

mute children of the province, the maintenance of the normal school and the university, and the cost of inspection, supervision, and the general administration of the school laws, the total expenditure would be found to exceed half a million dollars annually; a large sum in the aggregate, but involving an average cost of less than eight dollars annually for each pupil receiving instruction.

The superintendent again recommends that no ungraded school be classed as superior after the first term of 1897.

The chief superintendent argues that the work now done by the forty-nine superior and thirteen grammar schools, would be much more efficiently performed by about ten well equipped high schools established at convenient centres throughout the province.

He also recommends that an entrance examination be held for admission to the high schools, as that test is now very superficial, depending more upon expediency than merit. He would have these examinations take place at the same time as the normal school entrance and the matriculation examinations. The high school leaving examinations would in such case be abolished.

The total number admitted to the normal school was 272, a decrease of forty-three on the previous year.

It is suggested by the chief superintendent that instruction in purely professional work in the normal school, now almost entirely confined to the principal, be shared by the other instructors who are now mostly engaged in scholastic preparation.

He also expresses the hope, that in future there will be but one matriculation examination for the university, and that the county scholarships be awarded as the results of this examination.

There is a gratifying increase in the number of school libraries, and attention is directed to the new catalogue.

The inequality of the burden of taxation born by rich and poor districts is shown; and the superintendent suggests the idea of increasing the county fund from 30 cents to 50 cents per head.

He also draws attention to the fact that many wealthy districts evade full support of schools, and recommends that the head teacher of a school in a district having a taxable valuation above \$40,000.00 should hold a first-class license, and the head teacher of a school in a district having a valuation of over \$1,500.00 should hold a license not below that of second-class.

Teachers' institutes were held in all the counties except Restigouche and Madawaska. The aggregate attendance was 861.

In the appendices will be found interesting and instructive reports from the chancellor of the university of New Brunswick, the principal of the normal school, the inspectors, the boards of trustees of cities and incorporated towns, the principal of the institution for the education of the deaf and dumb, and the principal of the Halifax school for the blind.

Reference will be made to some of these in a later issue.

N. S. Inspectors' Reports.

We give below a few choice extracts from the reports of the Nova Scotia school inspectors. They are worthy of careful perusal and study.

PRINCIPAL CULKIN of the Normal School *inter alia* reports

Out of our one hundred and seventy-seven students, one hundred and seventy-one received diplomas of the various ranks—seventy-one of first rank, sixty of second rank, and forty of third rank.

The tests that allows so large a percentage to pass cannot be very strict. Unless some careful process of selection takes place before students enter the school, it will be necessary, if public confidence is to be retained, that more discrimination be exercised in granting diplomas.

• • • We have accordingly placed these students in the second rank, with the recommendation that after one year's successful practice in teaching, duly certified to by an inspector, they shall be granted diplomas of first rank. It may indeed be worth considering whether in all cases successful experience for a short period under a lower class of license ought not to be an essential condition for a higher class.

This is a most valuable suggestion. We have already recommended it in these pages, and hope to see the province far enough advanced educationally, to make it prudent to have it adopted.

Principal Calkin refers to the weakness of candidates entering the normal school in certain subjects—such as vocal music, drawing, physical geography, English grammar, composition, chemistry, physics. The scientific knowledge of candidates in most cases seems to be confined to text books with no acquaintance with laboratory method.

We would also commend to our educational authorities the two excellent suggestions made below. The reason given for their adoption are so clear and convincing, that nothing needs to be said in their support.

1. I suggest that the standard of scholarship as regards the minimum pass marks be raised in certain important subjects in which, at least in the teacher, "little learning is a dangerous thing." Under present arrangements, a person having an aggregate of 400 in all subjects, and not falling below twenty-five in any subject, is entitled to the scholarship certificate demanded for a first-class license. But a person whose knowledge of English grammar, or indeed of almost any other subject in the syllabus, is adequately represented by such a mark, can scarcely be competent to take charge of a school.

2. I suggest that some of our high schools restrain their ambition in the matter of taking up the work of Grade XII. In my opinion it would be vastly wiser to expend their surplus energy in the way of securing greater thoroughness in the work of the other three grades. Could they not, with much greater advantage to their students, do some laboratory work in botany, chemistry, and physics, and give more attention to physical geography, English subjects, drawing, and music?

PROF. SMITH, (School of Agriculture) after describing the biological work of the first class goes on to say:

In chemistry they should have had a good general knowledge upon entering the school, but unfortunately only a few had ever performed any experiments, and these not many, while the larger portion of the class had never seen any number of experiments performed. I can scarcely withhold comment upon the worse than useless character of such methods of teaching chemistry, or any science, for that matter, as it is actually an injury to the student.