System, again, illustrates strikingly the difficulties lying in the path of the modern legislator. Last year Dr. Ryerson, our wise and wary Chief Superintendent, made the tour of the country, for the express purpose of eliciting the views of the teachers, trustees, county boards and councils, and others having most to do with the working of the school system, preparatory to the introduction of a revised measure. The merits and demerits of the present system, were fully discussed, and the learned Superintendent and "astute politician," as he has been styled in Parliament, struck, I presume, a balance of the conflicting opinions and sent up his mission for the adoption of our one house of legislators. But alas, like his fabled predecessor who tried to please everybody, though whether for the same, or an opposite reason, I know not, he pleased nobody and lost his hobby into the bargain. The appearance of the poor animal in the legislative halls, though introduced by a member of the government, was the signal for such a series of merciless onslaughts as left the palfrey so cropped and mutilated and generally disfigured that both master and groom refused to recognize or own him; and he was turned unceremoniously adrift. We wait with interest to see whether the substitute of this season proves more successful, or whether it too is doomed to perish in the "slaughter of the innocents" at the close of the session. The points and details at issue are far too numerous to be presented in the columns of the *Messenger*, as they involve important principles.

The mode of examining and licencing teachers is one fruitful source of difference and difficulty. Under the present law a licence may be obtained in one of two ways. First. There are County Boards of Examiners who give County licences. Second. There are Normal School Certificates which are equivalent to provincial licences. Either from prejudice or for some better reason, Normal School teachers are preferred in the great majority of cases, as is very frequently said in advertisements for teachers. This is complained of by those who suffer in consequence. The question, as now warmly discussed, lies at the very base of the Normal School System. The main arguments in favour of that system are too well known to need repetition. Its opponents contend strongly that in multitudes of cases, the balance of education, of experience and of teaching ability inclines heavily to the side of the teacher who has not attended the Normal School, and that the very existence of such an institution, with a certain degree of *prestige* attaching to its certificate, is an injustice to such teachers and an injury to the cause of education. Nor are the arguments adduced destitute of much force and point against Normal Schools as here, and in most other places I fancy, conducted. But a fraction of time, is, I believe, generally devoted to the theory, or the practice of *teaching*. Most of the term or terms of attendance, is given to the study, simply, of ordinary branches of learning which are taught, and, it is claimed, taught much better elsewhere, and then the examination for licences, turns largely upon knowledge of those branches, *as thus taught*. On the other hand, it is said, the County Boards are often composed of men of the first class qualifications, and, that the examinations are frequently of such a nature as would leave many an A 1, Normal School man, sadly difficient of plumage. His latter statement from what I know of such Boards and their examinations I do not think improbable. However, here is one of our practical Educational problems demanding solution.

The principle of *compulsory attendance* at school, is another, and, I think, still weightier one which is yet *sub judice* in Ontario. While some deem the right of the State to enforce attendance indisputable and its exercise essential to the best interests of the country, others hold up their hands in horror at the bare proposal, and denounce it as an attempt at the grossest interference with the liberty of the British subject, as subversive of the first principles of *Magna Charta* itself. I shall not trouble you with details of the controversy but will try to notify you of the issue.

I had intended to give some particulars of another educational question, of much importance, and the discussion of which is being commenced by Baptists, but this letter is too long already, and I must reserve the *University* matter for a subsequent one.

J. E. W.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., January 18th, 1871.

THE DOOMED CITY.

Twelve months ago if one had prophesied that Paris with her two millions of inhabitants would now be shut up, and devoted to destruction he would have been regarded as a madman, or laughed at as a fool. The more we learn of the true state of things, however, amongst its people, the more evident it becomes that the present state and prospects of the city are as a judgment from heaven, and that God intends by this example to teach the world that He still reigns; and, as in ancient times, will appear and apply the rod of his correction. The fact of the Prussian arms being crowned with victory after victory is no proof of their being specially favored of Heaven, any more than were those nations of old which were frequently used by the Almighty to correct rebellious countries and wicked cities.

The opinions copied from a contemporary on our first page are more than confirmed by the facts which are being daily brought to light. There seems no disposition on the part of the Prussians as a people to assume an attitude of humility before God, or to give up the frivolities and vices which have so enfeebled the inhabitants of that city. On the other hand there seems only a determination on their part to sink into lower and still lower depths of degradation and infamy.

The universal desecration of the Lord's Day is well known; this with the wide-spread infidelity seem to have undermined the whole fabric of society, and nurtured the vices to which the people generally are addicted. The misfortunes of the last few months, and especially the semblance of popular government that has existed of late, seem to have given greater license than ever, to the prevailing looseness of morals and depravity among the people.

The destruction which is in progress seems to be intended as a beginning of what may possibly result in the entire destruction of the most spendid city in the world. A few extracts from the letter of "Keynote" in the N. Y. *Examiner* will corroborate these opinion:—

"The ignorance of the French is proverbial, but I had no idea of its prevalence or profundity. The lowest class cannot read, the highest class will not read, and the intermediate class do not want to read. All classes prefer a boozy lounge, or a silly chat, or a lascivious dawdle, to reading or reflection. There is no well-read or well-informed class in this country. A more ignorant people, taken as a whole, are not to be found in Christendom."

"Nothing in the way of literature could be more nauseous and disgusting than the common reading of France. It furnishes another point of resemblance between the present situation here, and that which we read of when we read of a decline and fall of ancient nations—monarchical and republican. As I stroll thoughtfully along the Boulevards or browse among the bookshops, I am constantly reminded of what I thought and what I saw among the ruins of Pompeii. Now as then, here as there, material splendor and vicious indulgence flourished side by side. But here the latter has been driven into concealment by the iron hand of power. The hideous monster, which the corrupt Second Empire compelled to observe a certain amount of reticence and retirement, is now stalking abroad under and literally fattening upon the "liberty, equality and fraternity" of the new Republican regime.

The most obscenely gross and grossly obscene books are exposed upon the Boulevards for sale, and cried by young women and little children on the streets. I may not even give the titles of these atrocious publications, but they cannot be left witout mention by any one who cares to be a faithful chronicler of this crisis and its causes. And I will say that in the concoction of some of these caricatures and pamphlets the author has descended to the very lowest depth of loathsome indecency. I have seen caricatures to-day which I am sure would not be tolerated on the streets of Turkey or Hindostan. In the smuttiest shop windows of the most unfrequented streets of the most licentious cities of Italy or Spain, you will see nothing so villainously filthy as the caricature I saw one hour ago, dealt out to merry purchasers on the Boulevard by an equally merry young woman of about 18 years, and of a pretty and unblushing face. I am determined to believe that English-speaking Christendom could not furnish even the street strumpet who could hand such a thing to a man, without a recoil of nature or a change of countenance.

And this is not an exceptional spectacle. It is to be seen anywhere any day, everywhere every day."

"The theatres are open and packed. Crowded galleries resound with hilarity over the farces on the boards. Sunday is the great day for them. The atmosphere is poisonous with unmanliness. I have said it from Sedan down—they are all given over to the incantation of some supernatural agency. It is doom, fate, Providence. The infectious air steals away the brain, weakens the knees, softens the vertebra, confounds the counsels, bewilders the judgment, and palsies tongue and pen and sword. Babylon is Babel as well. Nothing succeeds, nobody confides in anybody, a paralysis is upon everybody. Read Jules Favre on the armistice. Mere dawdling and whining from the shaggy old brave who used to rouse the Assembly and shake the throne with the thunder of his courageous oratory. He has said nothing, written nothing, done nothing worthy of himself on the occasion. He has been utterly unequal to the opportunity. What is the matter with him? He is under the spell that France is under. As for the rest—in fact as to all of them—they are simply bobbing up and down on the tumultuous billows. Their heads look like apples, or nutmegs rather, on mid-Atlantic in a storm. The accomplished Trochu, the resolute Ducrot, the veteran Vinoy, and the rest decorated in Italy, in Algeria, and in the Crimea—what is the matter with them and their 500,000 well equipped, well drilled, well fed, well artilleried troops? The only charitable answer is Doom. The hour has struck."

"In 1848, about a month before the Revolution, De Tocqueville said, in the Assembly; "Public morality is in a state of degradation which will shortly, perhaps almost immediately, hurry us into new revolutions." The prophecy was fulfilled. To make it now is to see it fulfilled again.

Can Republicanism survive where there is not a certain degree of public intelligence, a certain amount of public virtue, and a certain measure of self-reliance? The masses in her have none of these. They have no confidence in one another, and have less to fear from a ruler of their own choice, than from themselves in the experiment of ruling themselves. The worst ruler France can have is "France." In the United States and in Great Britain every man stands upon his own two solid legs; here every man leans against some other man, and all have an incredicable disposition to lean against some one man! Self-reliance is indispensable to self-government."

This then may be taken as the full development of the religious opinions of the great mass of the people of that city. When a man can transfer his religious responsibilities to the priesthood, for a consideration, he becomes enslaved in mind, and loses his self-respect; and finding he may obtain absolution from a fellow mortal he is left in subjection to his lower propensities, and the influences of his own evil nature.

The remarks of our Ontario Correspondent respecting the giving of licences to Teachers in that province shews how many difficulties surround the subject. Any system to be just to all must be impartial, and the classification must be according to qualifications and ability.

Some of the teachers to be examined would naturally wish for a relaxing of the demands in the examinations, but it could hardly be supposed that they should be the proper judges of what tests should be applied to them for this purpose. Notwithstanding the difficulties of teachers' examinations, the late Superintendent of Education in this Province had pretty effectually grappled with it, and the system we have, if faithfully administered, is, we believe, about as free from any chance of partiality as possible. Let Ontario take a leaf from our Nova Scotia book, and we think it would meet several of the difficulties they are experiencing.

We learn from the *Visitor* that the Rev. Mr. Balcom arrived in St. John on the 7th Inst., in prosecuting his agency for Acadia College. He passed on to Fredericton. We hope to hear a good report of our St. John brethren.

"TEACHING AND INSPECTION."

Education in the publte schools of Nova Scotia is a matter in which all the people of the province are interested, and whatever is propounded calculated to give a more intelligent view with regard to what our school system should be, possesses special interest for our readers. Under this impression we feel that no apology is needed for the space given below to extracts from the address recently delivered on the above subject by T. H. Rand, Esq., late Superintendent of Education, befor the Educational Association at Pictou. After the years of experience Mr. R. has had, together with such fine opportunities bf observation and enquiry on the subject, he has recently, enjoyed in the mother country, his opinions are entitled to consideration and respect.

We quote from the report published in the *Citizen*. The views advocated are of great interest, and the whole subject is dealt with so simply and clearly that the suggestious are worthy ot permanent record. There can scarcely be a doubt that progress in educational affairs must lie in the direction set forth by Mr. Rand.

"How may we reasonable hope to secure the largest amount of good teaching throughout the Province? I answer, by the adoption of such measures, possible for us, as are calculated to bind the whole brotherhood and sisterhood of teachers together in a recognized profession. Nothing short of this can ever meet the case. On a former occasion, I indeavored to shew that the business of teaching could fairly be held to meet the conditions demanded of other professions, though differing, of necessity in some of its aspects, from them all. Let me now specify the conditions which, in my opinion are absolutely essential to its actual assumption of such a character:

1. None but persons who prove themselves qualified, in a fixed degree, must be permitted to receive public sanction to engage in the business of teaching.
2. Teaching must afford such pecuniary reward as will induce qualified persons to make it their business for life.

These two conditions are fundamental. Every man who thinks for a moment on the subject must see them as truisms. But you ask how are these fundamental conditions to be secured? This is the educational problem which presses for a wise and adequate solution, if our schools are to *educate* our children. I am deeply sensible of the grave considerations involved in any answer that may be given; but of this I am certain; unless an answer is found, an answer that shall ring out clear and strong above the din of all merely personal interests and the clamor of faction and party, we cannot hope to retain in our schools men and women whose services are more precious than gold, and whose labors have so largely contribute to place Nova Scotia in an enviable position among the educating countries of the world. Their places will be occupied by persons of inferior qualifications, and our retrogression will be sufficiently rapid to be marked by every competent and attentive observer.

In reference to securing the first condition, there ought not to exist any great difficulty. It is certainly possible to ascertain with sufficient accuracy whether the attainments of any applicant for authority to practice in any recognized department of the profession, are such as to warrant, without injustice to any, the issue of that authority, in accordance with established principles applicable alike to all. A *Common Authority* must guard the door of admission to the profession, and the character of this common authority and the uniformity and impartiality of the principles and methods operative under its control, must be such as to preclude all suspicion of favoritism, and command in all respects the confidence of the public."

Respecting the recent Minute of Council by which persons holding licenses from any institution for the training of teachers within the Empire, may assume the office of teacher without examination, Mr. Rand shews that the Province has dealt unjustly by its own institutions.

"The Normal School of Nova Scotia alone of all the training institutions in the British Empire, is excluded from giving certificates to its students that can be exchanged for licenses authorizing the holders to teach in our public schools, and entitling them to draw a fixed amount from the public funds of the country.

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By the deliberate decision of the Legislature, the Province determined *in the interest of education*, that although our own Normal School at Truro, by the high qualification of its instructors and their practical acquaintance with our schools, was the best qualified of all kindred institutions in the Empire to grant certificates to our teachers, the officers of that institution should not have the power of classifying teachers and giving them a lien upon the treasury. And now, still recognizing and maintaining this feature of the law, we by an Order of Council practically confer on every other kindred institution, no matter how indifferent or obscure, the very power which a due regard for the welfare of our school system has caused us to withdraw from a Normal School created, supported, and controlled by the people of Nova Scotia. Surely, surely, the framers of such an order must have acted without due reflection. Such contradictions forcibly illustrate the necessity of a strict and systematic adherence to the simple provisions authorized by the law. The recent Minute of Council, by its glaring departure from the law, has made it sufficiently clear to all intelligent men, that we have upon the Statute Book an enactment which fairly provides every means necessary to secure the first condition on which it is possible for the business of teaching to assume and maintain the position of a profession in this Province. It only remains for those who are commissioned to administer the enactment, to do so without fear, favour, or affection. Any failure in this matter must be met with an earnest and uncompromising demand for the immediate recognition by those in authority of the transcendent importance of maintaining intact the sole condition on which any person can lawfully receive admission as a teacher in the public schools.

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"Let me now say a few words respecting the means calculated to secure the other condition to which I have referred, viz.: that teaching must offer such pecuniary rewards as shall induce qualified persons to make it their business for life. I shall not say anything directly, respecting the obligations resting upon the local communities in this matter. These obligations are very great, and must be assumed before we shall have qualified persons making teaching their life-work. I believe that these obligations will be acknowledged and discharged very much in accordance with the estimate which the Legislature of the country sets upon the *quality* of work performed in our schools. This estimate can find effective expression only in the measures adopted by the Province to insure to the people that the character of each teacher's work shall be adequately tested, and, as far as the Province is able, acknowledged by the granting or withholding of additional rewards.—Granted such were done by the Province, the local communities would thus be continuously and eloquently appealed to by the very importance of the position assigned the business of teaching. It is the duty of the Province to lead in this matter, and with solicitude to foster an ever-broadening educational interest in the minds of the people. I shall therefore, confine my remarks on the point under consideration, to the character of the legislative provision which, it seems to me, would go far to meet the case. For several years past, I called the attention of the Legislature to the fact that we were rapidly reaching a stage in our educational history, when the work of inspection should be confined more exclusively to the quality of the work done in the schools. In harmony with this view the Legislature a year ago empowered the Council of Public Instruction to aggregate, as the general interests of education would permit, the districts of the Province into divisions, each of a size sufficient to employ the whole time of a qualified man. I understand that no steps have yet been taken in the exercise of this authority. The work already performed by the Inspectors has been of incalculable service to education. In fact, we could never have reached our present position without them. But I believe the best Inspectors now in the field will all agree in saying that the time is drawing very near, has, in truth, in some Counties, already come, when the higher and specific duties of inspection should begin to tell more powerfully on our schools. I am equally confident that our most experienced and thoughtful teachers are of the same mind, and will hail with satisfaction any measures carefully adapted to test far more effectively than is now possible, the quality of the instruction imparted in the schools. I am not less certain that the public would lend its powerful sanction to every means necessary to prevent the schools from lapsing into an inferior condition. Rest assured, as "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance," the price of efficiency in the schools is adequate inspection. In furtherance of these views, I suggest that the system of Legislative Grants be two fold:

1. A personal grant, according to the Teacher's attainments determined by a uniform and impartial system of examination already provided by law.
2. A special payment for quality of teaching, as determined by specific tests applied by competent Inspectors.

The first is already secured by law. Let me speak to the second. I would group all school subjects under two heads,—*Obligatory* and *Optional*. The obligatory subjects would be (say) such as reading, explanation and subject matter of lesson book, spelling, writing, arithmetic, geography, and English grammar. The optional subjects would include all others now taught in our schools, with the elements of physical science.

The education department would adjust and publish a programme of proficiency in obligatory subjects, and another in optional subjects. I am aware of the difficult and responsible task involved in the preparation of these programmes; but it is practicable. The great point to be had in mind is to save the programme from stimulating mechanical teaching, to grasp subjects vitally and not by mere externals, and to litt principles to the surface, and not dead forms. I would then provide for the classification of the schools into (say, for the purposes of this discussion) three Classes, according to the quality of the instruction given as determined by semi-annual inspections. To entitle any school to be classed at all, not less than 75 per cent of the number of pupils on each class roll should be presented for inspection. To entitle a school to the rank of first class,