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THE *Canadian Almanac* for 1899, published by the Copp, Clark Company, Toronto, at the low rate of 25 cents, is such a valuable compendium of information that no one should be without it. It has been published continuously for over half a century, and has grown from a pamphlet of 100 pages to a handsome book of 376 pages, well illustrating the growth and prosperity of Canada. Among the contents of the book which are especially valuable are: the Customs Tariff, Post Office Guide, and Directories of various persons and officials, all of which are brought up to date, while the articles on the British Army and Navy, and Forms of Government throughout the world are interesting and reliable. A feature that appeals particularly to all who are interested in the current history of the world is the Historical Diary, which is carefully prepared each year, and gives an excellent resume of the year's history.

Education in P. E. Island.

There is not a province in the Dominion where educational questions are discussed with more zeal, perhaps one might say asperity, than in Prince Edward Island. One can scarcely take up a paper without finding some anonymous correspondent laboring to prove that too much money is spent on education, that the teachers are incompetent as a class, and that their only aim is to pocket their salaries, and grumble because the whole revenue cannot be appropriated to schools. Amid this growl of discontent one can occasionally hear a more reasonable voice counselling moderation and justice to hard working teachers, but this voice is rarer.

A subject of keen debate for some time past has been the cutting off by the government of supplementary grants formerly given to teachers on condition that a like amount should be raised by the district. The minimum grant for this purpose was ten dollars, the maximum twenty-five dollars. This had been in force since the passage of the free school act, but the government in repealing the supplementary clause last winter held that the provincial revenues could no longer stand the strain, and that outside the larger centres of population, districts which should avail themselves of the bonus were not taking advantage of it. At the recent meeting of the Teachers' Association at Charlottetown, mutterings of discontent were heard on all sides at the action of the government, and at the final session of the

association the gage of battle was thrown down in a resolution strongly condemning the government for its course. The premier of the province, with another member of the government, was on hand to support the stand taken; and though he boldly stood his ground, and pointed out that retrenchment must be adopted somewhere, the teachers were in no mood to have retrenchment practised on themselves, and carried the resolution by an almost unanimous vote.

And yet the government of Prince Edward Island is a paternal government, so far as schools are concerned, for it grants yearly about two-thirds of its revenue to their support. One learns with some surprise that one-half the schools are supported solely by the amount of government money paid to the teacher. The inhabitants of a district may build a schoolhouse and furnish it, and then, if they can induce a teacher to assume charge of it for the government grant, their direct contribution to education ceases, except in supplying fuel during the winter season. One objection to local assessment frequently heard is that the inhabitants are too poor, but one looks in vain for evidences of this as he journeys through the country. On all sides well-tilled acres, comfortable houses and barns meet the view. The fault of the government is that it is too paternal. In not placing the responsibility of school maintenance on those who should bear at least a portion of it, there is a lack of public spirit, and little or no interest in too many communities in educational matters. The result is seen in poor schools and scantily remunerated teachers. Districts not responsible for the payment of teachers are allowed to maintain schools with a surprisingly low attendance of pupils, that would not be tolerated in the adjoining provinces. Consolidation of schools in the rural districts of Prince Edward Island could be effected with a saving, it is believed, in the money that is now spent in keeping up a number of small and insufficiently equipped schools, and lead to the establishment of excellent schools throughout the Island like those of Charlottetown, Kensington, Summerside and a few other places where the additional subjects of manual training and the principles of agriculture could be taught. These subjects have long been called for by those most conversant with the educational needs of the Island. With its comparatively dense population, the generally level country, and fairly good roads, the carriage of pupils to a central school would not be a matter of great difficulty in most sections of the Island. In no portion of the Maritime provinces is there a better possibility for establishing central graded schools, and certainly in no other province is there greater need of re-organization of its rural schools.