

In the high schools as well as the public schools, there was a slight decrease in the attendance, viz., 663, leaving the total number of pupils 12,473. The average cost per pupil for the 104 schools was \$27.56. It seems there are yet 51 union high and public schools in existence, and that only 37 high schools charge fees, while the other 67 are free.

It is impossible within the compass of a brief article even to glance over the whole report. We conclude the present notice with a pleasing extract from the report of Inspector Kelly of Brant, which reveals the strides of progress making in the older and wealthier counties under the influence of intelligent direction.

"Perhaps the two most tastefully furnished school-rooms in the county are in the Cainsville school. There, in addition to a good library and a valuable cabinet museum of minerals, comprising also sea shells, fine specimens of coral are to be found. On brackets around the Principal's room are marble busts of the foremost poets and novelists of England. There are also samples, in small glass bottles, of the different kinds of grain grown in the country; models of full-rigged ships, of reapers, mowers, ploughs, harrows, etc." Here is an example worthy of imitation, and more eloquent than a whole sermon on æsthetics.

REPORTS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL INSPECTORS.

Both the Inspectors close their reports with emphatic expressions of satisfaction with the general efficiency of the high schools and collegiate institutes. Dr. McLellan says:—"There are but very few weak schools, and even those are doing work that ought not to be despised, while many really good schools are doing work which merits high praise. I have seen many of the best high schools in the United States, and a few of the best in Great Britain, and I feel sure of two things; that in the department of Mathematics our schools are superior to any I have seen, and that in general standing they are inferior to none." It is only necessary to point to this testimony to confute the few misanthropes who are continually repeating the charge that our high school system is radically defective. The real fact stands out plainly that in proportion to their cost they are about the best secondary schools in existence. But this is quite different from asserting that they have reached absolute perfection. And, as might be expected, the Inspectors dwell more upon the apparent defects than upon the many excellencies. Both officers report that reading and writing need more attention, and recommend that these subjects shall no longer be merely nominal at the Entrance Examination. As we lately pointed out, these subjects should have a higher value attached to them; and a higher standard of attainment should be exacted. Both public and high schools would immediately respond to the call for better results. The Inspectors agree in placing a high value on English Literature and urge the necessity of giving it a still more prominent position on the course of study. The Senior Inspector in his usual pregnant style points out the mischievous effects of forcing the study of formal grammar on children at an age when the "subtle

exercise of the reflective faculties is clearly impossible." He says:—"There is still, amongst many, a *furor* in the business of parsing and analysis," and expresses the hope that "the English language will be taught in a more practical way—as in the construction and re-modelling of sentences, the comparison of faulty with correct forms of expression, practice in epistolary writing, in simple narrative and descriptive composition, and the study of selections from the great masters of English whose 'sweet and proper utterance' has made the English tongue the glory of the English race."

Both Inspectors agree with the JOURNAL in asking aid for the establishment of good reference libraries in all our schools, and instances are quoted where the personal enthusiasm of head-masters has secured the desirable end, even without the assistance of government aid. We are glad to find the Senior Inspector emphatically condemning the excessive number of options recently introduced into the high school programme, and strongly recommending that the choice of studies should not be left to immature boys and girls, nor even, so much as now, to parents who are not much better qualified to make a wise selection. "The sooner," he remarks, "we return to a judicious *fixed course* with comparatively few options, the better it will be for the cause of education in this Province," and we believe that the evils already cropping out under the elective system, sufficiently establish the correctness of that opinion.

For the present we must be content to leave many excellent suggestions unnoticed. In regard to Science we have only space to put the following sentences beside the remarks of the JOURNAL on the same subject in our last number:—

"The department can make science obligatory, and, if necessary, substantially reward proficiency in this branch; the Universities can aid the Department in this work by giving elementary science a place in their primary examinations. Is it too much to ask the Provincial University to follow in this respect the example of the University of London?" What will be the reply?

MORAL EDUCATION.

On Dec. 27 last, a committee of the Wisconsin Teachers' Association presented a report on this topic. Their able paper sets out by stating that the object of the public schools is to fit the young for intelligent citizenship. Foremost among the duties of schools, therefore, is that of inculcating in the minds of their pupils those moral principles upon which social order and good government rest. There is a secular morality which is not opposed to religious morality. As the result of human experience, it is recognized by all civilized peoples, taught by the philosophers, and sanctioned by the creeds of all enlightened nations. This morality can and must be taught apart from religion but not in hostility to any of its forms. It must be taught without limiting it to the mere inculcation of precepts. It means the formation of character; the problem therefore is:—Can anything be done to help in rendering more effective the work of the schools in the formation of character?