

SUPPLEMENT TO THE Canada School Journal.

SPECIMEN PAGE FROM FEBRUARY NUMBER, 1878.

DAVID ALLISON, LL.D.

On the death of the late Rev. A. S. Hunt, Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia, considerable anxiety was felt by the friends of education in that Province concerning the selection of his successor. And rightly so, for there are few offices within the gift of the Provincial Governments of such importance as this, inasmuch as the incumbent has practically charge of the education of the people, his policy being, as a matter of course, adopted by the authorities and enforced by his large staff of inspectors and teachers throughout the country. When it was first rumoured that the President of Mount Allison Wesleyan College, Sackville,

had been offered the appointment, the anxiety was changed to hope that he would accept, and the official announcement of his induction to the office was hailed with a chorus of congratulations. It was universally felt that the Government had made a wise choice, and had selected a gentleman capable of managing the educational affairs of the Province with zeal and ability. The secular and religious papers were for once unanimous in their approval, and President Allison entered upon his duties with welcomes from all quarters.

The new Superintendent is just forty-one years old, having been born in 1836, at Newport, Hants County, N. S. He received his early education at the grammar school in his native village and proceeded thence to Dalhousie College, at that time, 1852, conducted as a Provincial Academy. From Dalhousie he went to the Wesleyan Academy at Sackville, N. B., to which he

was to return in later years as President of the College and other institutions of education. Having thus prepared himself for college, he followed the Arts' course at the Wesleyan University, Middleton, U. S., taking his degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1859, and of Master of Arts in 1862. His career at the University attracted the attention of the Sackville authorities, who appointed him, in 1860, Professor of Classics in the Academy, and two years later presented him to the classical chair in the College, a position he held for seven years, discharging its duties so efficiently, and proving himself so able a teacher, that he was elected to the Presidency of the College in 1869. Victoria University, Cobourg, Ont., conferred upon him in 1874 the degree of Doctor of Laws, and when the appointments to the Senate of the University of Halifax were made, he was chosen one of the twenty-four original Fellows. In the Senate he had a further opportunity of showing his powers,

and he proved himself a hard worker in this new sphere of usefulness.

President Allison will find abundant employment for his administrative talents and varied achievements in the Education Office. As Secretary *ex-officio* and member of the Council of Public Instruction he will have to act as the Government's adviser in matters educational, the duty being the more responsible that, in view of the constitution of the Council, it is possible there may, for a series of years, not be a single educationist, as the Council of Public Instruction is simply the Executive Council of the Province under another name.

It may be of interest here briefly to sketch the educational system of Nova Scotia as it now exists. The Council of Public Instruction is the head of the executive and has the appointment of inspectors upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the regulation of the expenditure of school grants, of the location, construction and control of county academies, and the appointment of the four Provincial examiners. The Superintendent has to supervise the inspectors, to inspect the academies, to hold teachers' meetings, to report on the qualifications of teachers and on the management of schools, and to see generally that the law is properly carried out. Next to him come the inspectors of schools, one for each county; their principal duty being to act as clerks to the boards of commissioners, and to inspect, twice a year, every school and academy in their county.

The schools are divided into common schools, county academies and special academies.

The Normal School, located at Truro, gives a classical education and trains teachers for their work and for examination for the various grades of licenses.

The colleges are the next step upward, and are all aided by grants from the Provincial Treasury. They are: King's College, Windsor, the oldest in the Province; Acadia, Wolfville; St. Francis Xavier's, Antigonish; St. Marys, Dalhousie, and Halifax. The Presidents make an annual return to the Superintendent of Education, but beyond this there is no governmental supervision whatever.

As a system it is simple enough, but its value for good must largely depend upon the energy, capability and talent of the Superintendent of Education, whose administration of the law must be efficient if the schools and academies are to come up to the mark. There is every reason to look forward to great progress in education in Nova Scotia under the auspices of President Allison.



Specimen Illustration, *Portrait* Number.