

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION,

Upper CANADA.



VOL. IX.

TORONTO: MARCH, 1856.

No. 3.

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The history of popular education in Upper Canada naturally divides itself into three periods. (1.) The first dates from the year 1816, when legislative provision was first made for the establishment and maintenance of Common Schools. (2.) The second dates from the Union of the Provinces in 1841, and (3.) the third embraces the years 1850-'55—1850 being the date of the passing of the present School Act.

Each of these periods constitute a separate epoch in the history of Common Schools in Upper Canada; and each is marked by some peculiar feature of its own; but united they present conclusive evidence of a silent but gradual progress towards the solution of that long unsettled question—the entire practicability of a National System of Education, commensurate with the wants of an intelligent and enlightened people, and enlisted the sympathies of all classes of citizens in its support.

We are entirely destitute of statistical information in regard to the character and condition of our Common Schools during the long interval of 35 years—from 1816 to 1841. We can therefore only give a summary of our progress from the year 1841 to 1855, as follows:

PROGRESS OF THE COMMON SCHOOL SYSTEM OF UPPER CANADA.

The system of public elementary education in Upper Canada has now been in operation a sufficient length of time to enable us to determine how far it has accomplished the object of its establishment.

No.	SUBJECTS COMPARED.	1842.	1843.	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.	1850.	1851.	1852.	1853.	1854.
1	Adult population of Upper Canada during the years	486,055	...	...	*622,570	...	...	725,879	...	803,493	950,551	958,239	...	...
2	Population between the ages of five and 16 years	141,143	...	183,539	202,913	204,580	230,975	241,102	253,364	259,258	258,607	262,755	268,957	277,912
3	Total Common Schools in operation as reported	1,721	...	2,610	2,736	2,589	2,727	2,800	2,871	3,059	[3,001	3,010	3,127	3,244
4	Free Schools reported in operation	No Rpts.	...	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	252	855	901	1,052	1,177
5	Total Pupils attending the Common Schools of Upper Canada	65,978	...	96,766	110,002	101,912	124,829	130,739	138,465	151,891	168,159	179,587	194,736	204,166
6	Total Amount available for the Salaries of Common School Teachers in Upper Canada	£41,500	...	£51,714	£71,514	£87,906	£77,599	£88,069	£88,478	£88,429	£102,050	£113,901	£120,939	£151,756
7	Total Amount levied or subscribed for the erection or repairs of School Houses, and for Libraries and Apparatus	No Rpts.	...	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	£14,189	£19,334	£25,094	£32,618	£43,368
8	Grand Total available for Teachers' Salaries, the erection and repairs of School Houses, and for Libraries and Apparatus	Do	...	Do	Do	Do	Do	Do	Do	£102,619	£121,384	£139,085	£161,769	£196,024
9	Total Common School Teachers in Upper Canada .....	...	...	...	2,860	2,925	3,023	3,177	3,209	3,476	3,277	3,388	3,539	3,530
10	Average number of Months each Common School has been kept open by a qualified Teacher .....	...	...	7½	8	8½	8½	9	9½	9½	9½	9½	9½	9½
11	No. of Brick Common School Houses	No Rpts.	...	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	No Rpts.	49	68	80	99	107	127	130	169
12	of Stone do do	Do	...	Do	Do	Do	84	100	140	137	147	160	169	168
13	of Frame do do	Do	...	Do	Do	Do	1,023	1,114	1,117	1,191	1,240	1,240	1,253	1,306
14	of Log do do	Do	...	Do	Do	Do	1,399	1,513	1,563	1,568	1,476	1,427	1,444	1,496

No Reports for this year were received, in consequence of a change in the School Law.