

MANY TONGUES HERE

PUBLIC SCHOOL INSPECTOR ON TEACHING DIFFULTIES

RECOMMENDS SEPARATE TEACHER FOR FOREIGNERS

Attendance at the Public Schools Has Fallen Off Because of Infectious Diseases.

The annual report of Mr. L. A. Green, B.A., Public School Inspector, on the town schools reads as follows:

	Attendance		
	Total.	Pres.	Av.
Mr. Lloyd...	36	33	32
Miss Miller...	33	32	30
Miss Brundage...	33	33	30
Miss Templeton...	37	36	34
Miss Harper...	26	18	25
Miss Ball...	41	37	37
Miss Corry...	40	36	33
Miss Hearst...	58	41	37
Mr. Faith...	43	37	39
Miss Bingham...	31	25	29
Miss Olivant...	39	36	33
Miss Cameron...	64	48	41
Mr. Kaine...	38	36	35
Miss Walker...	39	31	31
Miss Overend...	40	33	38
Mrs. Sanders...	34	27	25
Miss McArthur...	39	32	31
Miss Mowat...	52	42	39
Miss Campbell...	51	31	40
Miss Clendennan...	83	56	52
Mr. Mansell...	41	33	37
Miss Hotton...	24	18	20
Miss Beattie...	31	23	26
Miss Durham...	70	53	34
	1021	867	800

I do not know that any subject in the curriculum has been badly taught. Much advance has been made in many of the forms in writing, and there are excellent writers in several forms. Next term the Ontario writing course must be in the hands of every third and fourth book pupil and should be used diligently and according to the instructions. The principals will be advised of this immediately.

In many of the forms there is still a dead expressionless tone in reading. Had it not been for this the grading of several of the forms could have been raised. The teachers must pay more attention to the means of expression, the emphatic words and the value of punctuation points; all of which contribute largely to good reading. A reading lesson can be made an excellent lesson, even if only one paragraph be covered; and that by only two or three pupils. The whole class will profit from such a lesson by judicious questioning.

The working out of the uniform promotion examinations is proceeding satisfactorily, and we trust the results will be for the advantage of all the urban schools. A paper on mental arithmetic for each grade has been arranged for with a view to helping to raise the standard in this subject. So much dissatisfaction in the efficiency of pupils throughout the district, in arithmetic has been felt that we considered the introduction of a formal paper of this kind a wise and fair method of arriving at the end aimed at, viz., greater accuracy, more rapidity and higher efficiency in arithmetic.

The attendance as shown by the accompanying report does not indicate any desired increase in school population of the town since last report. On account of the widespread epidemic of certain contagious diseases the average attendance is much lower than it otherwise would be. We hope to see a rapid improvement at once. The broken attendance has seriously affected the work in some grades, and these may possibly be at a disadvantage at the midsummer examinations. For this reason, comparisons, (which are ever odious), between grades will be unjust. We have every confidence, however, that the teachers most seriously in this way, and who are alive to the situation will rise to the occasion, and their classes will overtake the work sufficiently well to make a creditable record at the close of the term.

The question of dealing with the foreign element in the schools must soon be faced in a much more effective manner than it is being handled at present. The history of the foreign child is, that they remain at school only long enough to secure an elementary education in English and the mechanical rules of arithmetic, then they are kept at home to work, having reached an age when they are capable of doing considerable in helping support the other members of the family. It is proven by the attendance that only one in twenty or thirty ever reach the third reader. It is, therefore, necessary that they be advanced as fast as possible in the two or three years it requires to put them through the junior grades. This cannot be successfully done where the new pupils are put into the same form with those grades which have been in attendance one, two or three terms. The amount of time that can fairly be given to such pupils is too small compared with what they should receive. To illustrate: One class in one session at school received the fact that "1 and 1 are 2," and were dismissed, without the opportunity of having that work reviewed or any additional work assigned. In phonics one or two sounds were reviewed for a minute or two.

This is very slow work when you consider that many of these pupils cannot speak English. I maintain that, in the first place there should be time for a language lesson in which the names of familiar objects could be taught; second, time in which the numbers, and the sounds in the Eng-

English language should be taught each half day; third, time in which to teach writing. To do this it would take at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours each half day to teach these lessons besides requiring much individual seat work for the several pupils, which would consume the whole half day.

When you consider that there are eight distinct foreign nationalities in the King Edward school, you will readily appreciate the difficulties of a primary teacher in bringing these into one class all speaking a common language.

We should do everything in our power to save the state from having in the near future an illiterate foreign population. We must make good citizens of these people. The public school is the common meeting ground. They must be taught our language, be inspired with our ideals, and be permeated with our standards of citizenship and morality. They must get all this before they are fourteen years of age, and to do this, they must receive more time than is possible under present arrangements. I would suggest that this work be given into the hands of one teacher, who would devote her whole time to these particular cases during the first year of their school attendance. They would be kept in school much longer and would get much farther advanced even though they dropped out at the same age as they do now. The question is worthy of careful consideration.

The school property is being so well looked after by the Board that there is little room for me to report necessary repairs or improvements. The West, or King Edward school is in an excellent state of repair; the Campbell is satisfactory; the Alexander, Muir is deteriorating very rapidly. Much needs to be done to restore this school to its former attractive appearance. The roof is largely responsible for all the damage to walls and wood-work inside, and therefore this is the first thing that must be fixed. The walls in places require scraping and tinting to cover up the stains; and the wood-work, all warped out of shape must be replaced and refinished. Some cracks in walls need repairing, and the urnal replaced with a good enamel one.

All basements should be levelled and drained to the catch basin, so they can be easily flushed, and kept scrupulously clean and sanitary. I do not think there is one floor in the schools that is satisfactorily finished for this purpose.

The Central school, while apparently in a fair state of repair, is quite out of date. Never a satisfactory school building from any standpoint it has been placed decidedly in the back ground since other parts of the town have been supplied with modern buildings. Its best qualities are seen from the street, and hence the public generally do not know wherein the building is unsuitable; and unsatisfactory; and for their benefit I should state a few points in which it does not conform to present regulations:

Site is too low; building is too far in the ground to admit of proper grading, hence basement windows are too low, and this cannot be changed in present structure.

Basement should be at least seven feet clear of all joists, and ceiled with metal or wood, tongued and grooved. In the boys' basement the ceiling is so low that an ordinary man cannot stand erect clear of the joists in some places.

Lighting.—The windows should be 4 to 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet from floor, must be on left of pupils, within 6 feet of the blackboards and of sufficient area to equal $\frac{1}{6}$ of the floor space. In no room is there sufficient light. In half the rooms the greater amount of light comes from the rear of the pupils, and shines directly into the face of the teacher. Windows are from 10 to 12 from blackboards, and are 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 ft. from floor. Light is therefore not sufficient and not properly distributed hence one half of most of the rooms is poorly lighted.

Halls.—A main hall should run through each floor and all rooms should open on to it. This gives the principal the oversight of the whole school at once. No main hall exist in this school and hence at no time has the principal the whole school under his eye. This makes the question of discipline difficult, and handicaps the principal in many ways.

Heating.—All school rooms should be up to a minimum temperature of 67 degrees when school assemblies. On account of the defects of the heating system the school was not up to the required temperature; many times the last winter, and frequently certain rooms were dismissed for the half day. The defect seems to be in the low basement, not allowing sufficient rise to the pipes, and in the placing of one furnace so far from the chimney to cause insufficient draught. The janitor also claims that the furnaces are incapable of heating the building because of their construction, and because of the many openings about the windows.

Ventilation.—Fresh air should be brought into the furnace in sufficient quantities from the outside to change the air at least three times every four hours. Fresh air flues are provided for this purpose, but they are not air tight and take air from the basements. All the foul air is not removed because of the utter failure of the present ventilating system, hence this air passes and repasss through the class rooms until the atmosphere on certain heavy days becomes oppressive and enervating, and quite unfit for use.

I trust that at an early date some means will be adopted to replace this

building with one that is modern, sanitary and ornate.

No comment as to the needs of a new school on Bruce Hill is necessary. The crowded state of the present room and the congestion in the primary departments of the Campbell school are sufficient evidence to establish the fact.

The school buildings are the most important buildings in the community. They have no prejudices. They speak the truth, and the whole truth about the attitude of any municipality towards all that makes for genuine progress. A perfect building combines convenience, comfort, stability and beauty. If we are to cultivate the taste of the community, the school itself and its surroundings must be an example of taste, and dignity, in form and design. Let these ideas be carried out on Bruce Hill.

I am pleased to see that efforts are being put forth to beautify the grounds about all the schools. With the co-operation of the Horticultural Society progress no doubt will be made in this respect, and the school grounds will become the most attractive spots about the town.

The sympathy, interest and assistance of every parent is solicited in the progress of their children, and in strengthening the hands of the teachers.

The Board is to be commended in advancing the salaries of the teachers to encourage permanency and retain good teachers. They have the right then, to demand the very best service each teacher is capable of, and I am satisfied that the teachers are fully alive to their duty, by the work that is being done in a majority of the divisions. I trust that any vacancies that may occur at midsummer will be filled by trained and experienced teachers, and that time is near at hand with the home supply will meet the increasing demand of this whole district.