

PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN LONDON.

The work doing in London attracts attention from all educational centres. With its population of three and a half millions, making it the world's metropolis, it has only lately taken in hand the question of its public schools. In 1870 it was stated that there were 150,000 children of the proper age excluded for want of room in the existing schools. The School Board determined to remedy this by erecting school houses for 112,000 pupils; a thorough list was made of the number in each school district in want of school facilities, and measures taken to supply them. Of course, there were legal difficulties and the opposing interests of existing schools to be overcome and reconciled, and this done, there were 134 school houses ordered in different parts of London. By September of 1874 there were 65 new schools opened for 61,985 pupils, 35 more under way for 26,736 children, and sites designated for 34 school houses to accommodate 20,207 more—in all 134 school buildings for 108,930 children. The cost of the sixty-five school houses was less than fifty dollars per pupil. The school rooms were fitted up for classes of 50, 60, 70, and 80 scholars, and the school houses planned so that there would be six with 250 children, twenty-five with 500, twenty-five with 750, forty-three with 1,000, thirty-two with 1,250 and three with 1,500. The School Board also took charge of eighty-four old schools, with 24,000 pupils, with room for 15,000 more, and these school houses were used by day for children, in the evening for adults for instruction in science and the mechanical arts. The old government of these schools was kept up as far as possible, but it was subordinate to the control of the School Board, whose inspectors made frequent visits and also held the annual general examination, which is prescribed with great minuteness of detail by law.

These schools have 243 male and 341 female teachers holding certificates, 791 pupil teachers, and about 500 on trial. The list of children attending them showed 79,700 on the rolls, room for 75,275, but an average attendance of only 58,507; but as this was partly due to the strict system of noting as absent all who did not answer to the roll-call on opening, measures were taken that reduced the number of absentees, total or partial, at least one-half, and the visitors appointed by the Board worked with such energy that the number registered was increased from 208,520 to 343,102, and that of average attendance from 171,769 to 256,391. Although competition is specially favored in all English legislation, the School Board received each year for four successive years an average of 79,000 pupils, and not one private school was opened.

The children in these schools in London pay, and 15,000 of the scholars that had formerly gone to schools provided for the poor free of cost now pay every Monday their penny. The School Board receives from 28,000 children one penny weekly, from 48,000 two pence and three pence, from 3,000 four pence, and from 1,000 sixpence. Of 1,325 families who stopped their payments, 500 recommenced, and 558 children were exempt on account of their extreme poverty. The opposition to payment came from the small dealers and from the country people, who used to turn an honest penny by the labor of their children, and did not like losing this at the same time that they were obliged to send their children to school and pay for their instruction. The law of compulsory attendance was enforced by the aid of visitors, whose best labor was in securing a large voluntary increase and in making the public schools deservedly popular.

The London School Board exercises its supervision over private schools, and with such effect that, in 1875, there were 85,000 pupils in them under their regulations, with a marked improvement in all respects. It has a limited power over the children left to run wild in the streets, and it has put over three thousand of them at Industrial Schools or on Training Ships. With all its outlay, the cost, which was established at sixpence on the pound in 1870, was found, after three years, to be less than a half-penny per year, including current expenses, interest on loans for the purchase of property, and building, &c. The money was borrowed at three-and-a-half per cent. for fifty years, so that the generations yet to come, who are to be principally benefited by these reforms, will also share in the expense, and in 1922, when the debt will be finally paid off, there will certainly be some substantial reward due the authors of the system of popular education inaugurated in London in 1870. The School Board still has a great work to do; for there are still 190,000 children either abandoned by their parents and given to mere vagabondage, or badly taught in inferior schools. The plan is to increase by 7,000 annually the list of their pupils, and to build ten new school-houses every year to

house them properly. The great merit of the London School Board is that it has carried its system into effect so thoroughly and so well that there has been little real difficulty in applying the law under which it exists, and in enforcing its provisions so as to secure the support of the vast population living under it, and its schools are filled with the children without distinction of fortune or position, while they are opened to those who hitherto were condemned to grow up in ignorance or vice.—*Pennsylvania School Journal*.

Native genius is not monopolized by Canadian candidates for certificates. The following answers were given at a late examination in one of the counties of Iowa:

With what country did we carry on the war of the Revolution? Ans.—Africa.

What is the first work to be performed on taking charge of a school, and what is your method of performing it? Ans.—My first work, generally, is to thrash about one-half dozen of the scholars, and my method is variegated.

Give the name of the author of the Declaration of Independence and the name of the body that issued it. Ans.—John Hancock.

What are the four prominent methods of teaching beginners to read? Ans.—To endeavor to make your own feelings and sentiments the same as the author.

Give the course of the Mississippi river. Ans.—It flows from its source to its mouth.

Decline ox. Ans.—Pos. ox, com. better ox, super. best ox.

What is cancellation? Ans.—A short operation of performing examples.

Decline Attorney. Ans.—Attorney smiles; attorneys smoke (generally).

Give your plan of a daily recitation in reading. Ans.—Form class in row, standing with book in left hand.

What is climate, and on what does it depend? Ans.—Is pure or impure air, and depends upon the condition of water, upon the ground, upon vegetation and upon the culture of the ground.

Another answer to the same is as follows: The climate is cold in the north and east, generally temperate and healthful in the middle and west, and warm in the south; it depends on social, political and commercial importance.

What is a sentence? Ans.—A line of words from one period to another.

What words should be emphasized in a sentence? Ans.—The most emphatic words.

Describe the heart. Ans.—The heart is a conical shape and situated between the right and left ventricle.

Name ten of the largest countries in Europe. Ans.—Italy, England, Russia, Prussia, Germany, Portugal, etc.

What form of government has Russia? Ans.—A desperate form of government.

—Some teachers of our acquaintance are evidently laboring under a strange misconception of their duty in regard to sustaining an educational journal. With charming simplicity, they sometimes say to us: "What a splendid journal you are publishing! I can hardly wait for the first of the month; and Miss A. no sooner gets her copy than I borrow it, and read it before she does."

Another says: "I am so glad my trustees subscribed for the Journal for our library. I take it home, and keep it there until every word is read."

This is a verbatim repetition of remarks quite frequently made in our hearing.

We have a few words to say, in all seriousness, to those of our readers to whom the words apply. It should be beneath the dignity of the teacher to borrow an educational journal—in fact, no true teacher will do so. What would be thought of a lawyer who constantly borrows a commentary on law, or a physician who borrows a text-book on medicine?

So every teacher should own, at least, one educational journal; and if its merits do not reach the high standard he considers necessary, his earnest endeavors should strive to supply every deficiency, and make it in reality an aid to the educator.

Another point we desire to have understood. There are already many copies of the Journal subscribed for for the District Libraries. These copies belong strictly to the library, and not to the teacher. They are for the use of trustees and pupils, and should not be taken from the school-room, except in the same manner as are other library books. We trust no teacher will consider himself absolved from the duty of subscribing for the Journal, because his district takes it.—*Pacific School and Home Journal*.