

is not founded on educational grounds; yet the question is, in the first instance, purely an educational one, and must be tried by the canons of that science. Incidental to the inquiry it may perhaps be also seen that their very aim is like to be frustrated by the measure they demand.

The problem known as the bi-lingual difficulty has arisen chiefly in the Ottawa and lower St. Lawrence counties of Ontario. Historically, the sequence is this: The first settlers used the English tongue: they avoided the lower and swamp lands, of which there are considerable areas in these districts, and gathered into communities on the higher lands. The French-Canadian, who followed in the wake of the lumber-camps, on the decline of that industry, took up the lands which had been refused by the more fastidious, because more opulent, British settler. The drift of population at once set in and the vacant areas rapidly filled up, and French-speaking communities were formed. The process was not one of displacement, but rather an intermingling of the two peoples settling in patches, chequer-wise. Now, that the unoccupied lands have been brought under cultivation, the French influx is much reduced and the equilibrium can be disturbed only by the differing ratios of the natural increase of the two peoples. As a consequence of the aggregation of the two races into separate communities the corresponding school-sections became French or English. The Commissioners found that in no less than thirty of the schools they visited every child whose name was entered on the roll was of French-speaking parents. "The present English schools," say the Commissioners, "have always been English since they were first established, and most of the French schools have always been French."

The condition of the French districts must be kept present to the mind while questions of method in their schools are under consideration. From the detailed report of the Commissioners, we have selected as a fair illustration the Township of Alfred. Results found in 11 schools are scheduled as follows:—476 pupils were on the roll; of this number 21 used