

The Schools of Nova Scotia.

The annual report of Superintendent MacKay, of the Nova Scotia schools, has been published, and its details are of great interest. Its review of conditions and progress in every department of educational work, in a closely printed volume of nearly 250 pages, is a very masterly one, and evidently no pains has been spared to obtain complete and accurate information.

In every department the report shows an improvement over the preceding year. The sections without schools decreased from 240 to 165. The number of schools in operation increased from 2,331 to 2,429, a gain of 98; the common school pupils increased from 89,871 to 92,966, a gain of 3,095; and the increase of high school pupils was 296, with an increase over the previous year of 372 pupils who successfully passed the examinations. There was a great improvement in attendance, although the winter of 1905 was the stormiest for a generation past. The ratepayers paid \$15,000 more for salaries and current expenses of schools. School libraries increased from 169 to 208, and school gardens from 79 to 208. Teachers' licenses to the number of 756 were issued, but out of 2,566 teachers employed, only 1,068 were normal trained, a serious defect when one considers the excellent educational status of Nova Scotia's Normal School. Four hundred and forty-one new teachers entered the ranks last year, and only 148, or one-third of that number, were in training at the Normal School! It is encouraging to note, from the superintendent's report, that "this discrimination against trained teachers is likely, in the near future, to be lessened," and that there is a growing appreciation among school boards for normal trained teachers.

Little increase is noted in the consolidation of schools, but many of the inspectors are taking measures to have weak sections unite for that purpose. No arrangement has yet been made to continue the consolidated school at Middleton after the present year, when the support of Sir Wm. Macdonald is to be withdrawn. It is not likely, however, that the people of the eight districts represented in the school will consent to return to early conditions.

The reports of the inspectors and Supervisor McKay, of Dr. Soloan, principal of the normal school, of Mr. Percy J. Shaw, director of school gardens and the Macdonald nature-study department, and

the pupils' exercises at the Middleton school, all form instructive reading, and furnish many evidences of educational accomplishment.

The Schools of P. E. Island.

The report of Dr. Anderson, chief superintendent of schools for Prince Edward Island, while it contains some encouraging notes, refers plainly to educational conditions that should not exist in a progressive province. "An average attendance of 60.33 of the number of pupils enrolled is much below what it ought to be," says Dr. Anderson. The number of schools in the province, 475, was five less than in the preceding year.

"The time was in this province, and that not long ago, when the number of men engaged in teaching greatly exceeded that of women; now, however, there are 324 of the latter and 246 of the former." This proportion, as Dr. Anderson knows, is perhaps larger than in any other province of the Dominion or in the United States.

The enrolment of pupils for 1905 was 19,272, a slight increase over the previous year, but the enrolment was larger a quarter of a century ago than it now is, the diminution of population being only in part accountable for this.

The local assessment for the support of schools was only \$45,695 out of a total expenditure of \$168,592, the balance, \$122,897, being paid by government. This is too large a sum to be paid by the province in comparison with the very small total contributed by the ratepayers. We are prepared, therefore, to hear that the salaries of teachers are inadequate, notwithstanding the fact that there was an encouraging increase in the supplements paid them during the year. "In this province in 1905, 14 men received \$180 and 20 women \$130 as their annual stipend as teachers. The highest salaries paid to men and women in the public schools are \$870 and \$360 respectively." In the case of the poorest paid teachers, fifty cents and less a day! The inevitable result follows: "The schools are entrusted to inexperienced youths, who in turn will leave when they are beginning to be capable teachers."

And yet in spite of these unfavorable conditions, Dr. Anderson finds in his numerous visitations that the work done in very many schools is excellent and highly creditable to the teachers.