

PUBLIC SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

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BRITISH EDUCATION REPORT FOR 1879.

WE subjoin some statistics from this Report that will be of interest to our readers.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.
Attendance—		
Registered	3,710,283	308,452
Average	2,594.99	385.109
Percentage of scholars who attended the whole year	70	76
Percentage of school popu- lation who attend no school	20	25
Number of schools	14,027	3,063
Cost per pupil in average attendance	£1 18 3¼	£2 0 9
Teaching Power—		
Certificated teachers	29,716	5,148
Assistant "	6,616	357
Pupil	33,195	4,648
In training colleges	3,108	970
Average Salaries—		
Of masters	£120 11 3	£139 3 0
" mistresses	72 3 2	72 6 4
Percentage of Scholars who passed the Inspector's ex- amination—		
In reading	87.51	91.8
" writing	80.08	88.9
" arithmetic	73.87	82.42
In the three subjects	61.6	73.2

As the Government pays for results in the three R's, our readers will infer that the Scotch earned considerably more than the English schools; the difference in favour of Scotland was, in fact, between three and four shillings per scholar. There are certain subjects—as grammar, geography, history, and needlework—for excellence in which special grants are made, and as there is danger of trying to win these by cramming, the Report contains some pertinent remarks upon school training that are well worth quoting:—

"In the short school life of our children, they cannot, at the best, do more than gain a superficial acquaintance with a few subjects

of study. But a habit of observation, and of careful connected reading, with a love of acquiring knowledge, may well be begun in school, and if begun, will often be continued when the children leave it. This is not likely to be the case under the system hitherto too often pursued of teaching 'class subjects' through *lectures*, assisted by home lessons taken from short skeleton manuals, labouriously learnt by heart, and then easily forgotten. This part of the instruction of our schools must henceforth be given on a better system; and we hope that the change in the Code, while increasing the amount and improving the methods of teaching in the school-room itself, will cause greater attention to be paid to the production of school-books, which, appealing to the interest and intelligence of the children, will not only improve their minds, but inspire them with the desire to extend and deepen their knowledge by a habit of continuous and useful reading after they leave school."

THE PERMIT SYSTEM.

IS IT not time that this "one-horse" way of securing teachers for some of our schools should be abolished, or so restricted that our schools should not be found a refuge for either the incompetent or the idle? The country pays a large sum yearly for the training and examination of teachers, and at present there are more teachers than there are schools for. We do not think we are asking too much to have the schools taken charge of by those who are properly qualified to do so. It may be said, and perhaps with truth, that many of those teaching on permits are more fitted to manage a class and to advance their scholars in the modicum of knowledge they are expected to acquire than a large number of certificated teachers. But would it not be better to make special cases of these, and grant them permanent certificates upon the recommendation of the County Inspector and some other officer, nominated by the Minister of Education, such as the Model School Inspector, whom we hope to see ere long appointed as one of the permanent staff of the Education Department?