

JOURNAL OF

Province of



EDUCATION,

Ontario.

Vol. XXVII.

TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1874.

No. 12.

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ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

As the usual period of the year for establishing or replenishing the School Libraries has now arrived, we desire to call the attention of Inspectors, Masters, and Teachers to the subject.

The approaching long winter evenings will afford ample leisure for reading as well as for study. The perusal of good books will be at once a stimulus and a relaxation, as well as an intellectual advantage to the pupils themselves. It will doubtless also be no less a source of pleasure and profit to their parents and other ratepayers, who have the right of free access to the Public School Library, under the regulations provided by law.

Painful evidence has already been afforded in Canada of the evil effects upon young persons of an acquaintance with that pernicious class of the lighter literature of the day only, which is everywhere so abundantly supplied, and which, in the absence of better tastes and some controlling influence against it, young people are too apt to seek out and to read with avidity.

Most of our public schools—chiefly in cities, towns, and villages—have by their excellence created, especially among the more advanced pupils, a taste for reading and intellectual culture, which, after a time, the ordinary instruction in these schools, without the aid of a suitable library, does not fully meet. Having acquired in the school this taste for reading, these pupils will necessarily seek to gratify it. How important is it, then, that this desire for reading should be rightly directed, or, what is better, gratified in a legitimate way in the school itself. It should be remembered, too, that teachers labour under serious

disadvantages, and are less effective in their instructions where they are unable to supplement their labours by means of a library of reading and reference books. It is therefore the more necessary, both for teachers and pupils, that this indispensable adjunct to a good and successful school should not only be provided, but that it should be well kept up, with a continuous supply of the more valuable and attractive books, as they issue from the press.

The facilities afforded by the Education Department for carrying out this most important object are now most ample. An abundant supply of most appropriate books has been procured to meet the winter's demand. The terms upon which they are furnished to municipal and school corporations will be found on the last page, and are worthy of the consideration of the local school authorities. A catalogue and form will be sent on application.

We would also call attention to the "Departmental Notices" on the last page, relating to school maps, apparatus, and prize-books. The variety of maps and apparatus now manufactured in Canada, under the direction of this Department, is both extensive and excellent.

VILLAGE LIBRARIES AND READING-ROOMS.

Some of our provincial contemporaries, we note, have been discussing the need of more occupation and means of healthy amusement for our young men during our long winters than now fall to their lot. One ventures, indeed, on the query whether so many sons being idle, or "as good as idle," one-third of the year is not a main reason why they frequently become listless and dissatisfied, getting into loafing or drinking habits, or in the case of energetic character, try their fortunes across the line where manufactures have given an impetus to progress, and offer a greater variety of occupation. The agricultural *ennui*, and difficulty of retaining our Canadian youth on the farms their fathers laboriously hewed out of the bush is an old story, yet none the less deserving attention. Every thoughtful suggestion on the subject merits considerable attention. Village libraries and reading rooms, one of our contemporaries says, are much required in the agricultural districts of Ontario for the winter months, as introducers of a more intellectual atmosphere, as a counterpoise for questionable haunts and modes of recreation, and as a means of bringing together the different classes of which even village life is composed, and cementing the union by the bond of intelligence. Of course, when such a proposition is hazarded various objections are heard from the let-things-alone people. The population—especially the intelligent population—would be insufficient; a library and reading-room would not be appreciated; in the majority of instances such an attempt would prove a failure: public libraries may do well enough for towns, but in rural districts they are altogether impracticable. But there are arguments and facts on the contrary side of this interesting question. Where village libraries are established they are found to be fairly patronised. It is not to be supposed that in rural populations they can be carried out with all the independence and self-support which may attend them in towns. Yet there are circumstances which render their operation and management easier and less expensive in the village than in the town. It is generally admitted by all but a very small and, one hopes, decreasing number of those who adhere to worn-out prejudices that if we educate in the school we must prepare for the consequences and result of education in a supply food. The intellectual recreation of an educated population involves intellectual resources. We cannot ne-