

while that of school sections has been \$311220. In comparing these figures with corresponding ones for the last previous year it will be seen that in Government Expenditure there has not been much change; in all probability it has reached what for some time to come, may be regarded as the maximum figure. The average cost of registered pupils during the year 1872 was \$5 59-100, a slight increase in the average cost of 1871.

#### TEACHERS.

For the winter term we have—

A decrease of 11, 1st class male teachers.  
 " " 10, 2nd " " "  
 " " 21, 3rd " " "

Showing a total decrease of 42 male teachers of all grades. In the same term we find an increase of 7 female teachers, making a total decrease of 35 teachers for the winter term. It will here be observed, that not only is there a decrease in the number of teachers employed, but the quality is deteriorating, vacancies left by the higher grade teachers being filled, if filled at all, by those of inferior grades, and women taking the place of men. This deterioration is a matter upon which I have had cause to comment in a former Report, but the evil instead of being in process of removal is, as yet, on the increase.

The fact that there has been a lowering of the standard of our teachers, and an actual decrease, both in their numbers, and in the number of pupils attending school during the year, is not inspiring to the friends of education. Various causes for these facts may be suggested. This state of affairs may, and there is reasonable ground to believe that it will, prove to be temporary only. The attendance of pupils at school has steadily increased for a number of years; it was but natural to expect that when the attendance had reached what might be considered a maximum according to population, fluctuations such as this, owing to a concurrence of temporary causes not always quite explainable, might not unreasonably be expected; as we have already seen, however, this alone cannot account for all the falling off in the present instance. Another partial cause is, the great and increasing scarcity and consequent high price of labor; a state of affairs which induces many of the poorer people to keep their children away from school, that they may work. The employment of so many teachers of the lower grade, and the consequent inferior character of schools taught by such teachers may be another cause, since that would have a tendency to keep larger and more advanced children from school. It is to be feared however, that the principal cause, and one to which those already mentioned are in a great measure subordinate, is the indifference of a portion of the people to the blessings of education. Doubtless there is a portion of our population who are disinclined to do anything for themselves or for their children in this matter, beyond what the law compels them to do, and were these people able they make their deleterious influence felt, just in those districts where the education of the people is farthest in arrear, and where it is most required.

Lapse of time under the working of our present educational system, will undoubtedly cure the evil referred to, for much must be expected of those who are yet young, and who, as a rule, are enjoying the immediate benefits of a system of free education, when they in turn become parents of families. We have to seek the acceleration of the cause I have already advocated in means for securing a more general maintenance, where such is practical, and in a better attendance of pupils. As for elevating the general standard of the teachers employed, or at least arresting its downward tendency, that is a matter in which little or nothing can be done by legislative enactments. We can only appeal to the common sense and proper feelings of the people themselves in an effort to reform. It is through the wretched, mistaken idea of false economy, that low class teachers are substituted for those of a higher class, and not at all because the latter cannot be had, but low grade teachers are employed because they are "cheap." To the really sensible man such a reason for such an act seems to be tainted with a feeble mindedness, little short of insanity. Any healthy toned thinker knows, that, as in too many other things, what in the service of a teacher is secured merely on account of its cheapness is very apt, in the long run, to prove excessively dear.

Our Inspectors continually and forcibly in their annual Reports present this evil, and warn trustees and sections of the baneful results. We make one or two quotations that the subject may not be passed over and too soon forgotten. Daniel McDonald, Esq., of Pictou County, one of our most experienced and devoted Inspectors, remarks on the above as follows:

"This inadequate support has a most baneful effect upon the schools. Trustees are necessitated to engage cheap teachers, and as in everything else, the cheap article is not of much value; the people become dissatisfied, and being unable or unwilling to see the true cause, Adam like, cast the blame upon others."

"Whilst this instability continues, efficiency will be retarded. In regard to the cause of this, I can but reiterate that assigned in former years, viz: *insufficient remuneration*. Sections that give a fair remuneration, and evince even a moderate appreciation of services and interest in the school, have no difficulty in securing and retaining the service of competent teachers."

"As nothing can be gained by concealment, the true state of matters must be brought to light, even though unfavorable. During the last year there has been a decrease in the number of higher grades of teachers employed, as compared with the preceding year, and a consequent increase of the lower grades."

In 1871, Grade A	5	B	36	C	59
In 1872, "	2	29	56		

Decrease,	A	3	B	7	C	3
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"This was not attributable to the scarcity of teachers: the supply was in excess of the demand. Some young men, and first-class females remained idle, and many removed to other counties. Many who could not afford to remain idle had to content themselves with low salaries. The superabundance of cheap teachers filled up the schools. The result is now manifesting itself. The demand for male teachers and first-class female teachers cannot now be supplied, and I fear some schools will remain closed for the next term in consequence."

"Increased remuneration must be provided, and the number of female teachers reduced by dispensing with the grade E. Let the country and the Government look at the matter fairly, and adopt measures necessary to secure the object desired. For every year of service exceeding five, increase the amount payable from the provincial funds: and give a proportionate increase for continuance in the same section. School sections should look forward to provide a manse for the teachers' use as an inducement to continued service.

"A glance at the salaries paid should convince all that teaching affords no inducement (in this County at least) for young men to choose it as their profession; nor yet is the amount at all commensurate with the expense and toil of preparation for the profession."

A Munro, Esq., of Victoria, makes the following judicious remarks: "The frequent change of teachers in this County and throughout the Province is a great drawback to the advancement of education. Trustees, when they get a faithful teacher, should by every means within their power endeavor to retain him, for his services are invaluable, whereas the indifferent or careless is worth almost less than nothing.

"The remuneration in general is so small that an active and ambitious young man will only engage in teaching as a stepping-stone to something better, though in too many cases the teacher is paid more than an equivalent for benefits received."

#### EXAMINATION.

By a Minute of Council, there will hereafter be an annual examination of teachers, and not as heretofore, a semi-annual one. This change receives the approval of our most experienced inspectors and teachers, and good results may be expected from it. Candidates failing in one examination are almost sure to come up at the next, and owing to the former frequency of examinations the preparations were very inadequate; and so numbers came and failed, thereby imposing a large amount of work on this department, and necessitating a large and needless expenditure of the public money. From the number of school sections to be provided with teachers, and the number of teachers holding licenses, the inference might be that the supply is largely in