

By comparing the above with last year's report, it will be observed that very little change has taken place in the ratio of male to female teachers employed during the year. The tendency, however, is in the direction of the employment of female to the exclusion of male teachers, chiefly, I fear, on account of the relative cheapness of the former as compared with the latter.

Whether the preference for female over male teachers be regarded as a matter of congratulation or not, I cannot but express my regret that it should have the effect of materially reducing the compensation paid to teachers of both sexes.

Though the opinion of Trustees seems to the contrary, I cannot help thinking that the efficiency of a teacher's efforts bears some proportion to the amount of pecuniary compensation which he receives for his services. Economy is not always in the direction of cost alone, but of cost as compared with efficiency.

The number of teachers seeking employment is much in excess of the demand for their services, and this gives rise to competition, in which the less competent teacher is more than likely to win. The present over-crowding of the teaching profession is doing mischief, not to schools alone, but also to teachers themselves, who in the end will be the greater sufferers.

It seems to me that the time has come when teachers of every grade might not unreasonably be required to exhibit certificates of attendance at some Model or Normal school, before being permitted to go up for examination, while those seeking the higher grades of license should be graduates of some school or college in which teachers are specially trained for their work. This would not only prevent the excessive increase in the number of licensed teachers, but would also furnish us with a more efficient and better qualified class of instructors.

The teachers of the County, as a body, still continue to discharge their duties with punctuality and industry, and if their success has not, at all times, been equal to their or my expectations, it is only what one might reasonably expect, when the number of the youthful and inexperienced teachers employed is considered.

The number of pupils enrolled during the year was somewhat in excess of the corresponding term of last year, while the percentage of attendance exhibits a trifling decrease. This has been due, no doubt, in a great measure to the prevalence of epidemics amongst the children usually attending school. This is especially true of the Summer Term.

Owing to a cause, to which reference has already been made, I have little of a material character to report respecting improvements in school grounds, furniture, etc. A few sections have enclosed their play grounds and put up out-houses, but no attempts have yet been made at ornamentation.

The first and most pressing necessity, that of providing a good and commodious school-house, having been met, it is but reasonable to expect that some attempt should be made to beautify and adorn its surroundings. A few schools have replaced their old and worn-out furniture by seats and desks of a better class. A small number, too, have made addition to the apparatus previously in use.

Notwithstanding the "hardness of the times" six new school-houses have been erected during the year. These are all substantial and commodious buildings, creditable alike to the liberality of the rate-payers and the energy of the several boards of Trustees. The following are the names of the sections in which these buildings have been put up:—Lakesfield, Baker's Stambourne, and St. Matthew's in the district of Lunenburg and New Dublin, and Sherwood and Chester in the district of Chester. The building put up in the town of Chester contains three departments, capable of comfortably seat-