerative. The competition thus created throws many teachers, who have spent the best years of their life in teaching, out of employment. It is beginning to cause salaries to be lowered when the necessities of life are increased in price on every hand. The cultivation of the soil, the most honourable and independent industry in connection with which men or women can be engaged, being abandoned by those best able to make it pay, impoverishes the country by the amount that could be made by them had they remained faithful to an avocation that would handsomely reward them in the end.

Payment by Results and its hand-maid "Intermediate Examination"