

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

THE FIRST PROTESTANT SCHOOL INSPECTOR
OF GASPEZIA

REV. WILLIAM GORE LYSTER

"The Lieutenant-Governor, by an Order-
in-Council dated December 27, 1873
was pleased to appoint the Rev. William
Lyster Inspector of the Protestant
Common Schools of the Counties of
Bonaventure and Gaspé."

KEN ANNETT

THE FIRST PROTESTANT SCHOOL INSPECTOR OF GASPESIA

PREFACE

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY in an article published by SPEC in its issue of January 3, 1984, recalled Gaspesia's first school inspector, Me. Peter Winter (later the Hon. Judge Winter) and his official report on the state and needs of education in the year 1851. A subsequent article, as yet unpublished, recalled the career of Joseph Meagher as the successor of Winter. The closing paragraph of that article on Joseph Meagher (No.103 of the series) read:

"It was not until 1873...that the first Inspector of Protestant Schools was appointed by Order-in-Council in the person of the Rev. W. Lyster. Thus began a new era which must await future recall by GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY."

To that new era and the work of the Rev. William Gore Lyster as Inspector of Protestant Schools for the Counties of Bonaventure and Gaspé from 1873 to 1899, GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY now turns.

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER

William Gore Lyster was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1831, of a very good family. When he was yet quite young his father died and the Rector of the Parish of Tallaght became his guardian. He grew up in Tallaght, the site of the summer Palace of the Archbishops of Dublin, and it was first intended that he should enter the Royal Navy - his name being duly inscribed in the Admiralty books. His uncle, Sir Edward Cusack, eminent surgeon of Dublin, wished him to study medicine. Both of these openings, however, were given up in favour of the Ministry. Accordingly, he entered Trinity College, Dublin. At the end of two years the Australian "gold-fever" broke out, and young Lyster cast his lot with a small company of young gentlemen going out to Australia to seek their fortune.

One year of gold-digging, however, was enough. Home sickness proved superior in strength to the "gold-fever". He came back to Dublin, finished his College course, graduated in 1856, winning the Divinity "Testimonium", and was ordained the same year by the Bishop of Down

and Connor.

After initial service in Ireland as a Curate and a College Tutor, William Lyster applied, in 1858, to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel for missionary duty. He was accepted and sent out to Canada to Bishop Mountain of Québec. There he was assigned to the first vacant Mission of the Diocese of Québec - Fort Daniel in Gaspesia. He served that Mission with great acceptance for four years - service that finds numerous echoes in the Diaries of the Rural Dean of Gaspesia at that time, the Rev. George Milne, Rector of the Parish of New Carlisle. In 1863 the Rev. Lyster moved to the Parish of Cape Cove where he was to spend the remainder of his life and ministry until his death in the year 1902.

As noted above, the Rev. Lyster was appointed in 1873 as Inspector of the Protestant Schools of the Counties of Bonaventure and Gaspé. For a quarter century, until his retirement as Inspector in 1898, he served the cause of education in his vast inspectorate with devotion and distinction.

QUALITIES OF WILLIAM LYSTER RECALLED BY A FRIEND

"Mr. Lyster was a man of very versatile genius and considerable attainments; a brilliant scholar; well read in English literature and every department of Belles-Lettres as well as in the literature of his own profession. He was also well known in scientific circles for his attainments in Natural Science, in Geology, Astronomy, Botany, Electricity, and other branches of Science. He was a delightful companion - a brilliant conversationalist, a lucid writer and highly distinguished in the art of letter writing.

He was modest, quiet, never given to push his own way, lived for his people, and was everything to them; doctor, friend, teacher, preacher, adviser, example, to whom they all went when in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any other adversity. When he died, men and women said to one another, we will never see his like again"

ANNUAL REPORTS OF REV. W.G. LYSTER TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

1874

INSPECTOR W. GORE LYSTER.

COUNTIES OF GASPE AND BONAVENTURE.

Sir,

You will perceive from the accompanying abstract, as well as from the table of statistics, that the schools in my district are of various degrees of efficiency.

The poverty of the people, their widely scattered and isolated position, and the consequent distance of the school houses from the homes of many of the children, taken in connection with the inclemency of our winter and the badness of the roads, in many parts of the district, are only too effective obstacles to educational progress and must all be taken into account, in making an estimate of the character of the different schools.

That in spite of these difficulties, schools are increasing in number, and a growing interest felt in education and that moreover the beneficial action of the school-law is generally recognized, and gives us room to hope that upon this important subject apathy and carelessness will soon cease to exist.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER, B.A.,

Inspector Prot. Schools Gaspé and Bonaventure.

Cape Cove, Gaspé, 27th October, 1874.

1875-76

REV. W. G. LYSTER.

Sir,

I have the honor to submit my report for the year 1875-76.

A comparison of the table of Statistics with that of the previous year will shew a large and gratifying increase in the number of pupils actually attending the schools : but more particularly in the number of those studying grammar, geography, composition and arithmetic.

There are a few municipalities in which much difficulty is experienced in keeping schools in operation during the scholastic year, in securing competent teachers, and in procuring the required attendance of children.

These difficulties arise not only from the poverty of a sparse and scattered population, but from the natural carelessness as to education incident to such conditions.

On the other hand, it is satisfactory to know that in most of the schools real progress is being made, and that a good elementary education is being brought within the reach of all.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER, B.A.,

Inspector of Protestant Schools,
Gaspé and Bonaventure.

1876-77

REV. MR. WM. GORE LYSTER, B.A.

Sir,

I have the honor to submit my report on the condition of the Protestant schools in the counties of Gaspé and Bonaventure for the year 1876-77, with the accompanying table of statistics.

It gives me pleasure to state that in the *County of Gaspé* the schools are generally improving; the Commissioners and Trustees shew considerable interest in the progress of education; accounts are, on the whole, well kept, and the teachers generally have been punctually paid.

The best school in my entire district is Gaspé Bay, South, No. 1. This school has been under good teachers for some years past; and the children having attended pretty regularly, and having been remarkably well drilled in the elementary branches, now give good results. At my last examination in June, the answering in English grammar and geography was exceedingly creditable; the reading was of a superior character, and the exercises in dictation and arithmetic were highly satisfactory. This ought to be a "model school." The teacher, Miss Gilman, deserves great praise. No. 2 is a much smaller school; but the answering, when the age of the children is taken into account, was about equal to that in No. 1. This is one of the few schools in which drawing is taught. Miss Charlton, who has a model-school diploma, is a very successful teacher. In accordance with your instructions, I beg leave, Sir, to draw your attention to the names of both these teachers, as specially worthy of commendation.

1876-77 (ctd)

In *York* there are two very fair schools. The progress in No. 2 is quite surprising when it is remembered that a few years ago there was no school in the municipality. Trustees and teacher alike deserve much credit. No. 1 is a new and commodious school-house, as yet unfinished.

Gaspé Bay, N.—The school here, though pretty well attended, has not improved of late, owing to the too frequent change of teachers. Maps have lately been supplied: accounts are well kept, and some interest is felt in education.

Roseville—This is a specially backward place. A very inferior school was kept open during part of the year. There is no energy whatever exhibited in school affairs.

Little Gaspé—Only one school was open at the time of my last visit. It was thinly attended, and very backward.

Grand Grève, No. 1.—This school was closed at the time of my visit. Education here does not make much progress. The Commissioners do not work together very harmoniously, though the Secretary-Treasurer seems to do his duty efficiently and keeps the teachers paid up.

Haldimand—Both schools are constantly in operation and give satisfaction.

No. 1 deserves special mention as a model of neatness: it is the best furnished school-house in the district. For this the teacher, Miss White, and the Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Bailly, deserve credit. Accounts are always in good order. Drawing, I should mention, is taught in this school.

Barachois of Malbaie—This school is very elementary in character, though fairly taught. The people, being poor, keep their children at home too much for their good.

Malbaie—Both schools are fairly taught, though the attendance is not so good as it ought to be. No. 1 is an excellent new school house. The Commissioners have latterly shown some interest in education.

Percé—School No. 2 has been open during the past year under an efficient teacher. The results, however, are not so good as one might expect, owing to a lamentable tendency on the part of parents to keep their children at home on trifling pretexts. Irregularities have too long prevailed in the financial affairs of the dissentient minority of this municipality; but a new Secretary-Treasurer has lately been appointed, and I am assured that a better state of things is henceforth to prevail.

Cape Cove—Here three good schools have been in operation during the year; the usual branches have been fairly taught, and some progress has been made.

The teachers are efficient and anxious to do their duty, and the Trustees show a commendable interest in school affairs and hold half yearly examinations in each of the schools, which is more than can be recorded of some other municipalities.

Here, as well as elsewhere, the character of the schools is impaired by the removal of the pupils at too early an age.

Accounts are well kept; but the Secretary-Treasurer is rather lenient, and there is a consequent want of punctuality in the collection of the assessment. A deplorable tardiness in the erection of school house No. 3 is not to the credit of a municipality in which there is much that is otherwise praiseworthy.

1876-77 (ctd)

COUNTY OF BONAVENTURE.

A drive of forty miles from Cape Cove takes one to *Port Daniel*, where the dissentient school is taught by Miss Gadd.

Here the children, though young, answered well. They quite distinguished themselves in giving the meaning of difficult words which occurred in their reading lesson, thus proving that they had been carefully taught.

Though the school is not of a high order, the elder pupils having been with one exception removed, a very favorable impression was produced. I wish, Sir, to call your attention to Miss Gadd as a painstaking and systematic teacher.

The Trustees and Secretary-Treasurer are zealous and active. A new school house is about to be erected.

Hope No. 2—Here twenty-nine boys and thirty-four girls were present.

Reading and spelling were commendable, and writing was particularly good, but the pupils were very deficient in grammar, geography and arithmetic. This ought to be a much better school than it is. The teacher attributes the deficiencies of the pupils to irregular attendance.

Hope No. 1—Nineteen boys and twenty girls were present at the examination. No improvement is perceptible here.

Reading and spelling are fairly taught, but this is all that can be said. Here also irregular attendance is complained of.

I have reason to hope that the introduction of the new readers and text books in this municipality will be productive of much good, as a want of books was complained of at both schools. A new school house is in course of construction. Accounts are well kept, and arrears are trifling.

Cox.—Here are two numerously attended schools which ought to be, but which are not, amongst the best in my district of inspection. As No. 1 was just changing teachers, and in what might be called a transition state, the examination was not very satisfactory. However, great things are promised by the time of my next visit. No. 2 is attended chiefly by very young children. There were fifty-nine present at the examination, of whom the great majority were under ten years of age, and not more than three or four over twelve. Reading and spelling were fair; geography and grammar, pretty good. There is no reason why this should not be a good school, if parents would only send their children regularly and allow them to remain sufficiently long.

The secretary-treasurer complains of much difficulty in collecting arrears of assessment.

New Richmond.—In this large municipality there was in operation at the time of my visit only one small school, taught by a young girl without a diploma. The children—twenty-three in number—were very young, and knew little beyond reading, spelling, writing and tables.

1876-77 (ctd)

The trustees have hitherto been painfully apathetic about education. One of them actually complained to me that against his advice a district containing over sixty families had recently been divided!! The main object hitherto has evidently been to keep the assessment as low as possible. It is full time that this disgraceful state of things should be changed.

I am glad to say the trustees have very recently raised the rate of assessment; they have also built a new school house, and they have agreed to build a second in a central position with a view to establishing a model school.

Thus, at length, a little life begins to be manifested. I hope in my next report to be able to give a more satisfactory account of the state of education in this important municipality. There is no reason why its schools should not compare favorably with any others in the district, as the country is thickly settled, and the people generally seem to be in fairly comfortable circumstances.

Shoolbred.—Here I examined three small schools containing a fair proportion of tolerable readers and spellers.

The poverty of the people as well as their small number and the distance apart at which they live, must excuse them in a great measure for the very defective condition of their school houses, and the general backwardness as to education. Mr. Wm. Gray is a most energetic secretary-treasurer, and performs his duties under considerable difficulties. His accounts are well kept and the teachers are regularly paid. At least two schools ought to be kept permanently in operation.

Mann—Here a small school, having thirteen children on the roll, is once more in operation, having been closed for two years. There are only four families in the district.

Restigouche—Only one school has been open during the past year. The school house is an old ruinous log building on the Kempt road. In this there were neither map nor apparatus of any kind. Here were present twelve boys and eleven girls, the majority of whom read and spelled very fairly, while three boys in the senior class answered pretty well in geography and English grammar.

Considering that the school had been open only during part of a year, the answering was remarkably good, and said much for the intelligence of the children and the assiduity of the teacher. I could not help thinking what a pity it was that such bright children did not enjoy greater advantages:

The Chairman of the Commissioners assured me that he was anxious that improvements should be made, and that the rate of assessment, at present only $\frac{1}{4}$ cent per dollar, should be raised, but that he was opposed by the other Commissioners. I have reason to believe that better schools could easily be built and supported here. Making every allowance for the difficulties experienced by a sparse and scattered community in supporting schools, it is yet painfully apparent that no real effort in the cause of education is being made. Money is in a great measure wasted in keeping schools open for short periods, as is the practice here. The Commissioners should be compelled to keep at least two schools permanently in operation in the most thickly settled parts of the municipality. The system that prevails here, as well as elsewhere, of allowing each district to retain its own assessment has a most injurious effect, and is distinctly contrary to the law.

1876-77 (ctd)

One small school in Metapediac, fifteen miles further on, and one hundred and sixty miles from my residence, yet remained to be inspected: but Inspector Lucier having kindly engaged to do this duty in my behalf on his next visit to that municipality, I went no further than Restigouche, as some scholastic engagements awaited me on my homeward journey.

I have only to add that I have taken every opportunity to make Commissioners and Trustees aware of the change in the laws, that I have distributed the list of books authorized for use in Protestant schools, and that I have advised the teachers generally to form drawing classes in their schools as soon as possible.

I beg leave, in this connection, to bring under your notice the frequently repeated request of Protestant Commissioners for the new edition of the school laws in English, the French copy being of no use to the majority of them.

I have thus, sir, endeavoured in a plain unvarnished statement, to convey to you an idea of the condition of the schools in my large, though poor, and thinly populated district of inspection.

Many deficiencies must be attributed to poverty and carelessness and want of knowledge rather than to intentional mismanagement. That the desire for education is spreading, I feel confident: that the few who don't value it will soon learn to be ashamed to be without it. I am equally certain.

With something to discourage, there is also, I am happy to say, much to cheer us and to justify us in feeling that we have entered upon a new and more hopeful era in the education of the people.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER, B.A.,
Inspector of Protestant Schools.
Cox, Gaspé and Bonaventure

Cape Cove, Gaspé, August 6th, 1877.

MR. LYSTER.

1877-78

Sir,

I beg leave to submit my report on the state of education in the district under my charge for the year 1877-78.

It will be seen by the accompanying statistics that a slight increase has taken place in the number of schools in operation, as well as of pupils attending them. The number of pupils studying English grammar, parsing, history and drawing has also increased. The main difficulty in introducing the last named subject arises from the diffidence of teachers, who, having themselves never been taught, are unwilling to attempt to teach what they do not understand. I have insisted upon the necessity of their making some acquaintance with the subject, and I look forward to some improvement in this respect.

In the study of geography, there has been a falling off, principally occasioned, I think, by the unwillingness of parents to purchase the new books, which cost half-a-dollar. To really poor people, even this small sum is a matter of importance. A cheaper text-book of outlines for beginners might be introduced with advantage.

I have the honor, &c..

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER, CLK., B.A.,
School Inspector.

CAPE COVE, Gaspé, 26th August, 1878.

To the Honorable G. Ouimet, Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Sir,

I beg leave to report upon the state of education in the district, under my charge, for the year 1878-79.

When I state that within the past year, I have visited and examined all the schools found open during my turn of inspection, that I have distributed rewards, notified teachers and commissioners of necessary changes, and examined the accounts generally of secretary-treasurers, is merely to say that I have been endeavouring to do my duty. That local difficulties, a great distance to travel, the poverty and consequent apathy as to education, on the part of a considerable portion of the Protestant population, are hindrances to the satisfactory performance of that duty, has once and again been the subject of complaint, and is a condition of things existing on this coast, with which, you, Sir, have been made acquainted.

In spite of these hindrances, however, a better spirit is beginning to prevail; and I am glad to notice in nearly all municipalities, a greater readiness than heretofore to obey the school law. In some schools in which competent teachers have been engaged, decided progress has been made; in others, again, in which teachers ill-trained and badly paid, have found employment, there has been, as might be expected, little or no improvement.

Having recently sent in bulletins of inspection from nearly all the schools in my district, it will be unnecessary now to do more than briefly recapitulate.

1. Port Daniel (Diss). This school continues to give much satisfaction. There were present at the last examination, 16 boys and 28 girls.

The seniors, 1 boy, 4 girls answered well in English grammar, parsing, geography and arithmetic.

The intermediate and junior classes answered well in the usual subjects, and all gave evidence of much care and attention on the part of the teacher, Miss Gadd, whom I have pleasure in naming now, for the third time, as specially worthy of commendation.

The writing in this school is far above the average, as you, Sir, will be able to judge from the book of specimens of writing presented to me by the pupils, and which I have the honor to transmit for your inspection.

I have not referred to religious instruction, which, I may here add, is given systematically in all the schools in Gaspé, and most of the schools in Bonaventure, and this is generally supplemented by instruction in Sunday schools.

From the table of statistics accompanying this report, it will be seen that the number of children studying history, geography and some other branches, has somewhat increased.

There is also a small increase in the number of those who have been taught drawing and vocal music. In spite of repeated injunctions, it is almost impossible to get teachers to attend to the two subjects last named: for to convey useful instruction in either one or the other, requires an amount both of taste and knowledge, which our elementary teachers do not often possess.

I have the honor to be, &c,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER,
School Inspector

1879-80

MR. LYSTER.

CAPE COVE, GASPÉ, 17th August, 1880.

SIR,

Having had the honor to transmit to you, from time to time, within the past scholastic year, bulletins of inspection from nearly all the schools in my district, I do not now think it necessary to do more than briefly recapitulate, as I have already put you in possession of all the information likely to prove useful.

It will be seen from the accompanying table of statistics, that while the whole number actually attending school was somewhat smaller than during the previous year, the numbers learning geography, history, grammar, vocal music, and drawing have considerably increased. I am glad to call your attention to the fact that three new school-houses are now being erected in the municipalities of New Richmond and Ristigouche; in the latter municipality a good school-house has lately been built.

In nearly all the schools which have been kept constantly in operation, considerable improvement has taken place in discipline, in the arrangement of classes, and in general school-management. The furniture is in many cases much better than it used to be, and school-rooms not supplied with maps are becoming exceptional.

In those small schools, which from the sparseness of the population and the insufficiency of funds, are kept open only every second year, no progress can be looked for. Still, I have found even in these, many children who had made the most of their slender opportunities, who had picked up an amount of knowledge, and who exhibited a degree of quickness, quite surprising under the circumstances. Notwithstanding the great depression which has prevailed in the district for some time past, and which, owing to the failure of the fisheries, is particularly severe in the county of Gaspé, I have heard no complaints on the part of the teachers, though I am well aware that the secretary-treasurers have experienced unusual difficulty in collecting their salaries.

I gladly notice an improvement in the qualifications of teachers who have obtained their diplomas according to the new rules.

The necessity of acquiring an accurate knowledge of the subjects for examination, has proved of advantage to themselves as well as to their pupils.

I may add that the want of a mixed Board of Examiners to hold its meetings at New Carlisle has been much felt of late; this want, will I trust, soon be supplied.

A good training-school, or even a model-school well conducted, in which intending teachers could not only obtain suitable instruction, but could also make some practical acquaintance with school-management, would prove of the greatest advantage to this district.

I have the honor to be, &c.

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER, B.A., C.L.K.,

School Inspector.

MR. LYSTER

SIR,

I beg leave to submit my report, with the usual statistics, for the year 1881-82

It will be seen that the number of children attending school is somewhat larger than last year; at the same time I regret to say that in several municipalities, epidemics prevailed during the winter, and greatly impeded regular attendance, and in some cases necessitated the closing of schools.

Having sent in bulletins with detailed notices of the several schools, it is unnecessary now to repeat the information already supplied.

I would indeed gladly report general and satisfactory progress, if I could, but I am in many cases unable to do so.

The absence of interest in the schools, on the part of trustees and parents, is too palpable in many municipalities, in which the teachers are left from beginning to end of the year without a single visit, or a word of encouragement to cheer them in their arduous and, too often, ill-remunerated work.

Can we wonder if in some instances teachers become dispirited, and perform their duties in a lifeless and perfunctory manner, with little credit to themselves and little advantage to their pupils?

And here, Sir, I beg leave to suggest that a question shall be added to those already in the hands of inspectors:—"Has the teacher been paid up to the end of last half year?" For several teachers have recently complained of tardiness on the part of Secretary-Treasurers.

This is shameful. To underpay teachers is bad enough; but to make decent girls who have some self-respect, plead and beg for their hard-earned pittance, long after it has become due, is nothing less than a scandalous cruelty; and a law should be made to reach trustees who allow their teachers to be thus treated.

I am glad, nevertheless, to be able to report the following items of improvement:

A new school in Restigouche, taught by Miss Fairservice, and making good progress. If the commissioners will only keep this school open for a few years, I have no doubt of satisfactory results.

A new school-house of neat appearance, in Mann.

Two schools well taught in Shoolbred, in which municipality, though a poor one, schools are visited and teachers are paid with punctuality.

1881-82 (ctd)

In New Richmond a new school-house, intended for a model school, which has since last summer taken a few more steps towards completion, but is not yet quite finished: Here it is to be hoped the trustees will soon enter upon an entirely new system in school affairs.

Two good schools as usual in Cox.

Two large schools in Hope, of which No 2, taught by Miss Hepburn, is very creditable. No. 1 is not so good as it ought to be, owing to irregular attendance.

In this municipality two school commissions flourish side by side, but within slightly different limits. The older, Hope, complains that the younger, St. Godfroi, had certain boundary changes made, without having given due notice, or having consulted the old commissioners. The younger claims a majority of population, secured probably by these changes. This majority Hope will not acknowledge; and so the matter rests for the present, *sub litem*. I have advised a peaceful solution of the difficulty.

A new and promising school in Port Daniel.

Two good schools in Cape Cove, though much hindered by sickness.

Three good schools in Gaspe Bay South. No. 2 under Miss Gadd, much improved of late. No. 1, under Miss Pinder, well taught and improving. No. 3, under Miss Davis, better than I have ever found it before.

Accounts well kept generally; but in a few cases considerable arrears, in extenuation of which, poverty, bad fisheries, and emigration from the coast are pleaded.

I am unwilling to speak about myself; but it is only fair to state that there is much more difficulty and expense in visiting the widely scattered schools in my district, than there would be in the inspection of thrice their number within narrower limits; and this difficulty is increased by the uncertain character of the weather and roads in winter. During the year I have travelled on inspection duty over seven hundred and fifty miles, by waggon and sleigh.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER, B.A.,

School Inspector.

CAPE COVE, 10 August, 1882.

M. LYSTER.

Sir.

I have the honour to submit a brief report upon the condition of education in my district of inspection for the year 1882-83.

On comparing the table of statistics with that for the previous year, it will be seen that the number of pupils has somewhat increased: and certain subjects, such as writing from dictation, history, drawing, and vocal music are more generally taught than heretofore.

Owing, no doubt, to perpetual insistence on the necessity of teaching the two last-named subjects, there is a remarkable increase in the number of learners.

I fear, however, that not much progress has yet been made in either: art, it must be acknowledged, is in a very elementary condition on the coast. However, even the most rudimentary acquaintance with drawing and music cannot fail to prove advantageous, as the cultivation of a taste for either conduces to the refinement of both teacher and pupil.

I am glad to say that new school-houses in Percé, Restigouche, Mann, and New Richmond, have been completed; the last-named is the best school-house in my district, and is a credit to the municipality.

I have, sir, during the year, put you in possession of all necessary details relating to every school visited: therefore I need not repeat what the bulletins have already shewn.

No very great change can be expected. On the whole, the schools are answering their purpose: ignorance is being gradually removed; and in a few years, it is to be hoped, there will be hardly an adult on the coast incapable of reading a newspaper or book intelligently, writing a good letter, and making out a fair account.

This may seem to be a low standard: but it is, at all events, practical.

If people were able to leave their children a few years longer at school, more satisfactory results would be obtained.

In all the schools under my care, religious instruction, in the shape of scripture-reading, catechism, hymns, &c., is given weekly. This instruction is supplemented by the Sunday-schools in nearly every municipality; so that children are not to be found growing up ignorant of religion.

I regret to be obliged to report an increasing difficulty in securing teachers. Whether it be from an exaggerated idea of the difficulty of passing the examination of the Protestant Boards, or from a demand for the services of young women in other employments, it is certain that the supply of candidates for the diploma is very small, and not at all equal to the demand.

1882-83 (ctd)

No fewer than six teachers without diplomas have been employed during the year in the county of Gaspé. Most of these professed an intention to present themselves for examination at the end of six months, and a few have done so. But not one of these unqualified teachers would have been employed if teachers holding diplomas could have been obtained.

It is a misfortune that there is no training-school on the coast; and the small number of Protestant candidates for diplomas would hardly justify the establishment of a training-school.

But, it has occurred to me, sir, that this difficulty might be in some degree removed by Government making a sufficiently liberal grant yearly, to a certain number of candidates, say two or three from each county, to enable them to enter McGill normal school, and there spend a year; the course to be completed by passing the examination for the elementary diplomas. There is little doubt that a sufficient number of respectable girls would, if thus assisted, proceed yearly to Montreal, and having learned *how to teach*, would return to this district with great advantage to the schools.

There is another subject, sir, in this connection, on which I beg leave to make a remark; it is the pension fund.

In this, hardly anyone in my district, with the exception of the three male teachers, appears to feel the least interest.

The reason is not far to seek.

The female teachers, mostly young, and it would seem attractive, have no intention, if they can avoid it, to continue teaching for the period required to qualify them for the enjoyment of a pension.

Indeed, to judge from the past, we can hardly expect to find one of those now employed, in charge of a school at the close of a few years.

I note with much satisfaction the publication of a list of authorized text-books. I have endeavoured to impress all school commissioners and trustees with the advantage to be derived from its adoption. I have also aided in making a selection from the list.

Gage's Readers have the advantage not only of excellent finish and illustrations, as well as of interesting and instructive matter, but this also, which for beginners is invaluable, viz., that instead of the difficult words with their meanings being packed away at the end of the book where they may be, and usually are shirked by the pupil, these words are placed prominently at the beginning of each lesson, and cannot be evaded or avoided. These books give besides much assistance in parsing and analysis, plain directions for effective recitation, and a large amount of general information.

An English grammar for beginners, written in short words and in plain English is still a desideratum, and I hope such a book may be either found or compiled during the current year.

1882-83 (ctd)

I also notice with pleasure the issue of a course of study for elementary schools. This must prove invaluable to teachers. I shall insist on its adoption as far as practicable in every school.

I have the honor to be, etc..

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER,

School Inspector.

CAPE COVE. GASPÉ. 18th August. 1883.

1883-84

MR. LYSTER.

CAPE COVE (Gaspé), 26th August. 1884.

SIR,

I beg leave to submit my report and table of statistics for the past scholastic year.

The total number of pupils is very slightly larger than in last report, emigration from the coast during recent years, having retarded the increase of population.

Having already put you in possession of information respecting all the schools under my care, I trust it is now unnecessary to do more than allude to a few facts of special importance.

I am sorry to repeat that the want of duly qualified Protestant teachers continues to be much felt.

Last winter there were no fewer than six schools in the county of Gaspé taught by young girls without diplomas.

A few of these have however, since succeeded in passing the required examination.

Several schools in the county of Bonaventure have been closed for months from the inability of commissioners to secure teachers. This scarcity of teachers arises in part at least, I think, from an imaginary difficulty in passing the Board of Examiners.

The schools generally, in both counties, have been fairly attended during the year, and in most of them some progress has been made.

I notice with pleasure that several schools in the county of Gaspé have procured excellent wall-maps; indeed, as to maps and books, nearly all the schools are now fairly supplied.

In some municipalities the school furniture is still of a rude and primitive character, but year after year, improvements are made.

The same may be said of the school-houses themselves; the old ones are being gradually replaced by neat and suitable buildings.

1883-84 (ctd)

A great deal depends on the energy of school-commissioners and trustees.

Where these are apathetic, we need not look for much improvement; where they are intelligent and active, changes for the better are constantly going on.

A remarkable illustration of this, may be noticed in the municipality of New Richmond, (diss..) in which during the past year, six schools have been in operation, with an attendance about double that of previous years.

The teachers also have been punctually paid, assessments having been duly collected.

This improved state of things may be attributed entirely to the zeal and energy of the new trustees, aided by a hard working secretary-treasurer.

I am glad to notice that the "Course of study" has proved very helpful and suggestive to many of our teachers. These young girls are, in too many instances, left from beginning to end of the year without other suggestion or advice than that received from the inspector at his biennial visit; and we need not wonder that when thus left to their own devices, they fall into a merely mechanical manner of teaching, and that their pupils take little interest in their work. Here the "Course of study" comes in as a perpetual monitor; and I may add, the "Educational Record" also, is in this respect most useful, and is indeed highly appreciated, supplying as it does, valuable information, not only to teachers, but to all persons interested in the progress of our schools.

I have the honor, etc.,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER,

School inspector.

1884-85

MR. LYSTER.

CAPE COVE (Gaspé), 25th August, 1885.

SIR,

I have the honor to submit my report for the past scholastic year. There is little to add to the previous year's report; in the nature of things no great change can be looked for.

From the bulletins which I have had the honor to forward from time to time, it will be seen that the schools generally are doing fairly well, and that the teachers, almost without exception, have been punctually paid.

The latter is a very gratifying feature in my returns.

1884-85 (ctd)

It is almost unnecessary to repeat, that the character of the schools and the progress of the pupils, depend, almost entirely, upon the character and ability of the teachers.

As to character I have nothing to complain of. Our teachers are nearly all industrious and pains-taking, and teach to the best of their power: they have, in acquiring their own education, made excellent use of very limited opportunities, and they are, as teachers, fairly successful. Very few of them, however, have enjoyed the advantage of such a course of training, as I conceive to be almost indispensable to thorough efficiency: for, though the boards of examiners may guarantee that the candidate for a diploma has acquired a certain *modicum* of knowledge—including even a knowledge of the "art of teaching,"—a course of training of a practical character must, I think, be undergone, before the teacher can be considered perfectly competent. It is therefore most important that an opportunity of receiving a proper training should be afforded to intending teachers; yet, from this, the young people resident in my district have hitherto been debarred, by their remoteness from the nearest normal school.

We have reason, then, to be thankful for the aid recently granted to two municipalities to establish model schools, as there is little doubt that these schools will benefit not only the municipalities in which they are established, but, through the training of teachers, the whole district of Gaspé.

One model school has been opened in Cox; the other is soon to be in operation in Gaspé Basin, and as both places are easy of access, it is to be hoped that many young people will attend to receive practical instruction in the art of teaching.

It will be noticed from the table of statistics, that while the numbers attending school have increased by 130, about 500 children between the ages of 5 and 16 are not on the scholastic rolls at all.

This large percentage of absentees may be accounted for, in the case of the younger children, by the distance from schools at which many of them reside; and in the case of some of the older ones, by the necessity that compels poor people to remove their children from school and make them earn their living at an early age.

But carelessness and apathy on the part of parents, are the main hindrance to a more general school attendance.

I am glad to report that new school houses are soon to be built in Gaspé Basin, Cape Cove, New Carlisle and Paspébiac. These are all much needed, the buildings now in use, being old, and, in many respects, unsuitable.

I have the honor, &c.

WILLIAM GORE Lyster,

School Inspector

1885-86

MR. LYSTER.

CAPE COVE, GASPÉ, Aug. 31, 1886.

SIR,

I have the honor to submit my report for the year 1885-86, on the condition of the schools in my district of inspection.

It will be seen by the table of statistics, now forwarded, that there is a small decrease in the aggregate number of children attending the schools: for this I can hardly account.

On the other hand, there is a gratifying increase in the number of pupils receiving instruction in writing, in writing from dictation, geography, drawing, object lessons, and sacred history.

In other respects there is little change, if I except the formation of two new municipalities,—“Sellarville” and “Gaspé Village.”

As I already have had the honor of putting you in possession of all note-worthy particulars, I hope it will now be sufficient to notice briefly, those municipalities in which some signs of progress are perceptible.

COUNTY BONAVENTURE—*Port Daniel*.—Here there are two very fair schools, though the children are mostly very young. No. 1 school-house is no longer in the centre of the district, and there has been some difficulty about removing it to a more convenient position. This, I hope, will be overcome before long.

St. Godfroi, Diss.—Here there is an excellent school, well taught by Miss French, who deserves much credit for the progress of her pupils, whose answering was very intelligent. A new school-house is much needed.

Cox, No. 1, is a large school—124 on the roll—under a very energetic and competent teacher, Mr. Frank Webb, whose heart seems to be in his work. There are, however, far too many children for one teacher: he cannot attend to them all in a satisfactory way. An assistant is here a necessity. The old school-house will soon be replaced by a fine large building, the frame of which has already been raised.

No. 2 was not in a satisfactory state at the time of my visit; a change of teachers had just been effected, and discipline seemed rather lax. In this school also, there are far too many children for one teacher: she cannot possibly manage them all. The model school department had been closed a little before my visit, and the teacher had left.

I here beg leave to call attention to the fact that I have, in the table of statistics, returned the model school simply as a department of the elementary. In reality it is still an elementary school, the children being mostly beginners, though the teacher holds the McGill model school diploma.

I regret to say that the object for which a special grant was made to this municipality has not yet been attained, no intending teachers having entered the school for training.

In winter there were a few girls making fair progress, who in time, might become teachers; but none came from outside the municipality.

It is to be hoped that the model department will be better attended, and more fully appreciated in future.

New Richmond, Diss.—The schools here do not call for any particular notice. No. 1—*Black Cape*, is, I think, the best: it is yearly improving. No. 5, in the village, was not satisfactory. The teacher complained of irregular attendance. A large school-house is being built in district No. 3. The municipality has recently sustained a loss in the death of their secretary-treasurer, Mr. John McCormick, who was very energetic and punctual in performing the duties of his office.

1885-86 (ctd)

Schoolbred.—The schools are as good as can be expected, at present, in a poor and thinly populated municipality. Three of them were in operation at the time of my visit.

The new municipality of *Sellarville* has a neat school-house, and, considering the short time the school had been open, the pupils answered fairly. The people are evidently anxious to have their children educated.

COUNTY GASPÉ. *Cape Cove. Diss.*—Here the three schools are constantly in operation. No. 2, under Mr. G. Gaudin, is an excellent school in winter, when it is attended by several pupils of from fourteen to sixteen years of age, some of whom are good scholars, who, with a little further training, would become effective teachers. Most of these leave school in summer and obtain employment at lobster-packing, farming, &c. Nos. 1 and 2 are also well taught, but the children are removed from both at too early an age. Two new school-houses have been built within the past year.

Haldimand—No. 1.—This is the best school in my district, and deserves honorable mention. For good discipline, regularity and intelligent answering, I am glad to commend it. The teacher, Miss Henry, has been in charge for several years. The advantage of keeping the same teacher as long as possible, provided she does her work faithfully and well, is obvious, and is proved by the satisfactory answering and generally prosperous condition of such schools.

York.—One school here, No. 2, is promising, and is more regularly attended than perhaps any other in the county. The other, No. 1, is the reverse. Both school-houses are new, neat, well-furnished, and well supplied with wall-maps, and care is taken to keep them in good order.

Gaspé Village.—As in the case of Cox, so here also I have returned the model school as elementary, with two departments, because, in point of fact, it is so, at present.

This school has, for the past year, been taught by a young lady holding the McGill model diploma. A few of the pupils are well advanced, but most of them may be called beginners. My hopes that intending teachers would avail themselves of a course of training in this school, have, so far, been disappointed; only one girl, who subsequently passed a good examination and obtained the elementary diploma, having taken advantage of the opportunity. I hope her example will be followed by several, during the coming year.

The commissioners deserve much credit for having promptly met the special grant, by building an excellent and commodious school-house—probably the best in my whole district.

The schools of Grand Grève were, as usual, in operation during the year, but the difficulty of attending regularly on this specially exposed coast, is a hindrance to progress. No. 1 was better attended and in better condition than in former years, but is yet, as well as No. 2, a backward school.

In nearly every municipality the same complaint is heard, viz., that parents remove their children at too early an age. Parents declare they are obliged to do so, as labour is scarce and the country is poor. I have no doubt in my own mind, nevertheless, that the children are, on the whole, much better taught than they used to be: and few of those who remain even to the age of fourteen, fail to secure a fair share of elementary knowledge, and a facility in letter-writing and making out simple accounts, which must prove most useful in after life. A satisfactory proof of this is found in the general statement of post-masters on the coast that their business is constantly increasing; the number of letters and newspapers passing their offices having in some instances doubled, within a very few years.

1885-86 (ctd)

I have not alluded to the secretary-treasurers of the several municipalities, because it would seem invidious to select a few for special commendation, when nearly all, to the best of my belief and observation, do their work faithfully, and, on the whole, well.

The proof that I do not say a word too much in their favor is, that with only one exception, all the teachers have been punctually paid.

Their office is by no means a sinecure, and their remuneration is seldom an equivalent for the trouble they are obliged to take, in order to secure the prompt payment of school rates.

Some ratepayers give a great deal of unnecessary trouble, and require frequent reminders, before the reluctant dollars pass into the secretary's hands. To sue, is, I need hardly say, in most cases, a last resource.

I have the honor to be, &c..

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER,

School Inspector.

1886-87

REV. W. G. LYSTER

CAPE COVE, GASPÉ, 10th August 1887.

SIR,

I beg leave to submit the annual report of the schools in my district for the year 1886-87.

On a coast such as this, no very striking change can be looked for, the circumstances of the people remaining much the same from year to year; still a change for the better is gradually but surely taking place.

I think that I am quite safe in asserting that in most municipalities, far more interest is now taken in the schools and in the progress of the pupils than has ever before existed, since I became school-inspector.

Upon referring to the table of statistics it will be seen that there has been a considerable increase in the number of children studying the various branches of the school course.

This is notably the case in Book-Keeping, in Sacred-History, English and Canadian History, in Drawing and in Grammar.

I cannot say that these subjects are all well taught. Drawing, for instance, is seldom taught in such a manner as to be really useful to the children after they have left school; though it may, in cases where there is natural aptitude, prove a starting point for subsequent attainments.

English Grammar, again, is not generally well taught. The conjugation of the verb and the rules of Syntax may be mastered, but sometimes even the teacher ignores these rules in common conversation; and it is not unusual to hear a pupil who answers remarkably well in class, and who even parses with facility "throw Grammar to the dogs" when he gets out of doors, and relapse into the untrammelled liberty of those happy folk who have never even heard of Lennie or Bullion.

If teachers would spend a little more time than they do, in correcting colloquial mistakes, this might be amended; and frequent drill in correcting sentences, on the plan of "Swinton's language lessons," would I think, prove most useful.

I am sorry to report that the model schools have not yet proved a success, though I have hopes that a change for the better is at hand. It was expected that pupils from the neighbouring municipalities would come in, but this expectation has been very slenderly fulfilled.

1886-87 (ctd)

Paspebiac school (Cox) has been attended by several young people who will in time be well qualified to become teachers, but a few years must elapse before they are old enough. The teacher, Miss Caulfield, is competent and energetic and succeeds remarkably well.

Strange to say, the school meets with a most determined opposition from some people who believe, or at least, profess to believe, that it is a "High School"; and that the pains and penalties of improved buildings large salaries, &c., &c., will fall upon *them*. Only for the active support of the Revd. Mr. Blaylock and some of the commissioners, the school would have collapsed before this.

Gaspé Village model school, containing as it does an elementary department which is attended by the majority of the children, is a popular institution, though it has as yet sent out only one teacher.

A change of teachers has recently taken place, and improvement is looked for.

The Port Daniel schools are doing very well, under active teachers.

The dispute about the site has not yet been settled, and a third district is now spoken of.

In St. Godfroi, Dissentient, the school is very well taught, but the children are taken away at far too early an age.

Paspebiac, Dissentient, is not a very good school, but at the time of my last visit it had somewhat improved.

Cox No. 1, has been attended by an unmanageable number of children and the marvel is that one man could teach so many.

Mr. Webb did wonders, under all the circumstances, and with half the number of pupils his school would have been excellent.

The answering here is always creditable, while the neatness of the school-room and the good discipline and polite manners of the children merit praise.

The York schools do not change much; they are not very good.

In Gaspé Bay, South, the school is pretty good; but the teachers are so often changed that little progress is made.

In Gaspé Bay, North, the school does not give satisfaction.

In Grande Grève both schools are fairly attended and at my last visit I noticed some improvement.

Although there is a good deal of poverty in the district, I am glad to report that the teachers' salaries have, without exception, so far as I can discover, been punctually paid.

This is much to the credit of the secretary-treasurers who sometimes have abundant trouble in collecting funds.

The poverty to which I allude, is a drawback to the progress of education: for the really poor cannot afford to keep their children long enough in the schools.

If, by any means, children could be kept at school, as a rule, to the age of *fourteen*, a great improvement in the character of these institutions might be expected.

I have the honour, etc,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER,

School Inspector.

1887-88

REV. W. G. LYSTER.

CAPE COVE, GASPE 11th. August 1888.

SIR,

I have the honor to submit my annual report on the state of the schools in my district, for the year 1887-88.

This is accompanied by the usual table of statistics.

Upon comparing this table with that of last year, it will be seen that there has been a considerable falling off in the attendance in nearly every school.

For this I can account in only too many instances, by the fact that sickness prevailed during part of the past year in many municipalities. Gaspé Bay North, Grande Grève, New Richmond diss, Shoolbred and Hamilton diss, were at one time or another visited by diphtheria or measles.

Then, some schools, viz. Port Daniel 1 and 2 Hamilton and others, were for considerable periods closed from want of teachers; and it is hardly necessary to add, only gradually recover their normal strength.

I regret to say that in several municipalities very serious difficulty has been experienced in securing competent teachers. The Protestant Board of Examiners have passed only one candidate, this year; three were rejected by the Gaspé Board. The supply from the coast upon which until quite recently, we depended, seems to have dried up; while the difficulty of attracting teachers from Montreal is greater than ever. In consequence of this, a larger number than usual of young and untrained girls, without diplomas, and, in a few instances, never likely to have any, are of necessity employed,—provisionally of course—but, as a rule, without much advantage to the schools.

I hope Sir, I am the last to advocate a retrograde movement; but I am not alone in believing that in a backward part of the country such as this is, a partial relaxation of the recent rules for the examination of Protestant candidates, would be advantageous.

And here I may be permitted to say that I feel much disappointment at the very slender results in the matter of supplying teachers, as yet produced by the model schools. I know of only one pupil from Paspébiac model (Cox) and one who for a short time was a pupil of Gaspé Village model, who have become teachers since these schools were opened. This is not in any way to the disparagement of the schools which are well taught and are doing good work. But it is a disappointment, inasmuch as there was good reason to expect that girls from the neighbouring municipalities, anxious to become teachers, would have gladly availed themselves of such excellent opportunities. The poverty of the parents of such young persons, appears to be the main obstacle. Board, both at the Basin and at Paspébiac, though not so expensive as in Montreal, is yet beyond their means.

The pupils actually attending the model schools, will, if allowed to remain long enough, become good scholars; but very few of them as yet approach the age at which they can present themselves for examination.

In the schools generally, I am glad to notice a marked improvement in *reading, penmanship, letter-writing, and scripture-history*. I may safely say that these subjects are better taught than they were a few years ago.

On the other hand I find little or no improvement in grammar.

Bullion has always been unpopular with the teachers; and to children of ten or twelve it is a mysterious book.

Lennie, in spite of many defects was much more useful, and much more easily understood by both teachers and pupils. A very short and simple hand-book, containing in an appendix or under special rules,

numerous examples for correction, of colloquial mistakes and common grammatical errors, would be the most useful sort of book for children who leave school at an early age, and who quickly forget a subject in which they have taken very little interest.

Geography, accompanied by map-drawing, is fairly taught in some schools. In others the rote system prevails in spite of repeated protests. Drawing is taught after a fashion, in all the schools; singing by ear is practised in those in which the teacher has a voice and some taste for music.

Arithmetic is not generally well taught.

In the smaller manuals, the examples under each rule are quite insufficient.

A book containing numerous examples with answers, to be used by the teachers alone, would, I think, prove of great advantage.

I notice with pleasure the fact that I have received no complaints from any of the teachers on the score of delayed payment of salary.

There is, however, one municipality where some of the teachers, receive, according to agreement, part of their salary in store-orders. As this is to be remedied at once, and I hope, finally, I shall not mention the name.

As I have, sir, from time to time, supplied you with special information, I trust it is unnecessary to enter into further particulars now.

I have the honour, &c.,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER.

School Inspector,

REV. W. G. LYSTER.

CAPE COVE, Gaspé, 15th. August, 1889.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit my report upon the condition of the schools in my district of inspection, for the year 1888-89.

I have already forwarded the usual statistics.

I regret to say that the difficulty experienced last year by commissioners in securing qualified teachers has not diminished. On the contrary it is felt more seriously than ever: and, as a consequence, a much too large proportion of young girls without diplomas have been placed in charge of schools. The fact is that though salaries are higher than they were, they are not yet sufficient to induce competent teachers to come here from other parts of the Province.

So far, the model schools have supplied this want to a very limited extent, while the reputed difficulty of the examination deters many young people who would probably have presented themselves, under the old regime. How this is to end, I do not see. It is well that teachers should undergo a searching examination: but the examination under the old "rules and regulations" was better than none: and the diploma though obtained, in many cases, much too easily, had a definite value.

At all events, teachers without diplomas were few and far between: there was no valid excuse for not passing the simple examination.

I have remarked that the model schools have not, so far, answered our expectations in the matter of training teachers; but for all that, there is no doubt that their influence has been beneficial and that the tone of the schools in those municipalities in which they—the model schools—have been established, has been decidedly improved. That they have been of immense advantage to the children attending them, is quite certain.

I may here remark, that to the best of my judgment, a model school would probably produce more satisfactory results in the neighboring municipality of Haldimand, than in Gaspé Village, where the attendance is small and chiefly of young children.

In Haldimand No 1—which is an excellent school, a large model class could be easily formed. Board is cheaper in the district than in Gaspé Village; and it is highly probable, that, in addition to a supply from the resident population, intending teachers would come from a distance.

Several intelligent persons capable of judging and not influenced by local prejudice, agree with me in this opinion.

I may observe that only the model schools, and Cox No 1 have as yet been graded. The teachers generally use the course of study, "*as far as they can*" and are more careful in this respect than they were some time ago; but they do not seem to be able to grade their schools just yet.

There is a little irregularity in some municipalities as to the division of the school year. It is felt, on this coast at least, that the months of July and August are just the two when children are least hindered by work and by bad weather: the heat is seldom a hindrance on the Gaspé coast.

Teachers from a distance, however, naturally wish for a long holiday during which they may visit their homes; hence some difficulty. There is little to add as to the condition of the schools; those in charge of competent teachers have improved; those in the hands of young and untrained girls have naturally made little or no progress.

There are two municipalities in which a good deal of special educational activity has been shown: the first is New Richmond which had seven schools open in June; a wonderful improvement upon the old condition of affairs.

The trustees, with Dr. Thornton as chairman and Mr. Taylor as secretary-treasurer, are very energetic and take much interest in their schools, visiting, giving prizes and in every way encouraging teachers and pupils.

In the model school a fine new set of maps has recently been secured through the exertions of Mr John Watson, manager; while in another school, No 1, Black Cape, new school-furniture of the best kind was purchased by private subscription about the time of my visit in June.

The other municipality to which I refer is Cox. Here, in spite of opposition and difficulty the model school with a large elementary division has been well taught by Miss Caulfield and her assistant; while the large graded school in New Carlisle has been kept in operation under two competent teachers, who, if they have not succeeded according to their expectations, have at all events deserved to do so.

The commissioners and their secretary, Mr Wm Sheppard, are zealous and energetic.

I have only to add that the secretary-treasurers with few exceptions perform their duties faithfully and that the teachers, to the best of my knowledge, have all been paid with punctuality.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

WILLIAM GORE Lyster,

School Inspector.

Rev. Mr. LYSTER.

CAPE-COVE, GASPÉ, August 8th, 1890.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit my report upon the condition of the Protestant schools of Gaspé and Bonaventure counties for the year 1889-90.

From the accompanying table of statistics, it will be seen that the number of children attending the schools is, in the aggregate, about the same as last year, although the schools of St. Godfroi, diss., Metapediac and Barachois, diss., have been closed, owing to the extreme difficulty of securing qualified teachers.

This is a pressing want which is being felt more and more.

The coast no longer provides a sufficient number of teachers for the elementary schools, and salaries are not large enough to induce them to come from a distance. Indeed, one has only to glance over the advertising columns of a Montreal paper, to perceive that the competition for the services of trained teachers, is at present, extremely active. In this competition, we are not likely to be successful. We must depend chiefly on the home supply; and though our model schools have not yet been very prolific, we have reason to hope for an early improvement in this respect. I think the opening of a model school in Haldimand is likely to prove advantageous.

There are many respectable families in the vicinity who will gladly take advantage of it; and, as board is cheap, young people living at a distance, who desire to secure scholastic training, will not be deterred by the expense.

I am glad to be able to speak in high term of the New-Richmond model school. Assisted by the energetic chairman, Dr. Thornton, I examined the pupils in winter, and again in June; and, on both occasions, we were much gratified by the general good answering. Nearly all the pupils in the model class are excellent scholars, and will be, in a short time, quite capable of passing the examination for the diploma.

A public examination of this school was held in July; and I have been informed that the exercises were of the most gratifying character. Many prizes, amongst them a silver watch, given by the chairman, were awarded to the best answerers.

Mrs. Delamotte, the head teacher, deserves much credit for having raised the school to its present satisfactory condition.

The model school in Paspébiac has also made progress, under Miss Murray, in the model, and Miss Cole, in the elementary department.

Both of these young ladies are, I think, excellent teachers; but they have remained for too short a time to produce permanent results. This perpetual shifting of teachers, is one of the most serious hindrances to real improvement.

The Gaspé village model school has not been ineffective; on the contrary, I noticed decided improvement when I examined it in winter. But the very small number of young people, in the model class,—only three on that occasion,—must have been very discouraging to the accomplished and pains-taking teacher, Miss Moss, who has since resigned.

Of the elementary schools, by far the largest is Cox, No. 1, with one hundred and seven pupils on the roll, I think some progress was made during the year; but the number of the children in the junior division was far too large for one teacher. The senior division answered fairly well last June; but the school was not on the whole satisfactory. Here also, the teachers who had been in charge for less than a year, have both resigned. I have called upon the commissioners to make certain necessary improvements and to build a new school-house in district No. 2, and they have promised compliance with my request.

1889-90 (ctd)

In Hamilton diss., I noticed decided improvement, especially in discipline: a much needed reform. The teacher here also, has resigned.

Of the elementary schools, in New Richmond, two were excellent. Not only was the answering good, but neat grounds and fences, and new furniture, all pointed in the direction of taste and progress.

The other schools were good, considering. In all: I noticed improvement.

Miss Thorton's prizes for needlework, given year after year, have proved a valuable incentive to the industry of the girls, some of whose work was extremely neat and good.

The commissioners deserve great credit for the spirited manner in which they manage their affairs. They have recently increased the teachers' salaries, and they seem determined to have good schools throughout their large municipality.

The Shoolbred schools do not seem to make much progress. It is, however, rather difficult to form a judgment: for the school visited this year, is nearly certain to be found closed at the time of my next visit.

Of Restigouche and Sellarville, the same remark may be made.

These schools, which are open only at intervals, cannot be very useful.

The frequent closing of such schools, with the changing of teachers from one district to another seems to be an unfortunate necessity in poor and scattered communities.

I have little to say about the Gaspé schools. They are in about the same condition as last year.

Nearly all them were visited by influenza, in winter and spring; and teachers and children were alike prostrated.

However, I may say confidently, that the commissioners and trustees, in nearly every municipality, are doing all that can be fairly expected to carry out the law.

The little school of Douglass, diss., supplies a decided want, and makes fair progress.

Haldimand, as usual, has two well attended schools; No. 1, under Miss Whinfield, who has since resigned, was very satisfactory.

York has two small schools kept constantly in operation.

In No. 1, under Miss Davis, shorthand has been so successfully taught, that a specimen, which I sent to Mr. Howard, of Cincinnati, editor of the "Phonographic Magazine," received high commendation for its exceptionally beautiful and correct execution.

It is not easy to class the municipalities as required; that is, if one is to take into account the difficulties arising from sparseness and poverty of population as well as from other causes. The difficulties are much more severely felt in some places than in others.

Making due allowances, therefore, I think I may safely say, that of the 25 municipalities in my district, 5 are excellent, 10 good, and 10 middling.

I have the honour, etc.,

W. G. Lyster,

School Inspector.

1891-92

REV. W. G. LYSTER.

CAPE-COVE, August 6th, 1892.

Sir

I have the honour to submit my report upon the condition of the schools in my district for the year 1891-92. I have already forwarded the usual statistics.

From the latter it will be seen that hardly any change has taken place as to numbers, since my last report. There is however one thing I mention with pleasure, viz: that I have at last succeeded in having all the schools graded and that the "course of study" is followed much more fully than heretofore, though in this respect there is still room for improvement.

The model schools have been in constant operation and with excellent results.

Haldimand model has improved greatly and has been well attended. Paspebiac model has done good work in the preparation of teachers: and New Richmond model, though not quite so well advanced as last year, having in the interim sent out a whole class of good scholars, was yet highly satisfactory, especially in the elementary division.

In this school there is the nucleus of an excellent library, for which the municipality is indebted chiefly to the liberality of Miss Thornton. Among the books already collected, is the new edition of "Chambers' Cyclopaedia" in ten vols. a most valuable and interesting dictionary of "universal information."

With such an ally, the intelligent teacher need never want either suggestion or subject-matter for the preparation of object lessons or instructive talks; or fail in stimulating the curiosity and interest of pupils.

It is my decided opinion that where such an expensive work as Chambers' cannot be secured, at least a small encyclopedia, such as one published by Cassell at three dollars, or the "dictionary of universal knowledge" now being published by the same Firm, ought to be found in every school.

Not only would the teacher find in such a work an extensive course of study and improvement for herself, but the more advanced pupils would speedily learn to look upon the book as an unerring oracle, ready to answer the most puzzling questions at a moment's notice.

Of the elementary schools, those of New Richmond continue to be the most satisfactory.

The commissioners have the knack not only of securing excellent teachers but of retaining their services for a long time. They fully understand the disadvantages arising from frequent changes.

Shoolbred had five schools in operation during the year, though only three were open at the time of my visit. These were fairly good.

The Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Jamieson having once been a teacher himself, understands school work, and keeps things in excellent order.

New Carlisle (Cox-No.1) was, as usual, well attended. Mr. F. Webb who taught here successfully some years ago, had resumed charge.

The junior division under Miss Fraser was in good order, but seemed too numerous for a single teacher.

The other Bonaventure schools have changed very little during the year.

Of the schools in the county of Gaspé there is little to say:

Cape Cove No 1; Gaspé village No 1; Gaspé south No 1; York 1 and 2, Haldimand 2, and Gaspé Bay north, were satisfactory. The last named especially, under Miss Margaret Suddard, had made good progress.

It is rather difficult to judge of progress in a school such as some of those last named, in which the normal attendance of twenty may be reduced for weeks at a time, by sickness, out-door work, or even by continued cold and stormy weather.

1891-92 (ctd)

I am sorry to say, the difficulty of securing good teachers continues to be much felt.

While salaries are higher than they used to be, many municipalities are certainly no richer: while in the meantime the government grant has been growing "small by degrees and beautifully less" so that at last it has almost disappeared in those small and weak municipalities where it is certainly most needed.

As regards the municipalities, I have to report, as last year, 5 excellent, 10 good and 10 middling.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER,

School Inspector.

1892-93

MR. W. G. LYSTER.

CAPE COVE, Gaspé, August 9, 1893.

Sir,—

I have the honour to forward the statistical reports from all the Protestant schools of the counties of Gaspé and Bonaventure, which have been in operation during the past year, and these I beg leave to supplement by a few remarks, although I can hardly be expected to make any new or original statement.

In fact there is hardly anything to be said about the schools, which I have not already said within the past few years.

The bulletins which I have had the honour to send to the Department from time to time have, I hope, already put you in possession of the principal facts connected with the state of education in these counties.

Some progress has certainly been made within the past few years.

Teachers are generally better trained than they were; they are also better paid. School-houses are more commodious and more suitable; and books and apparatus are more freely supplied than in former years.

In fact, there has been a general "levelling up," which, though hardly perceptible in one year or two, strikes one forcibly, when the state of the schools of even ten years ago is contrasted with their condition to-day.

When, however, we remember that the Protestant population of these counties remains almost stationary, or has in some places actually decreased, we can hardly expect the improvement that might reasonably be looked for in a district more favorably situated, and where the conditions of living are easier than they are on many parts of this coast.

I am glad to mention that in the municipality of Cox the commissioners exert themselves. They have recently erected a new building for the model school. This school, which is attended by about seventy pupils, is doing a very important work in training competent teachers. The head teacher and her assistant are very energetic and successful, and deserve great credit.

The New Carlisle school is the largest in my district, having one hundred pupils on the roll. The work accomplished, however, is not very satisfactory; for the teachers invariably leave at the end of a year, and these frequent changes do not conduce to improvement.

Another noteworthy municipality is New Richmond. To the zeal and efficiency of its school commissioners I have frequently had the honor to call attention. Their efforts have been rewarded by a greatly improved condition of educational affairs.

One model school with eighty pupils, and six elementary with one hundred and seventy, were inspected by me in June, and were, I think, in a more satisfactory state than ever before.

1892-93 (ctd)

The system of drafting advanced pupils from the elementary schools to the model is here carried out with great success, which is proved by the fact that already quite a number of well-trained teachers are doing credit to the last-named institution.

Owing to the causes already referred to, most of the other municipalities may be said only to "hold their own." I have no doubt there is some progress, such as I have indicated, but it is slow, and in one year hardly noticeable.

To the county of Gaspé the same remarks apply. In this county the schools are generally farther apart and are more thinly attended. The Protestant population is certainly smaller than it was, and in some municipalities the people seem to be as poor as ever.

Still, an occasional new school-house, as in Douglass, dis., and Gaspé village, district No. 2, and new (imported) school furniture, as in Cape Cove, dis., No. 1, testify to good will and sacrifices on the part of the people, in a cause which ought to be dear to all.

The model school of Haldimand is well taught, but is not yet so successful in supplying teachers as I once hoped it would be. Probably few parents can afford to send their children from a distance to be trained in this school.

I am glad to be able to report that no complaint on the score of irregular payment of salaries has been made by the teachers for a long time past.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER,
School Inspector.

1893-94

REV. MR. LYSTER.

CAPE COVE, GASPÉ, 29th August, 1894.

Sir,

Having already forwarded the usual statistics from all the Protestant municipalities in my district of inspection for the year ending 30th. June, 1894, I now have the honour to submit a brief report.

During the past year, the number of teachers without diplomas has been very small, owing to the fact that the model schools have furnished a sufficient supply of properly qualified teachers, who passed their examinations in July 1893: so that there has been no excuse for the employment of young persons who have not obtained the diploma.

Salaries are still far too low when one remembers all that is expected from a teacher. In fact, it is wonderful to reflect that for the small amount of one hundred and fifty dollars, a well-mannered and intelligent girl, with some training, and professedly capable of teaching quite a number of subjects, will devote ten months to the regulation and instruction of ingenuous youth. I regret to be unable to mention any striking improvement in most of the schools.

In the county of Gaspé, the number attending the schools has become very small, owing in part to emigration, and in part to the fact that the children of the younger generation, have not yet arrived at the age to take their places in the schools.

In Bonaventure, the case is different, and the numbers are rather in advance of those of former years.

The total number in the inspectorate is 1,231, with the very low average attendance of 697.

There are two municipalities specially worthy of notice, not only because they are the largest, but because the commissioners are more active and more interested in education than elsewhere — these are Cox and New Richmond.

In Cox, the admirable model school is producing excellent results.

It has earned so good a name, that quite a number of young people, from distant parts of the country, seek admission.

Miss Caulfield and her intelligent assistant Miss Howietson, work very hard and give general satisfaction. 14

The school in New Carlisle is very well taught by Mr. Geo. Gagnon and his assistant Miss Cooke.

I was glad to notice at my last visit, a marked improvement in many things, in this school.

As to New Richmond, I can only say that the energy and intelligent management of the school commissioners continue to produce the best results.

In June I inspected six schools which, with one exception, were in a highly satisfactory condition, giving a cheering promise of future excellence.

I consider that most of the other schools are just holding their own.

Teaching is slowly but surely improving; but irregular attendance, in sparsely settled districts, is a serious barrier to progress.

Where districts are weak, and the distances of children from the school-houses so great as they frequently are, it is very difficult to judge correctly as to the improvement we may fairly expect.

It is easy to find fault with teachers: but a girl, who perhaps for weeks together, in inclement Winter weather—in a time of bad roads, or during the prevalence of an epidemic, takes up her position in the school-room day after day, to teach half a dozen children in three grades, deserves some commiseration.

The school-rooms are for the most part much neater, not to say cleaner, than they used to be, and of late there has been some improvement in furniture.

The grounds are still too often untidy and ill-kept.

Two pleasing exceptions to this state of the grounds deserve to be recorded.

New Richmond No. 3 and Gaspé Village No. 2 have grounds as trimly kept as a garden; and the children who have laid out the flower-beds and gravel-walks are certainly gaining some culture, and are deriving permanent benefit from these surroundings.

I must not conclude without some reference to a very successful "Institute" which was held at New Richmond, in school-house No. 3, early in July.

This was the first "Institute" ever held in this part of the country, and, of course, it was more or less an experiment.

The results, I think, were extremely satisfactory, everything considered.

The accomplished lecturers, who, for four days, instructed the assembled teachers, from the first commanded the close attention of their audience, and left upon many minds a vivid, and, let us hope, indelible impression, as to the interest that can be imparted to a lesson in such well-worn subjects as geography, grammar, or even arithmetic.

How such a lesson may be raised from the dead level of a monotonous and oft-told tale, and rendered new, stimulating and thought-producing, was amply and successfully illustrated.

I have no hesitation in saying that the teachers derived more benefit from the instructions received in those few days than they would from the perusal of educational works for a year; while there is no doubt that many were set thinking who will not rest satisfied without further study and enquiry.

The Bonaventure teachers, with few exceptions, attended the Institute. Many of them came from a considerable distance by the B. C. R. R. which fortunately was running at the time.

I need hardly say, the visitors were kindly received and most hospitably entertained by Dr. Thornton and other good people of New Richmond.

I am sorry to say, not one of the Gaspé teachers put in an appearance. Some were deterred by the length and expense of the voyage; some by a natural dislike for boarding a steamer from a boat in an open roadstead.

The railway made all the difference. When we have a railway in Gaspé, teachers will be ready and willing to attend an Institute. But alas! between Grand River and the Basin, there is only one wharf, in a distance of fifty miles, and there is not as yet a bridge across one of our Gaspé rivers.

Who shall blame us for being a little backward and unprogressive!

I have the honour to be, etc.,

WILLIAM GORE Lyster,

School Inspector. /32

1894-95

Mr. W. G. LYSTER.

CAPE COVE, GASPÉ, 6th August, 1895.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit a brief report upon the condition of the schools within my district of inspection, for the year 1894-95.

I may at once say, there is no remarkable change of any kind to record; the number of schools in operation, and the number of children attending them, remain about the same as last year.

I may mention a few schools in which decided improvement was manifested.

County Bonaventure—Paspebiac model, 88 pupils on roll. Average 65, 2 teachers. A most satisfactory school in both departments. Good schoolhouse, excellent furniture. Maps needed.

New Carlisle—Roll 110, average 72. 2 teachers. A good school. Marked improvement in senior division; junior too numerous for one teacher.

St-Godfroi, diss—Roll 68, average 45. An excellent school. Map-drawing a specialty.

Paspebiac, diss—Roll 50, average 25. Much improved under a new and energetic teacher.

New Richmond No. 2—Roll 37, average 25. This school was formerly amongst the most backward, but is now well advanced.

New Richmond, No. 3—Roll 40, average 24; writing excellent; general answering very creditable.

New Richmond, No. 1—Roll 43, average 28; fairly good; but owing to certain changes, not quite up to former mark. The juniors have improved; but many of the better scholars of last year have recently left.

Miss Gadd, who bears a well-deserved reputation as a successful teacher, has resigned.

New Richmond, 4 B.—Roll 19, average 16. A school in which great improvement has taken place; answering in Scripture very good indeed.

Miss Pidgeon, though young, is an excellent teacher.

Shoolbred, No. 3—Roll 18, average 10. A small but well taught school in which decided progress has been made during the year.

In Ristigouche, Sellarville and Metapedia, the schools are not of an advanced character. They are too frequently closed. Until each district can have its own school open during the whole year, a condition of things seldom arrived at in these municipalities, we cannot expect satisfactory schools.

Gaspé—Most of the Gaspé schools are kept open during the whole year; and therefore, if they are not actually brilliant, they at least shew steady work, and one can depend upon them.

Cape Cove, D., No. 1—Roll 24, average 20. Better than for many years past.

A teacher with model diploma, attracted some young people who would not have attended an elementary teacher, and satisfactory progress was made.

A class in Botany was very successful, and some of the children acquired a taste for that most interesting science.

Percé, Diss., No. 2—Roll 22, average 16. Very much better than I ever found it before.

This school is closed too frequently. The ratepayers, by making a little exertion, could easily keep it open year after year.

Haldimand, Model—Roll 43, average 30. An excellent school under a very energetic and successful teacher.

No. 2—Roll 26, average 21. Also a good school; much improved of late.

Basin, 1 and 2—Both schools in constant operation and doing all that can reasonably be expected.

Gaspé South—Roll 30, average 25. Better than last year.

There is no need, I think, to refer specially to the other Gaspé schools.

For the most part the trustees are interested; the school laws observed, and assessments and fees are collected without much of the friction of former years.

1894-95 (ctd)

No doubt, as population increases, a consummation to be hoped for, now that emigration to the United States has ceased, our schools will be more numerously attended and will be more satisfactory.

I am glad to observe that I have been much struck of late years with the steady improvement that has taken place in the manners of the children attending our schools.

Even in the most secluded districts their gentle and quiet demeanor is noticeable.

The gentlemen who recently held an "Institute" at New Carlisle were impressed by the refinement and intelligence of the teachers, who followed, with the greatest interest, the lectures given upon various scholastic subjects, and who, I am sure, derived great benefit from the lucid and suggestive expositions of Dr. Robins and Mr. Parmelee.

The improvement of the teachers, means the improvement of the pupils.

It may be a trite remark, but I have often noticed, that the good teacher, and only the good teacher, makes a good school.

As changes are about to be made in elementary school-books, I beg leave to express my opinion, with some diffidence however, as to text-books connected with the teaching of three subjects.

1st The Bible.—I think a brief historical epitome of both the Old and New Testaments, based, let us say, on the "Helps" in the "Teacher's Bible"—Queen's Printers' edition—would be of great assistance. I don't think that the Bible is likely to be taught usefully, without some such guide.

2nd English Grammar.—I consider that a very short and simple grammar, an improved "Lennie" in fact, is a desideratum.

Nearly all the text-books seem to me to be too difficult and to enter into minutiae which are only a source of perplexity to children of ten or twelve.

3. I should very much like to see in every school a simple but correct introduction to science: something to explain phenomena which perpetually surround and influence us, but of which very few learn to give a rational account.

The "Science Primer of Physical Geography" by Professor Geikie, Macmillan & Co., London, 1s, would be very useful. Aided by such a book, the teacher would find matter for object lessons of the most interesting kind, in the brook running past the school-house, the gravel-pit beside the road, the boulder-stone on the hill side, the snow, the ice, and the rain, and the countless pages which Nature is ever unfolding, for those who have learnt to read even a few lines in her book of wonders.

Such lessons make children observe and think. How defective is the education which does not enable us to do both!

I have the honour to be, etc.,

WILLIAM GORE Lyster, B. A.,

School Inspector.

1895-96

REV. W. G. Lyster.

CAPE COVE, Gaspé, Aug. 26th, 1896.

SIR.—

I have the honor to forward the usual statistics and my report for the year 1895-96.

As the condition of the schools has not changed materially during the year, it is unnecessary to repeat the remarks offered in my last report, in which I mentioned a good many municipalities and schools separately.

During the past year three model schools have been in operation, with an aggregate attendance of 179 pupils and an average of 131.

Within the same period, 44 elementary schools have been open, with 1088 names enrolled, and an average attendance of 755.

The total number of pupils, then, who received instruction during the year is 1267, with an average attendance of 886.

1895-96 (ctd)

It is satisfactory to be able to report that of the 50 teachers employed, only 2 were without a diploma.

The average salary of the teachers in the model schools was \$238, and of the elementary teachers \$154.

I have given some thought and care to the classification of the municipalities, but with every wish to be lenient, I am unable to say that they are all as good as they ought to be.

A too frequent change of teachers, and a low average attendance—the latter unavoidable in some districts—contribute to retard the progress of the schools.

Of the 25 municipalities now reported upon, I consider that 6 are excellent, 10 good, 7 middling and 2 bad.

I have from time to time sent in bulletins of inspection showing the condition of the schools and the progress—where there was any—of the pupils.

I have the honor to be, etc.

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER.

School Inspector.

1896-97

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER.

CAPE COVE, GASPÉ, Aug. 25th, 1897.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward the usual statistics for the year 1896-97.

There is little to report as to change or progress. On the whole the schools within my district are in a fairly satisfactory condition and are doing useful work.

The teachers, with two exceptions, hold diplomas, and, so far as I have been able to judge, perform their duties honestly and well.

I have heard a few complaints from teachers as to the dilatory manner in which their salaries have been paid; but the past has been an exceptionally poor year on the coast of Gaspé; and secretary-treasurers have assured me that never before had they experienced so much difficulty in collecting assessments.

On the Gaspé coast especially, the reduced price of cod-fish threatens a serious diminution in the means of those persons engaged in the fishery and, of course, a corresponding difficulty in the collection of the school tax.

It is to be hoped that this state of things will be only temporary.

One of the principle obstacles to improvement in the schools is the low average attendance to which I have, more than once, directed attention.

How to remedy this, is a question not easily answered.

The distance of many pupils from the schoolhouses; the inclemency of our winters; and the too frequent outbreaks of such epidemics as measles and diphtheria,—all contribute to a low average attendance.

But apart from these sufficient and mostly unavoidable causes, there are others, which, I think, might be brought within the range of law, and which might be checked, if not removed, by certain regulations.

It is certain that attendance is most regular in those districts in which the majority of the parents, having themselves some education, are anxious that their children should not grow up in ignorance.

In such districts, the children who live at a distance are frequently, if not regularly, driven to and from school. In those schools I have frequently found pupils who had not missed more than a day or two in the course of the half year.

1896-97 (ctd)

The parents were anxious, and the children equally so, that not a day should be lost.

In other districts again, not so happily circumstanced, in which the parents are careless and set little value on education, the children are too often kept at home for trivial reasons; and in bad weather no attempt is made to assist them in reaching the school-house.

The result is, no real improvement is ever made in such schools.

The teachers become disheartened and sometimes careless; and when the Inspector remarks upon the special ignorance of some of the pupils, he is shown by the register that these children have probably not attended for five days in the course of a month.

Can nothing be done to remedy this evil?

Would it not be possible to introduce a modified compulsory law: to fix the minimum number of days during which a pupil *must*, unless hindered by sickness or storm, attend the school?

Or, would it be preferable that a small bonus should be given to all children whose attendance exceeded a certain number of days?

This is merely a suggestion; but those gentlemen whose educational knowledge and experience are more extensive and more accurate than mine, may see, in some modification of the idea, a chance of removing a very real barrier to progress.

During the past year 3 model and 41 elementary schools have been in operation.

The total number of pupils was 1,213, and the average attendance 784.

The average salaries in model schools was \$234, and in elementary schools \$154.

I have from time to time sent in the usual bulletins of inspection.

I have the honour to be Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER.

1897-98

REV. WILLIAM GORE LYSTER, B.A.

Sir,—

I have the honor to report briefly upon the condition of the schools in my district for the year 1897-8.

I may say at once that hardly any change of consequence has taken place during the past year. In fact the remarks in my last report are perfectly applicable to the present state of scholastic affairs.

I regret to say that the people on the coast of Gaspé are rather poorer than they have been for a long time; there has been no improvement in the fish-markets, and consequently the fishermen's earnings are much diminished. This, of course, reacts injuriously upon the collection of school funds, and Secretary-Treasurers have in several instances, experienced considerable difficulty. Only one or two teachers, however, have made any complaint as to the dilatory payment of their salaries, and I have every reason to believe that the delay from which they suffered was unavoidable, and that the cause of complaint was removed as soon as possible.

Within my district I have found only one teacher without a diploma; a remarkable improvement in this respect, upon the state of affairs which prevailed in former years.

One new schoolhouse, No. 1 St. Godefroi Diss., has been built. The building has been erected according to an approved plan, but is, I fear, too small for the requirements of a thickly inhabited district.

1897-98 (ctd)

The three model schools have been in successful operation and have given much satisfaction. Their utility is no longer doubted, even by people who were formerly much opposed to their establishment.

On the whole, I consider that the schools which have been kept open for the full scholastic year have done excellent work and have been more satisfactory than they were, even a few years ago. Those schools, of course, which are in operation only at considerable intervals, cannot be expected to show improvement.

There are two subjects which are not generally well taught; they are English Grammar and drawing. The latter cannot be well taught except by teachers who have some artistic taste, and have themselves been properly instructed.

The introduction of vertical writing has brought about a decided improvement in that branch.

I think the new regulation requiring teachers to undergo a course of training in the McGill Normal school, is likely to prove beneficial. It will probably diminish the number of applicants for the diplomas, but it will provide a supply of teachers who will have received careful training, and who will in a word, know their business.

The bonus presented to certain teachers in January last was very gratefully received. It was valued as a recognition of successful work, faithfully and cheerfully performed, in some instances, during many years, and often in the face of discomforts and difficulties.

I am glad to observe that parents generally are setting a higher value on the teachers than used to be their wont, and I am bound to say the teachers quite deserve this increased appreciation. These young women are, as a rule, above reproach, and most of them are fond of their very important work, while some are even devoted to it. I have no doubt that increased opportunities of instruction and culture, will greatly improve their efficiency.

With this short statement I beg leave to submit the usual statistics, and I have the honor to remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM GORE LYSTER, B.A.,

Cape Cove, Gaspé, September 14th, 1898.

School Inspector.

1898-99

REV. WILLIAM GORE LYSTER, B.A.

CAPE COVE, GASPÉ, Sept., 13th, 1899.

SIR,

I have the honor to submit a brief report for the year ending June 30th, 1899.

The schools were, for the most part, found to be in a fairly satisfactory condition; the teachers, with few exceptions, were punctually paid: only two were without diplomas.

In the County of Gaspé, the schools most worthy of commendation are,—(1) Gaspé Village, both schools; No 1 especially being highly creditable. (2) Hal-dimand, model: an excellent school. Cape Cove No 1, good. The other schools were doing good work, but their condition does not require special mention.

In the County of Bonaventure, I found (1) St Godfroi Diss. No 1, very good, (2) model school, Paspébiac, and Cox No 1, both excellent schools, with a large number of pupils enrolled. (3) New Richmond. The model and Nos. 1, 2 and 3 elementary, were all in a satisfactory condition and gave evidence of progress. (4) Mann Diss. is a creditable school, carefully looked after by the trustees, and giving satisfaction. The schools in the upper part of the county were mostly closed at the time of my visit in June. These schools can never prove useful until they are kept open during the entire school year. It afforded me much pleasure to distribute the bonus among six very deserving teachers who have been stimulated and encouraged by this recognition of their faithful services

1898-99 (ctd)

And now, Sir, when I look back upon the twenty-five years during which I have inspected these schools, I feel sadly conscious that improvement has been very slow, and has by no means kept pace with the anticipations in which I indulged, when I first undertook the work. Mine, however, is no unusual experience. That there has been very decided progress, I feel quite certain.

(1) As to the character of the school-houses. At least thirty of these are comparatively new and suitable buildings, which have replaced old school-houses which had become unfit for use. The furniture and school requisites, though still in many cases imperfect, are generally much better than they used to be.

(2) As to the character of the teachers. These are far better trained, and better instructed than they ever were before. But in spite of this, they have their special limitations. Many of them run smoothly in the scholastic groove, but out of that they know very little. In a word, their general knowledge is inadequate. From want of such knowledge, geography, history and object lessons too often fail to be interesting. I hope the time is not far distant when every teacher will possess not only exact elementary knowledge of some science—let us say botany—but also from her own reading, will have acquired more general knowledge than is common at present.

(3) The three model schools, established within the period named, have proved of very great utility, and have given a tone to education in both counties which can hardly be over-estimated.

(4) I notice with pleasure another improvement. The pupils are generally much less noisy and rough than they used to be. The refining influence of gentle and well-conducted teachers has not failed to make itself felt. I have, for several years past, rarely noticed an instance of noise or misconduct of any kind during my visits of inspection.

I regret to say the school population of my district is little, if at all, larger to day than it was twenty-five years ago. A steady drain to parts of Canada and the United States, where employment during the long winter can be obtained, has been going on all the time.

In 1887, the number of pupils enrolled was 1240, with average attendance 854. In 1899,—1251, with average attendance 880. That, under these circumstances, there has been marked progress in education, is, I think, something to encourage us.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM-GORE LYSTER,

School Inspector.

A CAREER ENDS

With his report of September, 1899, the Rev. William Gore Lyster ended twenty-five years of devoted service as Inspector of the Protestant Schools of the Counties of Bonaventure and Gaspé. Those long years of difficult travel over the district extending from Gaspé Bay to the Restigouche had taken their toll of his health and energy. To Gaspeians of that period from his appointment in 1873 until his resignation as School Inspector in 1899, he was a familiar and respected

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visitor in their communities and schools. Great indeed was the debt of Gaspesia to him for his consistent encouragement of sound education. It is to be regretted that no school, scholastic award, scholarship, or other educational memorial bears his name.

One measure of the work-load that Inspector Lyster had for many years is evident in the arrangements made to replace him. This is reflected in the following official notice:

"His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased by Order-in-Council dated September 12, 1900, to appoint the Rev. John Macrae Sutherland of New Carlisle, School Inspector for the new District of Gaspé, comprising the County of Bonaventure less the Townships of Cox, Hope, and Port Daniel and the Rev. Isaac Newton Kerr of Shigawake also School Inspector for that part of the District of Gaspé comprising the County of Gaspé and the Townships of Cox, hope and Port Daniel in the County of Bonaventure".

VALEDICTION

On Friday, January 17th., 1902 the Rev. Lyster, feeling in unusually good health, drove from his home in Cape Cove to Gaspé Basin on a visit to his friend, Dr. William Wakeham. The following morning, as he was on the point of stepping into a sleigh to pay a visit to another friend, the Rev. Richmond, Rector of Gaspé, he was taken suddenly ill. Two doctors were with him immediately but the remedies used were of no avail. He declared himself to be stricken for death and proceeded to make his Will and telegraphed to Cape Cove for his son, Ralph.

After receiving Holy Communion on Monday from the Rev. Richmond he gave his son his last instructions early on Tuesday morning and sent him back to prepare Mrs. Lyster for the bereavement then evidently close at Hand. By mid-morning he was dead. When the tidings that he was gone ran along the coast of Gaspesia, all men and women mourned his loss.