

cancy. Mr. W. W. Haines acted as chairman for the years 1898 and 1899.

On May 5th, 1898, following the death of Mr. William Alexander Mr. William Irwin received his appointment as inspector of St. Marys schools, a position which he still ably fills. The decease of Mr. Alexander removed an able and efficient officer who nearly twenty-five years previously received his first appointment as inspector in St. Marys, and who, during his long tenure of office constantly strove to impress on teachers and trustees that the physical, mental, and moral needs of the children were matters of first importance in the management of school affairs.

Inspector Irwin had occasion early in his term of office to criticize the schools. In his report dated June 23rd he included the following comment, "The inside of the rooms and the surroundings outside are not in keeping with many of the homes from which the pupils come. There is a bareness and want of cheerfulness about some of the rooms that has a depressing effect upon both pupils and teachers. This I think is a mistake." The board this year resolved to mitigate, if possible, some of the defects in ventilation and to this end employed Architect Powell who furnished a plan for a system of ventilation. This was adopted and the suggested changes made in the Central and West Ward schools at a total cost of about \$1400. In August another lot adjoining the West Ward school grounds was purchased at a cost of \$55.00.

For the following year 1899 all the teachers were re-engaged, the principal's salary being \$750 and the assistants' salaries ranging from \$250 to \$325. On the trustees board Mr. James Laing succeeded Mr. E. W. Harding as representative of the West Ward. Mr. Harding's retirement after twenty-five years of continuous membership was made, the subject of a kind resolution in which the board expressed its regret that he should find it necessary to withdraw, and also their appreciation of the very great interest he had taken in all the various problems that had confronted the board during his long term of membership. Mr. Harding was then appointed their representative on the collegiate institute board for 1899.

The inspector's report for April 1899 contained the recommendation that music be taught in the schools and also a complaint that the heating of the Central school was very imperfect. No action was taken with regard to the teaching of music, but to properly heat the Central new furnaces were installed at a cost of \$350.

## CHAPTER X.

### Some Heavy Annual Expenditures.

At the close of 1899 M<sup>rs</sup> M. P. Barbour resigned and was succeeded by Mr. P. Harding. M<sup>rs</sup> Thompson was granted leave of absence to attend the Normal and Miss M. Gillies was appointed to the vacancy during her absence. All the other teachers were re-engaged. For the following years 1900 and 1901 Mr. A. H. Lofft occupied the chair at the trustee board.

The amount levied on the town for public school purposes in 1899 was \$4100. The leg's'ative grant, including grant for inspection