

I am aware that the returns made to the Registrar have been, as yet, imperfect. They do not show the actual full mortality of the Province, but I may assume that they are not more defective as regards teachers than as relates to other classes; consequently they are, for purposes of comparison, approximately reliable.

The aggregate of the ages of the above 190 deceased teachers was 8,391 years, which would give, as the average to each, about 44 years and 2 months. The average age of 2,290 farmers who died in 1879 was $63\frac{1}{2}$ years, and that of 1,651 wives of farmers was $60\frac{1}{2}$ years; of 46 clergymen it was 62 years; of 39 tailors, 64 years; of 32 masons, 60 years; of 27 gardeners, 63 years; and of 184 gentlemen, 68 years. The returns for the three years preceding 1879 show figures pretty nearly corresponding to those above quoted. The disparity between the average ages attained by teachers and persons of the classes here named is certainly very striking, and yet I am convinced it does not fully represent the actual inequality, for it will be found that in 1876, 4 so-called teachers died, whose aggregate ages amounted to 294 years, or $73\frac{1}{2}$ each; in 1877, 5 gave an aggregate of 358 years, or $71\frac{3}{4}$ each; in 1878, 9 gave 629 years, or 70 each; and in 1879, 14 gave 972 years, or 71 each.

Now, I have not had the pleasure of a very extended personal acquaintance with the members of your profession, but from that which I have had I am constrained to believe that the number to be found in active service at the age of 70 years, or even at 60, is very small; and I think you will all concur with me in the belief, that any man or woman who had taught school from the age of 20 up to 60, and who lived on to 70 or 80, or, as I have found five to have done, up to 81, 83 and 89, must have been gifted with a very superior and tough organization, and beyond all question not one of these veterans had to pass through the severe preparatory ordeal to which teachers of the present day are subjected. What a comfort to all of us it would be to believe that the lives of these lingerers were elongated by the sufficiency of their retiring allowances!

I think that in order to arrive at a just conclusion as to the average age attainable by teachers of the present day, in active service, we should eliminate from our calculation those averaging seventy years or over; indeed I question if we should not draw the line at sixty. Putting it, however, at seventy, and deducting, for the 32 long-lived teachers, their aggregate of 2,253 years from the total 8,391 years, we get, as remaining for the 185 shorter-lived, an aggregate of 6,138 years, or an average of $38\frac{1}{2}$ for each. This is the average probable life-span that may be expected by five teachers out of every six, even embracing in the latter figure those rare specimens which, I fear, will every year become scarcer and scarcer. Only ten other occupations given in the Registrar's tables show worse figures than those legitimately falling to teachers.