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EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN LONDON.

BY S. N. CLARK.

LONDON SCHOOLS IN THE YEAR 1174; IN 1447; IN 1612; IN 1878.

More than seven hundred years ago Fitzstephen said of the schools in that great city: "The principal churches in London are privileged by grant and ancient usage with schools, and they are all very flourishing." On public days, we are told, "the boys of different schools wrangle with one another in verse; contending about the principles of grammar, or the rules of the perfect tenses and supines." Among the school-sports of those days were bear-baiting, bull-fights, and cock-fights. "On Shrove Tuesday each boy brought his fighting-cock to his master, and they had a cock-fight all morning in the school-room."

IN 1447

four grammar schools were opened in London. Latin was the chief study then, and it was more than a century after that before the study of English was introduced into English schools. To Richard Mulcaster, who was appointed the first head-master of Merchant-Taylor's School, London, in 1561, belongs the credit of this innovation. In his "Elementarie," written in 1582, he set forth his views on the study of English, at considerable length, his purpose being, as he quaintly expressed it,—

"To direct such peple as teach children to read and write English; and the reading must nedes be such as the writing leads unto, therefore . . . I will thoroughlie rip up the hole certantie of our English writing, so far furth and with such assurance as probabilitie can make me, because it is a thing both proper to my argument and profitable to my countrie. For our naturall tung being, as beneficiall unto us for our needfull deliverie, as anie other is to the peple which use it; & having as pretie and as fair observations in it as anie other hath; and being as ready to yield to anie rule of Art as any other is: why should I not take som pains to find out the right writing of ours, as other cuntrinmen have don to find the like in theirs? & so much the rather, because it is pretended, that the writing thereof is mervellous uncertain, and scant to be recovered from extreme confusion, without som change of as great extremitie."

Brinsley, writing a few years later, gave as one reason why English should be taught,—"Because of those who are for a time trained up in schooles, there are very fewe which proceede in learning, in comparison of them that follow other callings."

IN 1612

the boys in the London grammar schools were required to be in their places in the school-room at six o'clock in the morning; at nine a recess of fifteen minutes, after which "each of them to be in his place in an instant, upon the knocking of the door or some other sign . . . so to continue untill eleven of the clocke, or somewhat after, to countervaille the time of the intermission at nine." The school reassembled at one o'clock and remained in session, except during a recess of fifteen minutes, until half-past five; "then to end so as was shewed, with reading a peece of a Chapter, and with singing two staves of a Psalm; lastly with prayer to be used by the Master." One afternoon each week was given to recreation. "All recreations and sports of schollars would (*sic*) be meet for Gentlemen. Clownish sports, or perilous, or yet playing for money, are no way to be admitted." Boys began to go to school at seven or eight years of age; they were seldom sent at six years; and Brinsley says: "If any begin so early, they are rathe sent to the schoole to keep them from troubling the house at home, and from danger, and shrewd turnes, than for any great hope and desire their friends have that they should learne anything in effect."

FROM 1612 DOWN TO 1870

the education of youth in London remained under the control of the church, of endowed schools, and of voluntary societies, some of which were aided from time to time by grants from the public funds. When the English education-act was adopted in the latter year, so many and powerful appeared the obstacles to its enforcement in London, that many of its most ardent friends shrank from the attempt, thought it was apparent that the dangerous evils inseparable from a neglect of education were increasing in an alarming ratio. The London School Board was organized, however, and began its operations by taking a census of the school population,—the number of children between 5 and 13 years of age. When the enumeration was completed in 1871, it was found that the number of children coming within the provisions of the act was 574,693; that 176,014 of these were not receiving any instruction; and that the remainder furnished an average daily attendance of but 174,301 to "efficient elementary schools" of all kinds.

SOME STATISTICS.—1878.

From an address by Sir Charles Reed, president of the London School Board, delivered on the reassembling of the Board last month, after the summer vacation, the following facts are culled. The number of children who require elementary instruction now exceeds 615,000. The average daily attendance in all the Board schools is about 192,000, and in voluntary schools 147,000, making a total of 339,000; an increase, since 1871, of 94.6 per cent. The number of Board schools is 278; of adult teacher 2,378, of pupil-teachers 1,479, and of "candidates" who teach 272.

These are 11 superintendents and 208 school visitors. A large part of their duty is to enforce the compulsory laws regarding school attendance. The magnitude of this task is indicated by the following figures relating to the first six months of the present year. "Cautions" were issued to 32,529 parents, and secured the improved attendance of 24,497 children; parents were required to appear before the divisional committees and explain the failure to send their children to school, in 22,738 cases, and in 18,046 of these cases with good results; 3,705 summonses to parents were taken out, and in 2,340 cases small fines were imposed. "The process of enforcing the compulsory by-laws is very costly, but it should be remembered that, while the whole expense falls upon the Board, the voluntary schools share equally with our own in the benefit. Yet without an agency of the kind described, we should lose all trace of thousands of the very children it is our duty to gather into school."

None of the schools are free. The fees for last year amounted to about £56,800, and ranged from 2d. to 9d. a week for each pupil. On account of the poverty of parents the fees were remitted in 3,219 cases; so it appears that no child need be excluded from the schools, no matter how poor his parents are.

THE SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION

in junior and senior schools are divided into "essential" and "discretionary." The former comprises the Bible and the principles of religion and morality; reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar and composition, the principles of bookkeeping (in the senior schools), mensuration (in boys' senior schools), object-lessons, embracing elementary instruction in physical science, history of England, geography, drawing, music, and drill; in girls' schools, plain needle-work and cutting-out are also taught. The "discretionary" branches are domestic economy, geometry, and algebra. In infant schools (not the old-time "infant schools," but corresponding somewhat to the lowest grade of American primary schools), instruction is given in the Bible and the principles of religion and morality, reading, writing, and arithmetic, object-lessons of a simple kind, singing, physical exercises, and sewing.

At least one teacher in every girls' school must be able to teach cooking; and 201 pupils were in the different cooking-classes last March.

The degree of the pupils' proficiency in some studies is not yet very high. The inspector of "a very good girls' school" is moved to remark: "It would be well, however, to give the girls some idea of geography, as even in the fifth and sixth standards (corresponding somewhat as to age of pupils and range of studies with the lower grades of American grammar schools), most of them could not tell me what river flows through London, what county they live in, or the name of any other city in the world."

In this connection Sir Charles Reed remarks: "Complaints occasionally reach us that the class subjects are too superficially handled, and it might be well to imitate more closely the interesting and vivid method of teaching adopted in many of the American and German schools. . . . Needlework is a subject which has been too long neglected in the school. Comparatively few domestic servants can darn or sew neatly, or cut out and make their own clothing."

Great attention is bestowed on the physical training and well-being of the pupils by means of proper exercise, by thorough ventilation of school buildings, by ample supplies of pure water, etc. The London Schools' Swimming Club has taught 7,577 pupils and teachers to swim; and the present season 1,600 children, 100 of them girls, and 120 female teachers, were taught this necessary and useful art.

Lectures on temperance and thrift are frequently given, and the pupils have been encouraged to deposit their little savings in a savings-bank. The number of depositors from 40 schools, in various parts of London, last year was about 9,600, and the total amount of deposits was a little more than £3,100.

Each school has a library, and the libraries of different schools are interchanged twice a year, so that a constant supply of fresh reading is provided.

There are four schools for deaf mutes, and one for the blind, under the direction of the Board.

THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD

is charged with duties respecting illegitimate, orphan, vagrant, and lawless children, which in American cities are committed to other agencies. The school visitors are required to visit all such in their miserable abodes, where "an army of apostles would be beaten by the ordinary conditions of life," to register them, and bring them into the schools. The children of sentenced prisoners, "who are generally illegitimate," are at once placed in industrial schools, where they are trained to honest work and virtuous lives. In the last seven years, 8,508 "homeless and destitute, orphan, and lawless children" have been taken off the London streets by the agents of the Board. There are now 104 boys in one industrial school, 449 on board training-ships, where they "are not treated as criminals," but trained as children of happier antecedents; and about 300 have been sent to sea in different vessels, or otherwise provided for. A vessel which will accommodate 350 boys has lately been bought and fitted up as a training-ship.

In answer to objections on the score of expense, it is re-

marked, "that to leave these children to grow up in crime would cost the country ten times as much." Since the Board began its operations, there has been a remarkable diminution in juvenile crime. The number of commitments to one prison of prisoners under 14 years of age, decreased from 367 in 1870, to 146 in 1877. That ignorance and crime are closely related is illustrated by the fact that in 1877 "there were arrested 75,250 persons who could either not read and write at all, or could do so only with great difficulty; while only 2,732 were arrested who could read and write well."

The sources of income of the Board last year were (1) the government grant, amounting to £91,331; (2) school fees, £55,813; (3) rents, £1,142; and (4) the income of the education-rate, at 5½d.

The expenditures were, for school maintenance, £245,356; for enforcing compulsory by-laws, £26,623; for industrial schools and training-ships, \$23,152; total, £295,131, or \$1,475,655.

On the subject of school taxes, the board lately remarked: "An education-rate is in the nature of an insurance against future and menacing evils, which we ought to be very well content to pay. It is not like the poor-rate, which, however necessary it may be, is an evil necessity at the best, and indicates a dead weight of destitution and distress. An education-rate, on the other hand, is a charge every penny of which can, and ought to be, expended to profit. Every child we educate who would otherwise be left in ignorance, is a direct gain to the community."

Sir Charles Reed's address is replete with suggestions that will profit American school-officers generally, especially those in our cities; and fortunately it will soon become accessible to all, through its publication by the Bureau of Education at Washington.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

CANADA.

In 1871 the cost of the inspection of public schools in Ontario was \$14,527. In 1877 it cost \$36,644, being an increase of upwards of 150 per cent. in six years.

The endowment and building fund of Queen's College, Kingston, now exceeds \$100,000.

At a recent meeting of the Hamilton Board of Education, the following facts and statistics were presented: In 1876 the number of pupils on the rolls was 8,929; the average attendance was 3,556. In 1877 the number was 4,364, and the average attendance 3,783. In 1878 the number was 4,383, and the average attendance 3,950. The returns of the Collegiate Institute are: Number on the roll, 373, of whom 187 are boys; the average attendance is 349. The report also alluded to the fact that since 1873 the Institute has carried off 15 scholarships at the matriculation examinations at Toronto and London Universities, and 5 at Knox College, making in all 20 to the credit of the institution.

In the case of the Carleton Place (Ontario) School Trustees, a mandamus was recently applied for against certain of the trustees, to compel them to attend the meetings of the board, so that business could be proceeded with. Mr. Justice Gold, before whom the application was made, refused the application, on the ground that the trustees had not been guilty of dereliction of duty.

Toronto public school board employs 139 teachers.

The Board of Examiners of the county of Oxford (Ont.) have decided that no student failing to pass satisfactorily in English composition and spelling, will be adjudged competent, no matter what may be his excellence in other respects.

The Teachers' Association of Marquette, Manitoba, held their second meeting at Portage la Prairie lately, and a goodly number of teachers were in attendance, thus evincing the lively interest taken in educational matters in the Province.

The Hon. L. R. Church has been elected a member of the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction of Quebec, *vice* the Hon. Mr. Justice Sanborn, deceased.

The University of Halifax, Nova Scotia, is proving its usefulness by affording students who cannot, from want of time or means, or both, attend a college, the opportunity of obtaining a degree by simply passing examinations of a high standard. Of nine successful candidates at the recent matriculation examinations, seven had prepared themselves by private study.

At the recent Provincial exhibition at Fredericton, New Brunswick, a supposed invention was displayed there which was intended to be of interest to teachers. This was a geometrical diagram with demonstration, entered by the author as a solution of that unsolved problem, *the trisection of an angle*. It came very near being correct! W. E. H.

SCIENCE NOTES.

The Electric Light.—Those who are eager to learn full and detailed particulars of Mr. Edison's plans are doomed to exercise more patience than is agreeable to many. A lull in the excitement is apparent; everything indicates dead calm. The gas-shareholders wait with bated breath the fiat