

Commissioners fulfil the tasks imposed upon them with much more zeal, and omit nothing to obtain the best teachers. Each parish seems to vie with its neighbour in the quick adoption of every new improvement. I have been many times reproached by School Commissioners for having made known the superior merits of some teacher to the neighbouring school authorities, thereby enhancing the existing rivalry, and rendering it more difficult for the first to obtain indisputably the coveted services of that person. I state this fact for it speaks more to the purpose than almost anything else I could say. There is also a great advance, both upon the salaries offered, as also in regard to the school-houses that are intended also as a dwelling-house for the teacher. Five years ago when I made my first visit to the parish of St. Aimé, which then, also comprised those of St. Marcel and St. Robert, I found the schools shut up, the Commissioners refusing to act, no Secretary-Treasurer appointed, the property of the Corporation entrusted to irresponsible parties, and therefore obliged to call to my aid the rigors of the law. At the present time St. Aimé is one of the most flourishing parishes in my district. Independently of the Academy for girls, under the conduct of the sisters of the order of "La Présentation," it contains along with the new parishes, which are erected out of the dismemberment of the old parish of St. Aimé, a great number of schools well kept, and well attended. I have nowhere met with so strict an assiduity. As a proof I may mention, that on the 11th of March last, I was engaged in visiting the schools of the districts, one named, District of the River St. Aime, and the other of the Tierçant Range. The weather was exceedingly cold and tempestuous, nevertheless, the first under the charge of Miss Lucie St. Germain, was attended by 55 scholars, 29 boys and 27 girls, the second under the care of Miss Eléonore St. Germain, held 42 children, 22 boys and 20 girls. Not one of these children was over 12, and many were scarcely more than five years of age. Such a state of things speaks favorably not only for the parents and teachers, but also for the children. It is very rarely met with in a badly directed school, or even where the teacher lacks the talent of making the class-hours agreeable to the children. I shall now proceed to a rapid review of the parishes of my district.

Mr. Child's district of Inspection, is one of those which presents the most favorable statistical results. Public instruction was highly appreciated in this district long before the present educational law ever was in force, and even previous to the union of the provinces. This district of inspection composed now of the counties of Stanstead, Richmond, Compton and Wolf, has for some time been favorably remarked as possessing some of the best directed and most numerous attended schools in this portion of the province. Even there the emigrants from the surrounding seignories rival the older inhabitants of Scotch, Irish and American origin, in their energetic efforts to advance education, and Mr. Child speaks most favorably of the zeal, energy and success attending the efforts of both. Mr. Child terminates his report with the following remarks:

As to the general state of this district, some progress has been made during the past year. A good number of new school districts have been formed, and many good school-houses have been built and some old ones repaired. Some new settlements have been put in a way to organize themselves into new municipalities, and to make in the aggregate thirteen new schools. In the municipalities which I have severally reported, the schools are generally the same as last year. The attendance has fallen off a little, which is to be accounted for by the fact that many families have removed to the West, and an error which appeared in the General Report on Education, the Township of Cleveland having been brought twice into the aggregate. Otherwise it is about the same as last year.

The following remarks are extracted from the report of Mr. Roney, Inspector for the counties of Ottawa and Pontiac.

You will perceive that the total number of pupils in attendance at the different schools in this district at the close of the past year was 3,956, being an increase over the previous year of 1161, or 11 per cent.

On the hypothesis that the population of the Ottawa district is now 30,000, which, I presume, is pretty nearly correct, the number of pupils in attendance in the different schools in the district will

be in the ratio of 1 to 74 to the entire population. Although this proportion does not come up to that of several parts of Europe, the United States, or even Canada, still, when we contrast it with what it was five years ago, there is much reason for exultation.

It has afforded me much pleasure to observe the progress made by the pupils in many of the schools throughout this extensive district, as well as that made by the teachers themselves. In many of those schools the only branches taught a very few years ago were reading, writing, and the elementary rules of arithmetic; now, in almost every school, grammar, geography and history form a part of the studies, and in several of them natural science is also taught.

The books used in the schools have also done much towards advancing the status of the scholar. The Irish National School series are in all but universal use throughout the district. In the 4th and 5th books of that series are embodied a compendium of history and natural science, which will give the scholar a considerable knowledge of those branches, and pave the way for a more enlarged course of studies.

The prize books which you entrusted to my care have done much to stimulate the pupils to renewed exertions and punctual attendance, and have been productive of more good than can be imagined; they have likewise increased the respect entertained by the pupils towards the Inspector. It is to be hoped that, through the liberality of the Government and Legislature, you will enabled from year to year to continue such donations; and I may state that collectively these books would form useful and instructive parish libraries.

The immense increase in the number of pupils in attendance is, of itself, demonstrative of the working of the School Bill. Throughout the entire district I am not aware, at present, of any municipality wherein the law does not exist; and I find in every instance School Commissioners are desirous of co-operating with me in using their utmost exertions, and whatever authority the law confers upon them, to enforce the carrying out of the School Bill.

Although there are many municipalities which might be classed as indigent, such as St. André Avellan, Portland and Maniwaki, in the county of Ottawa, still I find a desire on their part to do their utmost to procure an education for their offspring. The supplementary grant which you bestowed on several of those parishes during the past year, as well as on others, have done much to stimulate them to renewed exertions in the cause of education.

Although the financial affairs of the different municipalities in my district are the most difficult part of my duties, still, with very few exceptions, I have had little difficulty on this score, and any that might have existed is now in a fair way of being satisfactorily adjusted.

There are four academies in operation in the district of Ottawa, viz: three in the county of Ottawa and one in the county of Pontiac. These are all well conducted and numerous attended; all the masters have studied either in colleges or universities, some of them being graduates. The academies of Aylmer are the most numerous attended, and all these institutions contain pupils studying Latin, Greek, French and mathematics.

In my last annual report I spoke at some length relative to the insufficient payment of teachers; and experience proves to me that, until we remunerate them better, we cannot expect men of education to embark in so unremunerative a calling.

Although there is some improvement in the quality and extent of the buildings, still I do not find what I consider an indispensable appendage to every country school, viz: a residence for the teacher, with a small portion of land attached thereto for a garden. Were such an appendage attached to every school, it would conduce not only to the welfare of the teacher, but also materially to his revenue.

I have found in many instances female teachers equally as efficient as males. In fact some of our best common schools are conducted by female teachers; and from the circumstance that they require less remuneration than male teachers, they are more suitable for poor districts.

You will perceive that the amount now levied by assessment nearly reaches, in this district, the sum of £1600 per annum.

The College of St. Joseph, Ottawa City, has in a great measure, supplied the want of a Normal School on the Ottawa Valley. Many of the teachers in that district were educated in that institution; and although it is situated in Canada West, it is as much of a Lower Canada as an Upper Canada institution, inasmuch as about one-half of its pupils are from the lower section of the Province. In my opinion its usefulness would be greatly increased were some pecuniary aid given to establish a Model Farm and Botanic Gardens in connection with that institution.

I have much pleasure in stating that the number of Dissident Bodies in the entire district is only three, which proves that the