

round the natural objects of daily experience. Children are naturally interested in flowers, trees, and animal life, and in country schools an observant teacher, who is fond of such subjects, and has properly prepared himself by studying them, can find in the object lesson a far more powerful instrument of early education than can be drawn from the more lifeless substitutes on which the town teacher is sometimes bound to rely. Much depends on the improvement of the education in the village school, and on a turn being given to its teaching which will open the eyes of the children to the significance and beauty of surrounding nature. The country child has many great advantages of which the town-bred child is unhappily deprived, but these advantages will not be used or appreciated unless the teacher himself realizes and seizes them. We are glad, therefore, to note the terms of praise in which some of Your Majesty's Inspectors speak of the skill and intelligence of many of the country teachers. One of them specially protests against "the too prevalent and mischievous notion that all the virtue and intelligence of the nation are concentrated in the large towns, and that country schools, as a rule, are not far removed from inefficiency." Speaking from long experience, both of town and country, he states that "the number of bad schools has gradually decreased, and that many rural schools would bear comparison with really good town schools, not only in the quality of their work, but in the reality and permanence of their influence."

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NOVA-SCOTIA, 1896-97; GENERAL SUMMARY.

Progress during the year was general in nearly all departments.

Sections without school were reduced from 171 to 153.

Schools increased from 2,312 to 2,346.

Pupils of all grades increased from 101,032 to 101,158.

The average daily attendance increased at a more rapid rate, the 54,015 of the previous year having become 54,922, indicating an increased attendance every day at school of 907.

The number of teachers increased from 2,312 to 2,346; but much more promising for the future of education, the "Normal trained teachers increased at a higher rate, the 690 of last year having become 752.

The numbers of trained teachers employed in the schools of the province during each of the last five years are as follows:

1893.	1891.	1895.	1896.	1897.
403.	499.	616.	690.	752.

This shows that gently but surely we are making steps in the direction of all the leading educational countries of the world which have already made professional training of a very thorough character necessary for all teachers. Our method of options appears to be well enough adapted to our present stage of development. It gives a chance yet, without any restrictions, to the impecunious student to earn money for his advancement to some profession; but it is also giving a chance to the trained teacher to remain in the teaching profession. That this change is going on so gradually and smoothly is the highest praise for the method. This programme will have to run for many years at this rate, however, before we shall be in this respect in the position of the leading states of Europe and America to-day.