

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.

REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION OF ONTARIO for the years 1880 and 1881. Printed by order of the Legislative Assembly, by C. Blackett Robinson, Toronto.

(SECOND NOTICE).

WE have, in former years, had occasion to complain of the lack of useful information about our Normal Schools; and though in the Report before us the items referring to these schools are more numerous, there is still a "plentiful deal of nothing" amongst them. On page 71, for instance, we are given, with scrupulous minuteness, the names of those who form the staff in each institution, but not a word is said as to the salary each receives. Now, we venture to assert that a statement of the cost to the country of these institutions is a matter of far greater moment than a list of the names of those employed in them. After searching through the volume we at last light upon a table, on page 236, in which is given incidentally some of the information we want. From this we learn that our two Normal Schools cost, in 1880, the sum of \$36,694, making the cost for each certificate granted in that year \$89.50. On the next page, the cost for each certificate granted in 1881 is given as \$109. We will try now to place before our readers a statement of the cost of pupils in the various schools under the Department. To do this we must ascertain the cost per pupil in our High Schools. This, as usual, we have to reckon for ourselves. It is true, we have a statement on page 166 which gives the cost per pupil, *based on total receipts*, as \$33.48. The happy thought of reckoning average expenditure in this unique way could only have originated in the Department; for what household manager would estimate daily expenditure upon the income, and not upon the gross outlay? Mr. Crooks' method

of reckoning is like that of the registrar who would estimate the average number of deaths in a community by the gross number of births. Of course the cost given above is made still more misleading by being based upon the registered and not upon the average attendance. By using the figures in the comparative statement of High Schools, we are enabled to ascertain the cost of each High School pupil in average attendance; and we now lay before our readers the cost per pupil in the three kinds of schools mentioned below, for the year 1880:—

Cost per annum of each Public School pupil in average attendance	\$12 82
Cost per annum of each High School pupil in average attendance.....	57 00
Cost of each Normal School pupil who successfully passed the examinations	89 50

The last item is very much less than the cost per certificate in those Normal Schools of the United States of which statistics are given on page 236; but no proper comparison with these institutions can be made, because the length of time occupied by the students in each school in securing certificates is not stated. It is a significant fact that the Collegiate Institutes and High Schools have completely taken from the Normal Schools the training of First Class teachers, for in 1880 they trained twenty-four out of the thirty successful candidates for First Class certificates. It is like repeating a twice-told tale to say that there is widespread dissatisfaction with the working of our Normal Schools; and that there is reason for this few can doubt after reading the following extracts from the Report. Thus, on page 47, we are told that six Normal School students obtained First Class certificates, and twenty-four others, who were principally trained as we have indicated. That the work of the Normal Schools is not of the