

Although there can be little doubt that a great deal depends upon the diligence, ability and enthusiasm of the teacher, the wise co-operation and intelligent appreciation of trustees and rate-payers, who show they really have the educational interests of their section at heart, and although the average in the rural sections would, it is believed, be increased were the vacation in summer given at a time better adapted to their circumstances, yet the conviction seems more and more to force itself everywhere, that to effect so manifest an improvement in this respect as would be really desirable, a compulsory law, with the necessary modifications would require to be enacted and enforced.

There were registered in the schools of this County during winter 2132 pupils, and during summer 2429, giving a proportion at school of 1 in 4.6 of the whole population, and making a grand total days' attendance by all the pupils 118,550. The average daily present at school for time in session was 1149.68. But for further minute details I may refer you to the Abstracts of A and B, which have already been forwarded to your address.

I may state in general, however, that while their is still wide room for improvement, on the whole our educational interests in this County are progressive. The principal number of our teachers appear to be diligent, pains-taking, and desirous according to ability and the means at their disposal to do their duty faithfully, and as the result give general satisfaction, and have no difficulty in obtaining situations in sections in which they are well known. It would be very gratifying if this could, in truth, be said of them all; but of the latter as of the former I would simply say, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

During the past year I visited officially 114 schools, 48 the winter term, and 66 the summer.

Owing to the great depth of snow, and the impossibility of getting a horse to Ingonish or Cape North, three or four schools had to remain during the winter term unvisited. Of the four in session at the Cape, however, the Rev. Mr. Clark kindly visited three, and forwarded me the results in Spring.

There were in that locality 5 schools in session during the Summer term, all of which I was enabled personally, although with difficulty to visit in August, which occasioned a fatiguing and dangerous drive on horse-back of 96 miles.

With regard to the Baddeck Academy I have little new to report. A large number of pupils last winter attended the Head Department, and several of them, upwards of 20, stood the examination of teachers in July, and although but one of these succeeded in obtaining the class sought, it would not be a fair inference that the failure of the others, was in any respect attributable either to the quality or mode of instruction imparted in that institution; but chiefly, we presume, to the severity of the tests, and strict adherence to rule insisted on at the examination.

Of 62 candidates at said examination, only 19 succeeded in obtaining any class, and 3 the class sought. One young lady, in 1875, sought and obtained grade C, and at last examination, grade B.

It seems but due here to mention that the School Commissioners of this District are deserving of cordial thanks, which I would hereby beg to tender them for their general promptitude in attendance at the semi-annual meetings of the Board and attention to business submitted for their consideration, as also the people whose hospitality and kindness I have invariably enjoyed during my inspecting tours over the County. It would afford me great satisfaction were the Government to provide that our Commissioners would receive a more tangible expression of gratitude than any words of mine, one which, while it might not weigh down the pocket, might tend to lighten the heart's burden.

Thanking you for your unvaried courtesy,

All of which is respectfully submitted,

KENNETH MACKENZIE.

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