

ATTENTION is directed to the official announcements in another column made by Dr. MacKay, Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia. Dr. Inch will publish in our next number the official announcements of the July examinations for the Province of New Brunswick.

ALL honour to the town of Milltown for its progressive action in the matter of providing free material to the pupils in its schools. The comparative efficiency of the schools cannot be ascertained from the report but in the matter of school attendance Milltown has been in the lead for two or three years. With such an intelligent school board and such an attendance efficiency will keep step, and some of the other towns will have to look to their laurels.

Poor Districts.

It is questionable whether or not teachers' salaries are correctly reported in the school report. Inquiry shows that many teachers having charge of schools in poor districts report their salaries minus the poor aid. It may be that all teachers in poor districts do the same thing, and if so the showing of salaries is much worse than it should be.

For example, a second class teacher teaching in a district "one-third poor" reports her salary \$120 per year, whereas, adding poor aid it should appear \$147 per year from the district. As there are many poor districts, if the aid in such cases were taken into account a very material increase in the salaries paid would be shown.

In fairness to all it is not desirable that the number of poor districts should be increased. Yet they are slowly increasing. This is not due to increasing poverty, because there can be no doubt but that progress of a very substantial character is being made each year. It is due to a sort of mania on the part of assessors to lower the valuation in order, as they think, to escape county taxes. There is urgent necessity for assessors independent of parish politics and possessing qualifications for the position.

The government should make the appointments and see that competent men are not removable at the caprice of politicians. According to the way we are getting on now it will probably not be long before the poor district limit will be reduced.

Even in poor districts the effort put forth for the support of schools varies greatly. Some of these districts possessing a valuation near the limit make very slight exertion beyond fulfilling the requirements of the law. They hire the cheapest teachers, curtail school

time, and supply poor accommodation. With the poor and these districts are very much better off than their neighbors, whose valuation is much higher. Would it not be a good scheme to grant poor aid in proportion to the effort put forth by the district. It might be according to the amount per hundred dollars expended for school purposes. It would at least be given where it is deserved by such an appointment.

Is the property of widows exempt for school tax to the amount of \$5000. There seems to be some doubt about it, and some districts suffer severely on account of granting this exemption. Cases also are not wanting in which a transfer of property to widows has been made in order to secure exemption from taxes.

The very low rate at which property is assessed in the average parish makes this exemption very formidable. The assessors allow deduction for all debts and liabilities, which of course are in addition to the legal rebate.

Parish assessors vie with each other to reduce the standard of valuation in order that the county rates may be lower.

It may be added that this procedure does not decrease the number of poor districts.

Religion in German Schools.

The average time actually given to religion in the German peoples' schools for the year 1894-5 was as follows in each year of the course:

First year, 2 hours 27 minutes per week; second year, 2 hours 57 minutes; third year, 3 hours and 24 minutes; fourth year, 3 hours 47 minutes; fifth year, 4 hours 6 minutes; sixth year, 4 hours 8 minutes; and in the eighth year, 4 hours 14 minutes. In Berlin four hours per week are required in every year. The maximum varies from 4 hours to 7 hours per week. Yet some of our contemporaries are circulating statistics tending to show that juvenile crime has been increasing rapidly in Germany during the last forty years, all supposed by the pro-circulators to be due to the "lack" of religious teaching in the German schools, which they ignorantly assume to be secular schools like those of the Atlantic Provinces of Canada. And evangelical preachers bemoan the sparse attendances in the German churches when they visit them. Perhaps after all, the national objective method of teaching the principles of Christian conduct and the formation of Christian character may be better than the irrational cramming of dogmatic theology in the mis-called "religious" schools; that is, if we assume "religion" to be what "pure religion and undefiled" has been very authoritatively defined to be.