

had been told when they founded the schools they must be a failure: they could get no pupils; but numbers flocked in. Then they were told that after being educated there they would not teach; but 145 of them were now engaged in teaching, 124 of them in schools under the department. The only remaining thing the grumblers could say was that they turned out bad teachers—the would trust to them to refute that by their future conduct. (Applause.)

The proceedings were closed with the benediction, pronounced by the Rev. Mr. Bonar.

Report of the Chief Superintendent of Public Instruction for Lower Canada for 1858.

Translated from the French by the translators to the Legislative Assembly.

Extracts from the Reports of the Inspectors of Schools.

Extract from a Report of Mr. Inspector TANGUAY.

St. Simon.—Here also there are more schools than can be properly supported. There are seven schools, three of them pretty good. The other four are in the worst possible condition. The whole five of them will certainly not do as much good as one good school, well conducted and provided with suitable requisites. This theory will be objected to on account of the difficulties arising from a distance, the roads, &c. I acknowledge that the obstacles are formidable, and that here as elsewhere the question is calculated to produce great embarrassment. Not less than 500 children attended these schools during a portion at least of the first half year. The secretary-treasurer is a retired teacher, who is still anxious to be of service to the cause. He cannot fail to render important service.

St. Fabien.—There are only two schools in operation in this parish, and even they are inferior and badly attended; there were 53 children attending them at the time of my visit. Last year two schools were closed because they were not attended by a sufficient number of pupils. The results of the year are unsatisfactory. The assessments are paid in slowly, and there are arrears due; but I hope the secretary-treasurer's good-will will enable him to re-establish order during the course of the year.

Bic.—Progress is slow in this municipality. There were three schools in operation during the first part of the year; two of them were pretty good, and the third, which was inferior, was discontinued after a few months. In place of three schools, however, there should be five; but here also want of money is the difficulty. These schools were attended by 138 children at the period of my visit. The accounts of the corporation are well kept.

Rimouski.—In this parish there are twelve schools in operation under the control of the commissioners, besides the industrial college and the girls' academy. The total number of pupils attending these different educational institutions is 583. Of the schools under control, five are good and meet the wants of the parish; the others are very inferior, and two of them, in particular, must be closed unless the parties take a greater interest in them, and profit better by them during the rest of the year.

Some of the rate-payers are also very dilatory in paying their assessments. Large sums remain due from year to year, which is a great obstacle to regularity in the payments. The academy for girls is in a flourishing condition. I regret my inability to say as much for the industrial college, notwithstanding the skill and efforts of the two professors, Messrs. Bégin and Ouellet. The success of the small number of pupils who have attended their classes must, however, help to increase the prosperity of this institution.

Lessard or Ste. Luce.—This municipality has five schools, three of them good and two middling. They are attended by 162 children. Two more schools are required; but the corporation has not at present the means of establishing them. The assessments are very irregularly paid, more through neglect than poverty on the part of the rate-payers.

Lepage or Ste. Flavie.—This municipality had seven schools, attended by a total of 170 pupils. Four of these schools are good; but unfortunately the parents do not send their children to them with punctuality. The other three are very inferior. The authorities do their duty manfully; but they meet many obstacles, arising

from the impossibility of establishing schools, in such a manner as to satisfy all the rate-payers. The parish is very extensive, thinly settled, and poor. The present condition of this parish indicates a certain amount of progress, as compared with its condition in years past.

Métis.—There has been but one school in operation this year. It is attended by thirty pupils. The other two schools have been closed for the purpose of paying off arrears of salary due to a teacher.

St. Octave de Métis.—This municipality has five schools in operation. They are sufficient to meet the requirements of the children, who are nearly all beginners. 192 pupils have attended these schools, with a tolerably satisfactory result. They are badly provided with school requisites.

Matane.—In this municipality there have been three schools in operation during the first six months. One of them was tolerably well kept, the other two were very inferior. The fourth section has had no school. There should be six schools in this municipality, and yet the means at the disposal of the Commissioners, barely suffice to support four. Progress is slow in this municipality; but the assessments are paid willingly enough. The great difficulty in this municipality, as in some of those mentioned above, is to find good teachers willing to go to such remote localities, and live there, in consideration of the poor salaries which can be afforded.

I have now passed in review all the municipalities constituting the vast district under my inspection. I have pointed out the obstacles still impeding the progress of education. Some of these obstacles are common to every people; thus, it is not alone in our country, that a portion of the teaching class are found to lack the enlightenment and devotedness that constitute a good teacher; that other teachers are insufficiently remunerated; that ignorant or egotistical parents look upon their children as mere machines, from which they should get as much work as they can. It would probably be more just to say that such things are now becoming exceptional, and that they are more rare than in many older countries which are as much admired because they are less known. Besides, it is now established that the proportionate number of children attending school and receiving a certain degree of instruction, in Lower Canada, is greater than in England or in France.

Mr. Tanguay then complains of the limited number of careers open to youth, and particularly to those who have received a classical education, and also of the fact that our primary and secondary courses of instruction are themselves incomplete as regards practical agriculture, industry, and commerce. They should be calculated to inspire at least a taste for these useful pursuits, and their parents would see a real practical object to be attained, and would be more willing to make sacrifices for the education of their children. It is the example of so many who have made great sacrifices for the education of their children, being frustrated in the attempt either by the excess, if it may be so called, or the insufficiency of the education they receive, that gives strength to the prejudices still entertained by the people against education. To provide, on the one hand, a new field from which to select a career in life, for the young man who shall have received a superior education, and, on the other to complete the system of primary instruction by linking it more closely with industry and agriculture, such is the double task which is yet to be accomplished.

The other causes which retard the progress of education are merely the different forms assumed by those which have just been pointed out.

1st. The difficulty of obtaining good teachers, arising from the fact that the salaries are too low to induce those who could do so to advantage, to adopt the profession of teaching.

2nd. Want of assiduity on the part of a great many of the pupils, who only attend the schools during what is commonly called *les mortes-saisons*. They are the pupils who would benefit most by the schools, as they are at the age when the judgment is most susceptible of development.

3rd. Want of school-books and requisites.

I now give a summary of the statistics of my district. I would call attention to the fact that the number of pupils attending the schools during the period embraced by this report, is less by some hundreds than that of the other division of the year. (1) This dis-

(1) We take the opportunity of remarking that the discrepancies between the statistical tables and the Inspectors' reports, arise from the fact that the reports are corrected for the tables by comparing them one with another, and also by information received from other sources.