

pity? But people say: we have a certain number of school districts which must be provided with masters. In the first place I do not see the necessity of so great a number of schools; and why, in order to give a master to each of them it is necessary to accept as teachers persons totally disqualified. I do not see why under the specious pretext of facilitating access to the schools to all the persons residing in a locality, we ought to adopt the system of multiplicity of schools, a multiplicity which will result in the end in affording instruction to no one. For what civil or moral instruction can children obtain from male or female teachers who hire their services for £25, £20, £15, £12, and even £8, per annum? Is it to be believed in good faith, that with the system of multiplying the schools, with the impossibility of procuring competent masters and mistresses, education will be made to progress, and its benefits and advantages be appreciated. Without doubt it is desirable that all the inhabitants of a parish should possess a good elementary school; and in order to obtain this precious advantage, there should be sufficient money to pay the teachers suitably; but as that is scarcely possible, is it not better to have fewer schools in each parish, and have good ones?

In the *Journal de Québec* we find the following excellent article on the same subject:—

“One of the first, the most important duties of every good government,” says Mr. Dupont White, “is to afford the people the benefit of a solid and moral education. By what means can the people receive this instruction, so essential to the prosperity of the state, and to the happiness of its inhabitants, if the teachers are not placed in a better and more advantageous position than they have hitherto enjoyed? Where can masters be found at 200 francs (£10) capable of giving such instruction? How create an *esprit de corps*, and all the guarantees that it admits of, among men whom the urgency of their wants, whom the inferiority of their minds and their talents can only consign to the ungrateful functions of teachers for so small a remuneration? Is not the teacher, like the priest, charged with the care of souls? Why then mete out to him with such a stingy hand, the wages due to his painful and important labours?”

“Permit me to direct your attention to the present situation of the school-masters,” said Lord John Russell, in the last session of the British Parliament, (1846.) “There is no duty more useful than theirs; they are the men on whom we principally rely for the religious and civil instruction of the people, and nevertheless, their remuneration is pitiful; their position so little inviting to a person of education, that, generally, a school-master does not remain such for more than ten years.”

“I one day questioned the Secretary of the English and foreign School Societies, on the subject of teachers formed by the Normal Schools, and he replied:—

“We have a great many clever young men at our school who would make excellent teachers. They leave, and take charge of a school, but it continually happens that being capable of obtaining a more lucrative position, known to be such, they are drawn into another sphere; they enter into more advantageous business, and leave the position of school-master to persons of inferior knowledge.”

“There exists in this, according to my view, a *national calamity*,” added the speaker, “in the midst of general assent; for however important may be the position of a clerk in a shop, or that of a confidential man in a manufactory, there is none, however, more grave, more important, and more eminently useful than that of *teaching youth, that of bringing up the children who will form in a few years the people of this country.*”

“If we wish to see more knowledge in the pupil? it will be necessary to have more capacity in the master; and for that purpose we must offer to that capacity advantages equal to those which it can obtain in every other employment.”