

vealed in the annual report of the Minister, proclaims to all the world that our educational system is a failure. Does the Minister of Education explain? We cannot find a word in reference to it. Do the Inspectors, of whom there are seventy-eight for the whole province, throw any light on this very serious blemish in our school work? Not a sound comes from that official quarter. And what of the House of Assembly? It was in annual session, and the Report on Education was presented to it in the usual form. But not a word about the report, not a question asked for information or explanation concerning the attendance. Silence reigns, and it is not golden. The press is not so dumb; one of our contemporaries calls the fact "startling"; another "puzzling," and a third a "just cause of grief."

A MOST important movement in favor of education in Canada was the introduction of Manual Training in the Public Schools. Many were in favor of making the experiment but had not the means. The enlightened and public-spirited action of Sir William C. McDonald, of Montreal, made the effort possible. Sir William C. McDonald set apart a large sum of money to enable School Boards in the larger centres of population in every province of Canada to introduce and carry on for three years by way of experiment the education of the hand and eye, which is believed by well-read men to be necessary for full development.

The McDonald Fund, which provides for carrying on this work, is administered by Professor J. W. Robertson, of Ottawa, well known as an able and energetic exponent of the practical in education. With School Boards the terms of the

agreement are that the Boards supply the rooms, and on behalf of the fund the Trustee will bear the expense of the equipment of the rooms with all necessary material and apparatus and all costs, charges and expenses in connection with teachers' salaries and expenses of equipment, maintenance of equipment and material for use of pupils.

It is claimed for Manual Training that it develops executive ability, gives the mind that practical turn that enables it to make use of and supply and apply knowledge, gives the boy the mastery over himself and strengthens him to overcome difficulties, trains him to accuracy and exactness, develops his power of observation and stimulates the disposition to independent inquiry, supplementing in this way the mental training afforded by the ordinary subjects of the school course.

There are now in Canada between thirty-five and forty schools working under the conditions of the McDonald Fund.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.—The brief note which we had last month on "School Attendance" in our Public Schools has been the means of calling attention to a "puzzling" question as one of our contemporaries puts it. The fact remains—and as yet no explanation has been given, why it is so—that less than one-half of the pupils in the First Reading Book reach the Fourth Reader class. There are in Ontario seventy-eight (78) inspectors to look after the Public Schools. They are men of experience in the affairs of life, of experience in teaching in our Public Schools, and must, at least, have first-class certificates, fortunately, are not subject to dismissal by the appointing power as unfortunately, perhaps, our public school teachers are. Many of them, to our knowl-