

There are, therefore, 40 teachers out of 588 who do not know English well enough, making an average of 8%. And, if that be still a large number, too large, as we think, we may fairly draw attention to the scanty assistance given by the Provincial Government to the recruitment of the staff of bilingual schools. On the one hand, that number of children in French Canadian families, on the other, the difficulty of access to public examinations, at which our teachers would have to present themselves after a year's course in a normal school not made for them, without, moreover, obtaining the special training which would make them peculiarly fitted for work in our **Catholic** and **bilingual** schools. All this is a sufficient explanation of the relative weakness of a small number of our teachers in respect of a knowledge of English. And justice compels us to add that these teachers are, as a rule, put in charge of the lower forms, where the young children, according to Dr. Merchant himself, ought to be taught in their mother tongue. "The best results," he says, "are obtained when the medium of instruction is in the beginning the mother tongue. Life, in the ordinary school, is so different from the life of the home, that the child, on the entrance to school, finds himself in a strange and perplexing environment. He is bewildered if the language he hears in his lessons has no meaning for him, and for a long time he makes but little progress."⁴²

"Many of the remaining teachers speak English with a French accent although with a fair degree of ease and correctness."⁴³ Indeed! Is that a

⁴²Report, p. 72.