

High Schools are doing substantially the same work as laid down for the 4th, (in part) 5th and 6th classes of the Public Schools, and for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd classes of the High Schools!

As to the financial aspect of this question, and as to the way in which even the low standard of admission has been kept up in various High Schools, we shall refer further on.

#### OBJECTION AS TO THE NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS.

Secondly, objection has been made to the number of teachers to be employed in the High Schools. On this point the Legislature has given no doubtful expression of its opinion. In the statute of 1853, as consolidated in 1859, it prescribed certain subjects of instruction for the High Schools, and declared that provision should be made for teaching these subjects according to a programme and general regulations prescribed by the Council of Public Instruction, and in a subsequent part of the Act, it specifically defined the duties of trustees, and distinctly declared that it should be "the duty of each High School Board [in making provision for teaching the prescribed subjects according to the programme and general regulation], to appoint the master and other teachers in such school, and to fix their salaries and prescribe their duties."

Each Board was also authorized "to appoint such other officers and servants as they shall judge expedient," &c.,—thus giving them a discretion in regard to the latter but none whatever in regard to "the masters and teachers," whom they were required by law to appoint in each High School.

It further requires them to apply "the moneys received" towards making up "the salaries of teachers" etc. (not "a teacher,") and it requires trustees, on the union of a High and Public School, to make "ample provision" for giving instruction to the pupils in the elementary English branches of the Public School department "by duly qualified English teachers." The Act of 1865 further provides for the settlement of all differences between trustees and "head masters and teachers" in regard to salary. As each school must have a head-master, (whose qualifications are prescribed), the "teachers" referred to in that statute must, in all cases, be the assistants provided for in the Act of 1859. Further, the Act of 1871 prescribed certain additional subjects to be taught in the High Schools, and provides that "the Council of Public Instruction shall have power to exempt any High School which shall not have the necessary funds to provide the necessary qualified teachers from the obligation to teach the German and French languages." Apart, therefore, from the provisions of the statute which (speaking of the duty of each High School Board) makes it obligatory on such Board to "appoint the master and other teachers in such school," the subjects themselves (which the Legislature has prescribed to be taught in each High School), require the full time of the head-master, and at the least that of one or more assistants to teach them to the pupils. The number of pupils attending the school is immaterial, as the same subjects (which are prescribed by the Legislature) and the same number of classes are required in each school according to the programme, whether the pupils in attendance be many or few.

#### AMPLE PROVISION NOW MADE BY THE LEGISLATURE FOR THE SUPPORT OF HIGH SCHOOLS.

Up to 1871, it was urged with some force that, while the Legislature required the High School Boards to do certain things, it left them powerless to provide the necessary means to defraying the expenses of doing so. This was doubtless true to some extent in past years, but in 1871 it left the Boards without a shadow of excuse on this ground. The statute of that year, as we have shewn, prescribed certain additional subjects of instruction for the High Schools, (which gave a symmetry and completeness to the course of study in them), but it also provided most liberally for enabling the trustees to support these schools and pay their teachers. Not only did it in that very year increase the High School grant from \$57,000 to

\$70,000, but it also required the county and city councils to provide by local assessment, and to furnish the trustees with \$35,000 more—making a total of \$105,000, or an average of \$1,000 for each High School!

Further, for the first time the Legislature authorized each High School Board to call upon the council or councils of the municipality or municipalities in which the High School was situated, to provide whatever additional sum it might require "for the school accommodation and maintenance" of the High School; and it made it the imperative duty of the council to provide these sums without question. While, therefore, the Legislature required each High School Board to provide for teaching "all the higher branches of an English and commercial [or classical] education," and to employ a head "master and teachers" to do so, it also (in the school legislation of 1871) provided the ample means (as we have shewn) of \$105,000, as a preliminary fund, at the rate of about \$30 per pupil, for the support of the High Schools.

#### THE TRUE PLACE OF THE HIGH SCHOOLS IN OUR NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

Again, it has been urged that the Legislature has fixed the educational standard of our High Schools quite too "high"—that a lower grade if not a narrower range of subjects would be quite sufficient for the wants of the country, etc.; and that it is unreasonable to require High School Boards to bring these schools up to the prescribed Legislative standard, as laid down in the official programme.\*

A more unwise and untenable objection could not have been urged. Those who do so look at the question from a purely local and narrow standard point. They forget that the fundamental principle involved in the adoption by the country of a complete "national system" of education, stands opposed to such views, and that a national system must of necessity leave no room for private or denominational efforts to supplement it, but must include within itself a systematic and complete gradation of schools from the lowest elementary school up to the university itself, without a missing link, or break in the chain. They either forget or ignore the fact that this is the theory—the very fundamental principle on which our Canadian "national system" of education is based; and that while the Legislature has strictly defined the limits and functions of each class of its national schools, it has most liberally provided in an ascending scale of remuneration for the support of each class.

Thus, it provides for the elementary public schools, and declares that they shall be free to every youth in the land. Next it provides specifically for a superior grade known as "High Schools," which shall form the connecting link between the elementary schools and the university, and declares that these schools shall teach such "higher" subjects, and such "higher" subjects only as it prescribes. Lastly, it sets apart a liberal portion of the public domain for the maintenance of a Provincial College and University (the functions of which are also defined by Parliament itself.)

These Institutions in their teaching are not allowed, nor do they dream of interfering with, or trenching on the domain of the High Schools, as do many High Schools on that of the Public Schools, even beyond that point which is allowed by the Council, (as is urged) as a matter of right and of expediency.

#### VAST DIFFERENCE IN THE RATIO OF THE GRANT TO HIGH AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

We will now contrast the liberality of the Legislature as shewn to the High and to the Public Schools. It has been often said that the Legislature is willing to do anything for the Public Schools, but is chary of its favours to the High Schools. This we will shew to be simply a mistake,—a popular error. The Legislature has indeed liberally fostered the Public Schools, and the policy of the Education Department in the adminis-

\* The whole question as to the necessity for a more complete and extended programme of studies for our High and Public Schools is discussed at length in the last Report of the Chief Superintendent.