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### JOHN SEATH, B.A., INSPECTOR OF HIGH SCHOOLS.

MR. SEATH was born in Auchtermuchty, Fifeshire, Scotland, in 1844. His parents removed in 1847 to Monaghan, Ireland, and he received his preliminary education at Corlett School in that town. He matriculated at Glasgow University in 1858, attended one session, and completed the Arts course at Queen's College, Belfast. During his course at the last named institution, Mr. Seath stood first in Natural Science, taking prizes in that and other departments of study. He also took Honors in General Proficiency, in 1861, his final year, and graduated from Queen's University in his seventeenth year, standing first in Natural Science, and winning the Gold Medal and Exhibition in that department. Had he returned to his College after graduation, he would, no doubt, have been Senior Scholar in Natural Science. But he then, in 1861, sailed for Canada, whither the family had preceded him some time before.

In January, 1862, Mr. Seath was appointed Headmaster of the Brampton High School. This position he retained for seven years. In 1869, he became Headmaster of the Oshawa High School, in 1871, of the Dundas High School, and in 1874, of the St. Catharines Collegiate Institute. The last named position he retained till August, 1884, when he was appointed by the Minister of Education to his present position of Inspector of High Schools.

Of Mr. Seath's work as High School Principal we have not space to speak particularly. It was, so far as we have learned, very successful in each locality. It would be easy to furnish a goodly list of such men as Rev. John Somerville, of Owen Sound ;

Dr. Arnott, of London; Dr. A. R. Robinson, of New York; the late Dr. McCollum, of Jarvis Street, Toronto; Principal L. E. Empree, of Parkdale, etc., each of whom would readily, we have no doubt, ascribe no inconsiderable measure of his success, to the mental impulse, direction and stimulus received while under Mr. Seath's instruction. Perhaps a still better tribute to his ability and faithfulness as teacher and principal is the fact that his appointment to his present office was highly approved by the High School teachers of Ontario, who readily acknowledged, as one of them assures us, Mr. Seath to be "the leading High School

for Mathematics, during his inspectorship, that Mr. Seath has done for English and Science. In the methods of teaching the former he has wrought a revolution. His first examination papers in English raised a cry of disappointment and protest from many teachers and candidates, but those papers demanded methods of teaching the subject which are now carried out by the best teachers of English in our schools, and it is not too much to say that in no other country is the subject of English taught more scientifically in secondary schools than in the Province of Ontario to-day. It may be said, too, that efficient science-teaching dates from Mr. Seath's appointment. The results of his vigorous administration are to be seen in the fitting up and equipment of special science-rooms for practical work by the pupils in Chemistry and Physics, and in the greatly improved status of the science-masters. Not only Chemistry and Physics, but Botany and Zoology are now taught by observation and experience, and the Universities have recognized the ability of the schools to cope with this work, by accepting Science in lieu of French or German at matriculation. Further proof of the increasing importance of this department is to be found in the formation of a Science Teacher's Association, quite as vigorous as any of the other bodies organized in the interests of Classics, Mathematics, and Modern Languages.

As an Inspector, he is honest and fearless. Though he is firm and unyielding where a principle is at stake or where strict discipline is necessary, no teacher who is trying to do his best need fear his criticism or his censure. He has the faculty of seeing at a glance the *morale* of the classroom. In departmental work, his mastery of the details of the High School system, and his well-developed faculty for organization have made his advice of great value, and it is well understood that in bringing order out of the chaos in which

Mr. Ross found the Department when he took charge, the Minister has had a most valuable coadjutor in Mr. Seath. Mr. Seath visited the schools of New England and New York about two years ago, and prepared a very valuable paper on these schools, with suggestions. This paper was published in the Minister's Annual Report. Mr. Seath's edition of some extracts from Milton and his excellent High School Grammar are well-known to our readers.



JOHN SEATH, B.A., INSPECTOR OF HIGH SCHOOLS.

Master—the *dux* of the profession—in the Province.

Mr. Seath's work as Inspector has been characterized by the same energy and strong common sense which marked his administration of the schools in which he was Headmaster. Without neglecting any department of High School study, he gave special attention, as indeed he was instructed to do, to those of Science and English, till then much neglected. What Dr. McLennan did