

## THE SCHOOLS OF NOVA SCOTIA.

The Annual Report of Dr. Allison, the Superintendent of Education, states that the record of the past year is more than usually satisfactory. There has been an increase in the number of schools, teachers, and pupils, and the sum expended on school buildings much exceeds the average amount during recent years. Teachers' salaries have gone slightly upward, and new interest has been manifested both in methods and subjects of instruction. During the winter 1,911 teachers were employed and 2,011 during the summer term, to instruct 98,307 pupils enrolled at 1,943 schools. In 1878 the number of pupils was 102,538, showing a falling off similar to that observed in the province of Ontario during the last few years. In 1880 the attendance sank to 93,700, so that, as in Ontario, it is again on the increase.

The total expenditure for public schools for 1883 was \$612,889, of which \$176,072 was government aid and \$436,817 derived from local sources.

The average salary for first class male teachers was \$408.70 and for female teachers \$298.24. For second class teachers the averages were, males, \$279.06, females \$230.52. The averages for third class teachers were \$206.09 and \$159.10 respectively. The highest averages were \$669 for first class males, \$450 for second, and \$414 for third class. The corresponding figures for women were \$430, \$330, \$270. These figures bear out our contention that part of the fixed grant to schools should depend on the grade of the teacher's certificate, and make it plain that the plan would be fair to the local authorities, while it would stimulate teachers to advance as rapidly as possible in their profession. In fact the distribution in Nova Scotia *does* depend on (a) the number of teachers employed, (b) the grades of license, and (c) the relative time the schools are open. During the summer term 630 teachers removed to other schools, and 664 in the winter term, while 1,136 and 953 respectively continued in the same sections. During the same periods 215 and 263 teachers respectively were engaged for the first time.

There is one Normal School, on which the expenditure was \$5,133, and \$753 was paid for the travelling expenses of Normal School students. It has five teachers, whose salaries amounted to \$4,250; it instructed 125 students, of whom 77 received licenses to teach. The Model Schools attached have 12 teachers, whose salaries amounted to \$4,850, and the total expenditure on these schools with 1,009 pupils enrolled was \$6,808, of which the province paid \$800. General and professional education are carried on simultaneously at the Normal School, but the Superintendent urges the necessity of making it distinctly a training school for teachers. There is nothing corresponding to the County Model Schools of Ontario, but Dr. Allison recommends such a reconstruction of the academic system as would prepare the advanced schools to undertake the entire non-professional training of teachers, just as the High Schools of Ontario now do with marked efficiency. He also recommends the separation of the non-professional from the professional examinations of teachers as the first step to be taken. The admirable results obtained

here by training third class teachers in local model schools are worthy of careful examination, if a general reconstruction of the system of professional training is aimed at by the authorities of Nova Scotia. The outlines of the proposed plan for reconstructing the secondary schools were given in these columns last month. After giving statistics to show that only a small percentage of all the pupils study such branches as science, algebra, geometry, Latin and Greek, the Superintendent remarks:—

"A glance at the foregoing figures will tend to allay the apprehensions, cherished by some, that our schools are being given over to the domination of certain high sounding 'ologies.' To be candid, I have never shared in such fears, believing them, when entertained, to be based on misconceptions. In the first place, to sneer at a useful branch of knowledge, whose principles may be closely related to the health, the life, or the general usefulness of human beings, as an 'ology' does not affect either its intrinsic or its educational value. We have made a beginning of introducing the elements of science into our schools, to say nothing of the *pre-scientific* work done in a goodly number in the shape of simple lessons in color, form, and the more obvious phenomena of nature; but in my judgment we must do more in both directions before we meet the real necessities of the case. Secondly, our 'Course of Study for Common Schools' is intended to lay emphasis on the importance of the fundamental branches. No ideal perfection is claimed for its provisions; it is probable that extended experience will suggest as desirable their modification at certain points; but beyond all question the course has the merit of recognizing *all* of the studies accepted as constituting the general basis of human culture and the instruments by which the ultimate results of education are to be secured. These it adjusts in their proper relations, and, at least approximately, assigns to each its just degree of importance. Surely those who criticize it as a means designed to promote a showy veneer of knowledge at the expense of all that is solid and substantial in education, have never studied either its aim or its requirements."

## CANADIAN HISTORY.

The following extract from the report of an address by the Hon. G. W. Ross at the opening of the free library in this city articulates itself precisely into the remarks of the JOURNAL on the teaching of history. The hon. gentleman said:—

"Above all things was it necessary that Canadians should study thoroughly the history of their own country. If there was one thing more than another that was studiously avoided in the educational system of this country it was the study of its history. Even in the Public Schools—those schools of which they were so proud and boasted so much in the Province of Ontario—this branch was grievously neglected. The children were taught the history of France, of Germany, of Italy, and of other European countries; they were taught the history of ancient Greece and Rome; but the history of their own country—this fair Canada of ours—which it behooved them all to know and understand, was almost totally neglected. It was not so in the United States. Every schoolboy and girl was taught something of the life and doings of George Washington and of those other men who had helped to build up the great country to the south of us. But how many children in Canadian schools had any acquaintance with the lives of the distinguished men whom Canada had produced? He feared the number was amazingly small."

This is, we hope, the shadow of a coming event. Let "Canada for Canadians" be the motto of the school-room as well as the political platform.