

in the strongest light how much remains to be done, in order to secure to every Canadian youth the priceless endowment of a good education.

The question naturally arises, why is it that the attendance of children at the Common Schools is so much less in Upper Canada than in the State of New York, in proportion to the number of children of school age, when as has been shown, in the former part of this Report, that the inhabitants of Upper Canada pay more in proportion to their number, for the support of Common Schools, than do the inhabitants of the State of New York? I think the chief reasons are:—

1. The conviction of the absolute necessity of education, though strong, is not so universal in this Country, as it is in the State of New York. There, no man thinks of bringing up his children without education, any more than he thinks of bringing them up for the slave market of the Southern States; here, thousands of Parents look upon the sending of their children to school as a loss, and the payment of the School assessment as an unnecessary oppression. They thus evidently desire untutored ignorance and free barbarism.

2. In the State of New York Female Teachers are employed to a much greater extent than in Upper Canada, and, therefore, School-rate inducements to Parents to keep their children from School are much less there than here.

3. Free Schools exist, to a much greater extent, there than here, that is, Schools supported by a rate upon property, and to which all children of School age have free access. It has been demonstrated, in the course of the current year, in both our Towns and Country places, that, whenever the Free School has been established, though in its infancy, the attendance of the pupils has been increased from fifty to one hundred and twenty per cent.

V. TIME OF KEEPING OPEN THE SCHOOLS BY QUALIFIED TEACHERS.

The present School Law of 1846 requires a School to be kept open six months of the year, by a qualified Teacher, as a condition to being entitled to receive aid from the General School Fund. No inconvenience has arisen from this provision of the School Act; on the contrary, I have been assured by local School Superintendents of its salutary influence. The few cases of poverty and inability which have occurred in each Municipal District have been beneficially met by the application of another provision of the law. In every District there are examples of School Sections having no Schools, and, consequently, the money apportioned to them remains in the hands of the District Superintendent of Schools. At the commencement of each year there have, therefore, always been found balances of school money of the preceding year, in the hands of the District Superintendents.

By the 9th clause of the 13th section of the School Act of 1846, it is provided that the District Superintendent shall retain on his hands, subject to the order of the Chief Superintendent of Schools, all moneys which have been apportioned to his District for the year, and which have not been called for, or expended, according to the provisions of the said Act; accordingly, during my Official Tour last autumn, and, in official correspondence, I have recommended the School Superintendent in each District, in the disposal of those balances, to consider, in the first place, the cases of poor and weak School Sections; such as deserved special aid, both from their meritorious exertions and poverty. I have found this mode of proceeding most beneficial and satisfactory. It enables us to meet cases, which are exceptions to the general rule, assists the District Superintendent in encouraging special efforts in circumstances of necessity, or misfortune, and, at the same time, strengthens his hands in enforcing the conditions of the law on negligent School Sections, which are able to comply with them.

The average time of keeping open the Common Schools in Upper Canada, during the year 1847, was eight months and one-third of a month. In the School Report of the State of New York, for 1847, the Superintendent, referring to the average period during which the Schools were kept open there, says, "The average number of months for the whole State appears to be eight."