

the teacher's desk without lock and key, but the building open to every one that choose to enter. Books, &c., are often removed, registers tampered with and abused. Such things are intolerable and inexcusable.

The multiplicity of books has become a *positive evil*. With all deference to the action of our Council of Public Instruction, I must dissent from and deprecate the authorization of *so many* series of readers. The Nova Scotia Series had come into universal use, and all our schools had a pretty good supply. This series gave general satisfaction and afforded good results. Quite suddenly we found "The Illustrated" and the "Academic," followed in quick succession by the "Royal Readers." In a few months, we found the "Academic" and the "Illustrated" recalled, and the "Maritime" substituted, but not until the former had, to some extent, found their way into the schools. Now we find some of *all kinds* in the schools; classes are multiplied and the time frittered away needlessly. It is a serious matter to the county to have a whole series of School Books changed, many cannot afford the expense. *I have not and will not* advocate the introduction of any one of the said series, whilst such vacillation and uncertainty prevail. We may have other changes in a few weeks or months. I say to our teachers and trustees "do not change except when a whole class is ready to pass in to another book, then it may be well to adopt one of the new series. All those authorized are good—take your choice." More depends upon the teacher than upon any kind of book, however excellent, to make good readers.

This variety of readers is reprehensive—destructive of that uniformity at which the system aimed, and carries us back to the time when the school books were liable to be changed with a change of teacher. Better adopt one good series and exclude the others.

Houses.—Three new Houses have been finished and occupied during the year, viz:—in Section No. 28, Hardwood Hill in the North District; and Blue mountains No. 26, and Grant on No. 69 in the south; all are substantial, well finished and commodious buildings, furnished with the Dawson desks. No. 49, Lyons Brook, renovated their building—fitted up an excellent classroom, affording increased accommodation and comfort to teacher and pupils. No. 22, Head of Mount Dalhousie has a building in course of erection. Six Sections have voted an aggregate sum of \$2210 towards building. In two of the said Sections the houses are unfit to occupy during winter, and the schools of course closed.

The School-rooms in general are kept clean and tidy. There is room for improvement in some sections in regard to fires, sweeping, &c. in the winter season. Trustees neglect to provide for such service.

Interest manifested.—So far as visitation is an index of the interest taken in school work, there has been a growing increase. Trustees made 80, clergymen 170, teachers 128, others visitors 1449 more than during the preceding year.

In our incorporated towns the schools are placed in the hands of the town council, and a committee on schools is appointed, just as for any other branch of the public service. As the duties of the councillors are multifarious and onerous, it is often impossible to give the time to superintend the schools that should be given. It might be well to have a committee of supervision to co-operate with councillors.

Returns.—Whilst there is general improvement in accuracy and neatness in the preparation of the returns, some teachers did not manifest the same care as in the previous year. The trustees' yearly returns show little if any improvement. Something must be done to simplify the document, and obviate the necessity of answering the same questions for a number of years.

Amendments.—After a year's experience in the working of the recent amendments, I can report that they have given *entire satisfaction*.