

the organization of a School is a thorough and complete classification of all the pupils in accordance with a judicious and systematic course of study. This will require and secure uniformity of the approved text-books, improved methods of instruction and better discipline.

*“Age and Acquirements Classified—*Pupils of the same age and advancement will be placed in one grade; those older and more advanced in another—thus giving to each teacher a specific work. By this division of labour the classes will be increased in size, but diminished in number, thus enabling the teacher to devote more time to each class, and impart to each pupil more systematic and efficient instruction. The enthusiasm and excitement which a large class always creates in every School develops a corresponding zeal, energy and determination upon the part of the teacher to excel in his noble work. He labours more faithfully, and succeeds in infusing into his pupils new life and vigour—prompting them to higher aspirations and nobler effort in their studies. Thus the School is developed into the pride of the neighbourhood, and a blessing to the people.

*“6 Efficient Supervision—*It will secure a more efficient system of School supervision. Under the present system, the time of the County Inspector is largely occupied in organizing Schools, classifying pupils, changing union section boundary lines, cutting off here and adding on there, in the vain hope of finding some golden mean of fixity. Under the new system the County Inspector would be relieved from most of this unprofitable work, and would be able to spend his time more exclusively among the Schools, looking after and fostering their best interests, and prompting teachers and members of the School boards to the full performance of their manifold duties. With the increased responsibilities the School board becomes a supervisory committee, vigilant and active, ever watching with zealous care the sacred trust confided to them in securing for every child in the section the best education possible.

*“7. Better Qualified Teachers—*It will secure for our Schools better qualified teachers, with better compensation. As the number of pupils in each School can always be kept up to the maximum, it necessarily follows that with a graded and classified School, one teacher will do the same work and in a superior manner than two, and in many cases even three or four, are doing under the present system. We confess this proposition, at first sight, appears somewhat paradoxical; yet when we remember the vast superiority of graded over ungraded Schools, it does not appear so very absurd after all. In fact it is true—and a small portion of the money thus saved, in addition to the present compensation of teachers, will command the best skill. Increased salary will always bring better qualified teachers, consequently better Schools and better education for the children.”

AMENDMENT TO OUR OWN SCHOOL LAW RELATING TO TOWNSHIP BOARDS OF TRUSTEES.

One or two difficulties have been experienced in giving effect to our school law on the subject.* These difficulties have been pointed out, and a mode of overcoming them suggested by one of our Inspectors (D. J. McKinnon, Esq., of Peel), as follows:—

“I have expressed my belief that under the township system, schools might be so placed that every child in the Townships of Toronto and Chinguacousy would be within two miles of some school. This might be done by planting schools ten lots apart one way, and four concessions the other, with one in the centre of each (almost) square, thus giving two concessions ($1\frac{1}{2}$ miles) as the maximum distance to be travelled by any child.

“But here a difficulty meets us at the outset in the shape of several really good school houses already—many of them lately—built, and which it would be most unreasonable to close merely because a little out of place. I have found, however, that by slightly modifying the original scheme these schools may be all brought in by leaving only one corner of either township (7 lots), more than two miles distant from some school—children from the same corner having now to go more than four miles.

“We have at present 46 sections in Toronto and Chinguacousy, of which 9 are Unions, and supposing the burden of five of these to fall upon these two townships, there are still 41 left. Besides, there was presented to the county council at its last session a petition from certain farmers in Chinguacousy, showing that some of their children had from four to five miles to walk to school, and praying for a new section. Should the wish of these ratepayers be granted, there would be 42 schools to support under the present

system instead of 37 under the township plan. Should ratepayers in each of the five sections in Chinguacousy, whose outskirts lie three miles or more from their respective school-houses take the same course, it would, by multiplying the number of schools, very materially increase taxation in that township.

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“But even reckoning the number of schools to be kept up under the present system as only 42, there would still be five more than under the township plan; and counting the cost of maintaining each school in the future as \$500 per annum (interest on value of site, building, furniture, &c., say \$1,500, at 7 per cent. \$105; fire-wood, \$20; repairs, prize books, &c., \$15; and salary of a teacher, \$360), the amount saved on the five schools would be \$2,500, or \$60 a piece to each of the 37 schools, and \$280 over for ‘contingencies.’ That is to say, it would cost the people exactly the same to have a \$360 teacher under the township system as a \$300 man at present; or rating teachers according to salaries, the efficiency of the schools would be increased by 20 per cent.

“But here I anticipate an objection. If the number of the schools were reduced to 37, would not the increased attendance at each make the work too great for 37 teachers to overtake? I answer decidedly, no, for the aggregate attendance of the townships for the first half year of 1871, was only about 1,400, or less than 38 a piece for 37 teachers, while for the second half it was some 50 less, so that even if the attendance should increase by one-fourth on account of the greater facilities afforded to children who are now at too great a distance, it would still fall below the 50 allowed to each teacher by law.

“Another great advantage of the township system would be the equalization of taxation. I shall at this time merely say, that the present system is most unjust, some sections in the county having double the amount of ratable property that others have, and consequently requiring to pay each man less than half the taxes for the same class of school.

“But what about the new and good houses already built? Will those who have paid some \$40 apiece for school-houses in their own sections be required to turn round and pay their (say) \$20 additional for similar buildings in other parts of the township? This would assuredly be most unfair, as men in sections that have been enterprising enough to put up expensive houses would have paid some \$60 for schools belonging to the whole township, while their more canny neighbours whose present schools were built some 30 years ago, would get off with \$20! But fortunately the remedy is simple. If A. and B. two merchants in the dry goods trade, having stocks valued at \$7,000 and \$3,000 respectively, agree to go into partnership on even terms, with a capital of \$20,000, on the understanding that their present stocks shall be the property of the firm, it would be absurd for B. to say, ‘We have now \$10,000 between us, and the \$10,000 more required will be just 5,000 apiece, because, you know, we’re equal partners.’ ‘No.’ A. would say, ‘I’ve \$7,000 in now, and you’ve \$3,000, so I shall put in \$3,000, and you \$7,000, and then we’ll be on even footing.’ And so may it be arranged with existing school property. Let the township board, if formed, buy up all the school property of the various sections at a valuation, so that the value of such property shall be deducted from the building taxes of those who have paid for it, and thus even-handed justice done.

“But what of the fairly good school-houses—those not quite coming up to the requirements of the law, but yet too good to throw away entirely? Make them into teachers’ residences. A partition or two run through, and a kitchen attached, will convert the most of them into very comfortable little houses, and this would be by no means a useless investment, for fully one-third of the teachers at present engaged are married men; and I have known of several instances during the past year where a good school has been refused by a good teacher simply because he could not get a house.

“Of course, even if township boards were at once established we couldn’t expect to see all these changes at once. New schools would have to be built no sooner than they will if no such change take place, but when built they would be in the most convenient places, and every child could at once be allowed to go to the school nearest him. After all, it would perhaps be hardly worth while to make such a change for the sake of saving a couple of dollars a year to each farmer, but for the sake of the little ones who now must wait till ten or twelve years of age before they can walk their three miles or so to school in winter, it is worth while to go to some trouble.”

In a memorandum addressed to the Government last year on some amendments to the school law, the following suggestions were made:—

“The 14th section of the School Act of 1871 might be amended so as to provide that school sections which have erected good school-houses of a certain valuation to be determined, should be exempted

* The same difficulties, in giving effect to the law, are, no doubt, experienced by other Inspectors, so that the example and illustrations here given, may be taken as a fair specimen of similar difficulties in other parts of the Province.