

maps, apparatus, etc. The Minister notices a gradual improvement in the character of the school buildings, the brick and frame school houses increasing, while those made of logs are gradually disappearing.

The total school population between the ages of 5 and 16 years was 478,791; this number shows a decrease of 5,026. In a review of a previous year's Report we remarked upon a similar decrease, and explained it by the fact that there was a large emigration of our farming population to the North-West. But this explanation will not now avail, seeing that so few people left Ontario in 1883 to seek their fortunes in the Land of Promise. The two most probable ways in which this decrease may be accounted for are the incorrect returns sent in by the local authorities, or a permanent decrease in school population, owing to the fact that fewer children are born. Of the number we have given, 452,661 were entered on the school registers as scholars; there were also 11,708 of other ages registered, making a total registered attendance of 464,369 pupils. The average attendance was not one-half of this, for only 215,561, or 46 per cent., attended school every day. The law requires a minimum yearly attendance on the part of pupils between the ages of seven and thirteen years of 110 days, or eleven weeks in each session, but we find from the Report that 88,432 of this class did attend any school for this period, and we are further told that there were 7,266 who attended no school whatever. If Mr. Ross can succeed in decreasing these numbers, and thus add to the regular attendance he will become a benefactor to the country. The more the children of the country are brought under the wholesome influences of our school system, the more we may expect crime to decrease and prosperity to reign. There were

35 per cent. of pupils in the First or lowest class, 23 per cent. in the Second, 25 per cent. in the Third, 15 per cent. in the Fourth, and only 2 per cent. in the Fifth. The large numbers that are found in the lower classes show how necessary it is that the practical training of the teachers of these classes should have the first consideration. We look anxiously for the time when a year's practice under skilful teachers will be exacted from every student in training in the Province. With an apprenticeship of this extent the teacher would be better fitted at the outside to cope with the difficulties of his calling, and accomplish more satisfactory results.

The following were the average salaries :—

	In Cities.	In Towns.	In Villages.	In Rural Districts.
Males,	\$764	\$605	\$575	\$388
Females,	362	277	256	250

The average for the whole Province for males was \$422; for females, \$271. Mr. Ross remarks that the salaries "are quietly but surely advancing," but the advance is mighty slow, for by reference to the abstract on pages 68 and 69, we find that in 1874 the average salary for the Province was \$287, in 1883 it was barely \$320, thus salaries have advanced \$33 in ten years, or at the rate of \$3.30 per year. Surely Mr. Ross cannot be sincere in advancing this paltry increase as a plea for doing away with the Superannuation Fund. From a statement of the average salary in the various Counties, which appears for the first time, we gather that Kent pays the highest and Haliburton the lowest.

The total number of schools open was 5,252, taught by 6,911 teachers, of whom 2,829 were males, and 4,082 were females. These figures show 1,253 more female than male teachers employed. The excess of female over male teachers is rapidly increasing. 211 of the teachers employed