

III.—ATTENDANCE OF PUPILS AT THE SCHOOLS.

According to the Reports of local Superintendents, the whole School population of Upper Canada in 1848 (that is of the population between the ages of five and sixteen years) was 241,102—being an increase of 10,127 over that of the preceding year. The whole number of Pupils reported in attendance at the Schools in 1847 was 124,829; the whole number in attendance in 1848 was 130,738—increase of Pupils in favour of 1848, 5,910. But there is a much greater difference in the *average* than in the *aggregate* attendance of the pupils at the Schools during these two years. The gross *average* attendance of Pupils in the *Summer* of 1847 was 84,537; in the *Summer* of 1848 it was 112,000. In the *Winter* of 1847, the gross *average* attendance of Pupils was 89,991; in the *Winter* of 1848 it was 114,800. These results furnish a gratifying illustration of the gradual and rapidly advancing progress of School instruction amongst the youthful population of Upper Canada; although it is lamentable to observe, that nearly one-half of our School population are not in attendance at School at all.

IV.—NUMBER OF SCHOOL SECTIONS, SCHOOLS, &c. &c.

In my last Annual Report (pp. 5-7*) I mentioned the means which had been employed to prevent the formation of small and inefficient School Sections; and to reduce the number of those already formed. It affords me pleasure to be able to remark, that while the number of *School Sections* reported for 1847 was 3,055, the number of School Sections reported for 1848 was 2,953—a reduction in number of 102. On the other hand, the number of Schools *in operation* reported in 1847 was 2,727, while the number of Schools *in operation* in 1848 was 2,800—increase of Schools in operation in favour of 1848, 73. It is also satisfactory to remark, that while the *average* attendance of Pupils at each School was, in the *Summer* of 1847, 31, and in the *Winter* 33; it was in the *Summer* of 1848, 40, and in the *Winter* 41. I have, furthermore, pleasure in stating, that while the *average* time of keeping open the Schools by qualified Teachers throughout Upper Canada in 1847 was 8½ months, it was in 1848 not less than nine months.

It thus appears, that in respect to the *average* time of keeping open the Schools by legally qualified Teachers, the *average* attendance of Pupils in both *Summer* and *Winter*, the *aggregate* attendance of Pupils, and the *amount of moneys* raised by voluntary local taxation for the salaries of Teachers, the year 1848 is manifestly in advance of any preceding year. The same remark may be made in respect to the number and character of the School-houses built during the year 1848, as shown by the accompanying Statistical Table marked E; and also the increasing use of School Books recommended by the Board of Education—those Books being already used in a majority of the Common Schools of Upper Canada, and also in most of the Private Schools.

I herewith subjoin extracts from the Reports of those local Superintendents of Common Schools who have accompanied their Statistical Returns with general observations on the working of the School Law, and the state and progress of the Schools in their respective Districts.

V.—EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF LOCAL SUPERINTENDENTS OF COMMON SCHOOLS IN UPPER CANADA, FOR THE YEAR 1848.

OTTAWA DISTRICT.

Extract from the Report of Thomas Higginson, Esquire, District Superintendent :—

"Of the state of Education in this District I would say, it is very low, especially in new settlements; still there are many Teachers, male and female, of respectable attainments, of correct morals, and persevering industry; and many Pupils possessing a much larger amount of elementary knowledge than is generally supposed. A feeling is evidently springing up on the part of parents and guardians, and the community generally, that the education of the rising generation is indispensable; and I believe if the present system would be permitted to continue, that great, important, and happy results would be achieved. That ever vacillating system of legislation with which this Province has been pestered, tends much to

paralyze the effects of even the best School Law. Public opinion has no time to mature on any system until another is adopted. The great corrector of abuses, experience, becomes bewildered amidst continual fluctuations; and the public mind, having no time to fix on what is beneficial, or reject what is erroneous, becomes either bewildered or indifferent."

BATHURST DISTRICT.

Extract from the Report of the Reverend James Padfield, District Superintendent :—

"Of the 122 Teachers employed in the course of the year in this District, only 40 received certificates from the District Superintendent. It is supposed the rest held Visitors' certificates. The power given to Visitors to grant certificates is liable to great abuse; and in this District many persons have been authorized to teach by such certificates, who ought rather be pupils themselves than instructors of others. With respect to the character of the Schools here, they are for the most part of the second class; there are many, however, of the third. Very few only are taught by such Teachers as I should deem entitled to general certificates. On this subject, however, it appears to me that no definite idea can well be formed until a more accurate statement is furnished of the qualifications necessary for the several classes of Teachers.

"Ten new School-houses have been erected or completed in the District during the year. In most of these erections a much greater regard has been paid to the fitness of the buildings for the purpose they are intended to serve, than has heretofore been usual in many parts of this District. There is indeed yet room for improvement; but still every friend of education will rejoice at the increasing interest felt on this subject, which these buildings exhibit. The parties who projected and carried on the works deserve great credit for their exertions, and it is to be hoped they will witness the good effects of their labours in the additional advantages thus afforded to both Teachers and Scholars."

DALHOUSIE DISTRICT.

Extract from the Report of the Honourable Hamnett Pinhey, District Superintendent :—

"You will find on a realization of my Annual Report, that the pecuniary remuneration actually paid by the Trustees and Parents to the several Teachers, has quadrupled the amount of the Parliamentary Grant; and I am assured that the sums appearing due to the Teachers on the 31st of December last, have in most of the Sections been paid. A very great improvement is visible as regards the efficiency of the Teachers, the acquirements of the Pupils, and scholastic discipline; the Schools are better furnished, and the children improved in appearance, dress, and address."

MIDLAND DISTRICT.

Extract from the Report of John Strachan, Esquire, District Superintendent :—

"It gives me pleasure to state, that the Schools in general in the Midland District are very much improved from what they formerly were, and some of them are in a most flourishing condition, though too many are inferior.

"I fondly hope that the Normal and Model Schools will have a most salutary effect, and be productive of the best consequences by means of raising the standard of Education in Common Schools, and qualifying young men to become teachers of youth."

VICTORIA DISTRICT.

Extract from the Report of William Hutton, Esquire, District Superintendent :—

"We have only one of the Normal School Pupils yet in our District, (Edward Thresher,) and, though in a very remote part of the County, I am happy to say he has a very large and good School, and gives very great satisfaction. A few more of them would infuse a spirit amongst us which we much require."

NEWCASTLE DISTRICT.

Extract from the Report of Benjamin Hayter, Esquire, District Superintendent :—

"It will be seen that very nearly all the Schools in the District have been open at least six months, and very many have been open twelve months,—independent of those which are always yearly

* See *Journal of Education*, Vol. II., pp. 114, 115.