

"the power of doing good. *To rear up Masters approaching to such a model is a difficult task, and yet we must succeed in it, or we have done nothing for elementary instruction.* A bad Schoolmaster, like a bad Priest, is a scourge to a Commune; and though we are often obliged to be contented with indifferent ones, we must do our best to improve the average quality."

Now, I ask, has the present law provided for the improvement of the teachers? It is true that, in 1851, a law was passed for the establishment of *one* Normal School to supply the want of good teachers, which has been so sensibly felt in a population of 890,000 souls! What good, what favorable result can be expected from *one* Normal School, which distance and poverty render inaccessible to nearly the whole of those who are devoted to teaching? In truth some have thought they discovered in this last law, passed nearly two years ago, a joke of the Legislature; and yet, this law has not, even at the time I write, received its entire effect!

To what is the teaching in our elementary schools limited at the present day? What is the utility of this teaching for the well being of man, for his intellectual and mental development, and can it become an element of prosperity to the state, a means of improving the moral and material condition of the people?

These important questions were raised in France in 1847, and here is what we read on the subject in the excellent *Journal des Economistes*, which contains an extract of a memorandum read by M. Rapet, before the Academy of Moral Sciences.

"To teach children the mechanism of reading, of writing and of a few arithmetical operations; to teach them mechanically to spell through the rules of grammar, unintelligible to their minds, or the names of men and countries, heaped together in books the only merit of which consists in including the greatest number in the smallest possible space, does not, certainly, require great talents in him who limits his attention to that. But nothing remains of such teaching—there is nothing at least for the development of the intellectual faculties; the memory alone can profit by it.

"But to teach the elementary principles, to cultivate the intelligence of the pupil, and form his judgment; to accustom him to observe, to compare, to place him in a position to comprehend the reason of things, to seize the analogies, the differences, to remark the intimacy between causes and effects, and to make, when occasion offers, a useful application of what he knows, that is what instruction ought to effect, but which is not done by ordinary means. That is also what few teachers are capable of."

How many male and female teachers are there in Lower in a position to give this direction to teaching?

"It is now universally admitted that *Seminaries* for the *training of Teachers* are absolutely necessary to an efficient system of public instruction,—nay, as an integral part, as the vital principle of it." This truth is proclaimed in England, France, Germany and the United States of America.

M. Cousin, in his Report on Public Instruction in Prussia, says that *the State has done nothing for popular education, if it does not watch that those who devote themselves to teaching be well prepared.*

But it is not sufficient to form good teachers; it is also necessary that provision be made remunerating them suitably. Our law on primary instruction has only provided in a vague manner for the payment of the teachers; it leaves this remuneration to the arbitrary will of ignorant and parsimonious school commissioners, who only consider cheapness, and believe they have acted liberally towards the teacher when they have given him a salary a little higher than that given to a farm servant. I believe that the average salary of the teachers in the District of Quebec is from £20, to £25, per annum! Is it possible, that for this small sum, qualified teachers can be procured? What educated man (unless from a love of the public good,) will go and devote the best years of his life to teaching, for a salary which would cause the lowest clerk in a shop to shrug his shoulders for very