

**N. B. Educational Institute.**

The Educational Institute of New Brunswick was opened at Fredericton by a public meeting on Monday evening, July 29th, the president, Dr. J. R. Inch, Chief Superintendent of Education, in the Chair. Addresses of welcome were extended to the members of the Institute by the President; His Worship Mayor Vanwart; Dr. Coulthard, Chairman of the Fredericton Board of School Trustees; Dr. Harrison, Chancellor of the University of New Brunswick; Dr. Bailey; Principal Mullin, of the Normal School; and Principal Foster, of the Collegiate School. Suitable replies were made by Inspectors Mersereau, Carter, Bridges and Meagher, and by Principal Hay of St. John, and G. J. Oulton, Esq., of the Moncton High School.

On Tuesday morning after enrolment the report of the Secretary, John Brittain, was read. For the two years just ended the total receipts of the Institute have been \$474.09, expenditure \$197.05, leaving a balance on hand of \$277.04. The report was received and adopted. John Brittain was elected Secretary; Miss Orr (St. John), Assistant Secretary; Mr. Montgomery, Inspector Carter, Geo. J. Oulton, B. C. Foster, Dr. Bridges, N. W. Brown, G. U. Hay, F. O. Sullivan, P. G. McFarlane and G. H. Harrison were chosen as a nominating committee.

Then followed the address of the Chief Superintendent, Dr. Inch, which is as follows:

**OUR EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS.**

*Ladies and Gentlemen.* When I had the honor of last addressing you in Provincial Institute, assembled two years ago in the City of St. John, I attempted to indicate the position and progress of our public educational work as it appeared to me at that time, and to forecast, in some measure, results which might be hoped for, judging from tendencies then apparent, and from plans in process of being formed. It will be fitting on the present occasion to inquire how far these forecasts have been verified, whether the present outlook affords grounds of encouragement or of discouragement, and what measures should be taken further to promote the efficiency of our educational agencies, and to extend their beneficent influence.

In making a survey of the position and prospects of the work, different observers will form quite different judgments. The various standpoints from which the survey may be made, the relation which the observer bears to the work and to the workers, and even his subjective condition and constitutional tendencies, will necessarily color his views, and, perhaps, seriously warp his judgments. The constitutional pessimist sees everything with jaundiced eyes; on the other hand everything reflects a rosy hue to the eyes of the constitutional optimist. One may be happy in a fool's paradise, the other wails because of the spots on the sun and takes no pleasure in that luminary's life-giving light and heat.

Between these extremes there will always be a thousand different tints and shades of opinion produced by the individual condition and environment of the observer. To view affairs in the plain white light of truth should be the desire of every honest mind. Shall we depend on statistics? Yes, and no. Carefully prepared and well authenticated statistics afford the only practicable method of registering progress or retrogression, as the case may be, so that the public mind may readily apprehend it. And yet statistics reveal only a part of the truth, and not always the most important part.

What do statistics say in regard to educational progress in New Brunswick since the last meeting of the Provincial Institute. First, in regard to expansion, A comparison of the figures for 1893 and 1895 (those for 1896 are not yet available) gives the following results:

Increase in the number of teachers employed . .	97
Increase in the number of schools in operation, . .	81
Increase in the total number of days' attendance, . .	377,636
Increase in total number of pupils in attendance, . .	2,364

Expressed in another form the total number of days' attendance of all pupils has increased ten per cent; the average attendance for the whole term has increased three and a half per cent; the number of pupils in attendance four per cent; the number of teachers and schools five per cent.

Second, in regard to the class of teachers employed. The number of first class teachers employed increased, during the two years, by nearly ten per cent; the number of second class teachers by over five per cent; the number of third class teachers by only three and three-quarters per cent; the number of untrained teachers employed decreased by sixty per cent.

Third, in regard to the increase of pupils in the higher grades, showing a longer period of school life for an increasing number. In 1893 there were only 724 pupils above Grade VIII; in 1895 the number was 1060, an increase of forty-six per cent.

Fourth, in regard to school libraries. During the two years over 3,000 volumes have been added to the libraries at a cost of about \$1500.

I might continue these comparisons, but I do not wish to weary you with dry statistics. The only important point in which the figures do not indicate progress is in the average salary of the teacher. While this fact is greatly to be deplored, it ought not to be forgotten that the rapid extension of the work into the poorer districts, where the people are able to pay only the most meagre salaries, tends constantly to lower the general average.

Whether there has been any marked advancement in the efficiency of the schools is a question not easy of determination. The inspectors are in the best position to form sound judgments in regard to this vital matter, and their reports are, on the whole, assuring. The results, even of the best teaching, like "bread cast upon the waters," are often seen only "after many days." Two years constitute too short a period to enable even the acutest observer to mark much progress in this respect; but good teaching will always produce good results, which will be manifest sooner or later.