

THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

FOR THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL IN 1866.

This very large increase in the number of pupils attending the public schools during the past year is very gratifying. There were *45,131 registered in the Winter Term, and 56,017 in the Summer. This is an increase over last year of 9,980 for the Winter, and 12,246 for the Summer. The number of different pupils at school during the year is estimated at 71,059. This estimate supposes that of the 45,131 pupils at school during the winter, one-third, or 15,043 left school to engage in the various industrial occupations during the summer months. The supposition is based upon the following considerations:—

1. It is well known that in every country situated as ours, a very large proportion of the younger children are necessarily unable to attend school in winter; while the pressing demand for labor calls away during the summer very many of those constituting the school-going population of the winter. This periodic change of pupils is frequently referred to by the Inspectors. In many cases, the only answer they are able to report to the question, "Has this school made satisfactory progress since your last inspection?" is that the school is composed of a class of pupils entirely different from those at the previous visit,—is in fact "a new school."

2. Though there were 263 more schools and 10,886 more pupils in the summer than in the winter of the past year, yet the number of pupils over 15 years of age in the summer was nearly 6,000 less than in the fewer schools of the winter. Besides this, some schools in operation in winter were, from various causes, closed during the summer.

3. In Upper Canada, where the public school system has reached a very high degree of efficiency, the whole number of different pupils attending school during the year is reported. The proportion of these daily present at school on an average is 40 per cent. The number daily present at the schools of Nova Scotia, on an average, was, for the first half of the past year, 25,988.86, and for the second half 32,490.02, or an average of 29,239.44 for the year. Assuming that the number of pupils daily present on an average at the public schools of Nova Scotia bears as good a proportion as in those of Upper Canada to the whole number of different pupils for the year, we have, as the probable number of different pupils in attendance at our schools during some portion of the past year, 73,099. If the regularity and constancy of attendance in Nova Scotia is inferior to that of Upper Canada, the whole number of different pupils for the year must have been, of course, greater than the above.

It will therefore be evident that the estimate of 71,059, is much more likely to be below than above the actual number.

The following Table, compiled from the Journals of the Assembly, shews the number of pupils registered at school each term, from 1856 to 1866, together with the amounts

*Owing to an unfortunate oversight in tabulating the Returns, the number of Registered Pupils in the county of Cumberland was reported, in the September No. of the *Journal*, as 2914; the actual number was 3374, and the increase over the corresponding term of 1865, 1291 instead of 831. The number then reported for the whole province was 44,584. The balance of the discrepancy between this number and that given above is accounted for by the fact that the Returns of one Winter School containing 87 pupils were not sent in till the end of the Summer Term.

raised by the people for support, (exclusive of buildings, lands, furniture, &c.,) and the amounts granted for the same by the Province:

TABLE.

YEAR.	No. Pupils for each Term.		Support, (exclusive of buildings, furniture, etc.)		Amount from Province for every dollar raised by the people for support.
	Winter.	Summer.	Raised by people.	Granted by Province.	
1856	29451	33163	Dollars. 111963	Dollars. 44413	Cents. 40
1857	31626	37087	128222	53519	42
1858	34054	38430	129672	53319	41
1859	33319	37844	135041	46891	35
1860	33210	37376	121873	44742	37
1861	31409	35895	129775	46833	36
1862	34111	38023	129999	47888	37
1863	33311	41656	130664	45472	35
1864	33265	37546	115226	47930	42
1865*	35151	43771	124673	87085	70
1866	45131	56017	†140486	114344	81

In the sections having schools in the winter, there were 52,312 children between five and fifteen years of age. Of this number 34,360 were in attendance at the public schools. There is every reason to believe that most of the remaining 17,952 were not receiving any school training whatever. 550 under five, and 10,221 over fifteen years of age, were under school instruction, making a total attendance of 45,131, of all ages. In sections having school in the summer, there were 66,467 children between five and fifteen years of age: 49,865 of these were receiving instruction at the public schools, while 16,602 were not under training, except the limited number that may have enjoyed private instruction. There were 1,680 under five, and 4,472 over fifteen years of age, at school. Total for the summer, 56,017.

The large number of children between five and fifteen years of age residing in sections having schools, who did not attend school, is worthy of remark. A few were, doubtless, receiving private instruction; some were, too young, or too poorly clad to attend in winter, while the demands of labor had an undue influence in keeping the same or others from school in summer; and some were unable to gain admittance to the school on account of the limited accommodation provided by the section. The latter obstacle is but temporary, since the law requires that accommodation be provided for all over five years of age. A very large number, however, were deprived of instruction on account of the low estimate of its advantages entertained by the parents of the children. The rate-payers of the section had provided ample school-rooms and teachers, instruction was free to all, but ignorance so blinded the minds of many that the most trifling matters were deemed of more importance than the education of their children. Thus, notwithstanding the noble efforts of the rate-payers in many sections to expel ignorance and its dire effects from their midst by providing, free of charge, ample means for the training of all children with which they are surrounded, they are still compelled to

*The first year under the operation of the Free School system.

†This includes the County assessment.