

14. Lack of proper qualifications, such as would be required in a uniform township school.

15. Total disregard to the programme, pupils often studying what they choose and not what they ought.

These twice seven and one plagues of our public school system will be recognized by every one who has had any experience in connection with our public schools.

## " 2. THE ADVANTAGES OF A TOWNSHIP SYSTEM.

"The following are given as some of the desirable results to be realized by abandoning the Section system, and placing the schools under the care of a Township Board:—

1. It would secure just as many schools as the necessities of the community demand, each being an integral part of one central organization, and adapted to the wants of individuals.

2. It would dispense with a large number of trustees, collectors, &c.

3. It would establish a uniform rate of taxation.

4. It would furnish more uniform and equal advantages and privileges to every resident.

5. It would allow the child to attend school where his own interests would be best conserved.

6. It would prevent endless difficulties and strife about school section boundaries.

7. It would diminish the aggregate expenditure for schools.

8. It would secure a more efficient system of school inspection and supervision.

9. It would secure a permanency of the advantages of supervision.

10. It would secure greater permanency of teachers.

11. It would secure a better class of teachers.

12. It would secure better compensation to competent teachers, and less employment for incompetent ones.

13. It will secure better school-houses.

14. It will secure greater facilities to teachers for reference and illustration.

15. It will enable townships to establish graded schools.

16. It will secure uniformity of text-books in the township.

17. It will result in more uniform methods of teaching.

18. It will secure the establishment of a course of study, and will tend to keep pupils longer in school.

19. It will secure to the Education Department more reliable statistics.

20. It will insure schools in every section of the township, and prevent a bare majority from depriving a respectable minority of school privileges.

21. It will tend to diminish neighbourhood quarrels.

22. It will ensure the employment of fewer nephews and nieces, sisters and sisters-in-law.

23. It would ensure a larger aggregate of interest on the part of the community in each school.

24. It would render possible competitive examinations.

"There is no gainsaying the force of the argument presented by the above points, all of which are susceptible of the clearest proof and demonstration. Nothing but apathy and prejudice can prevent a reasonable person from seeing that they are conclusive in favor of a change. Are those persons who cling to the school system aware of the following fact? That of those townships in Massachusetts and other States which have abandoned the district system, it is very rare that one, after a fair trial, has any inclination to return to that system. The advantages of the township system are too apparent and too important to be lost when they have been once attained and enjoyed."

Again to refer to recent experience, I may quote from the Reports of several of the Public School Inspectors for the year 1878. Their opinions are as follows:

### INSPECTOR McDIARMID, COUNTY OF GLENGARRY.

"The difficulties which small, weak and struggling sections have, of keeping their schools open during the whole year, would be removed were all the schools in the township in charge of one Board of Trustees. A serious hindrance to the progress of education lies in the number of small school sections. When the townships were first divided into school sections, the school-houses were built in the settled portions, but when the whole township was occupied, attempts made to change the site to a central locality led to disputes and the formation of new, small and irregularly bounded sections."

### INSPECTOR McNAUGHTON, COUNTY OF STORMONT.

"One of the greatest hindrances to the permanent improvement of the schools is the frequent change of teachers. This is an evil which will always impede the progress of our rural schools as long as the school section method of management continues. Under the Township Board system the evils complained of would be rendered less injurious, and reduced to comparatively small proportions."

"The present method of apportioning the Public School Grants to the several sections of a township by the County Inspector I consider to be unfair to the weaker section. The schools which are situated in poor and thinly settled localities receive the smallest sums in aid of local effort, while the large and wealthy sections, which are comparatively independent of external aid, receive by far the largest share. The trus-

tees of those poor sections are compelled to employ legally qualified teachers as well as those more favorably situated, and in order to do so they must tax their constituents at a rate double, and in some instances treble, that imposed on those residing in more wealthy sections, and yet they can only secure the services of the cheapest class of teachers. The Township Board system would provide a remedy for this evil; but as the introduction of that system seems to be indefinitely postponed, I think in the meantime some other remedy should be sought for, and I am persuaded that the desired remedy can be found in a partial change in the method of apportioning the school funds."

### INSPECTOR GARRETT, COUNTY OF RUSSELL.

"I repeat my assertion of last year, that the sooner our schools are governed by Township School Boards, the quicker will the rising generation reap the benefits of that sound and liberal education otherwise provided for."

### INSPECTOR SLACK, COUNTY OF LANARK.

"In some of our municipalities we have too many sections, in some the division lines are not so equitably arranged as they should be, while in others, owing chiefly to the broken condition of the country, by lakes and streams, the school-house either is not or cannot be located at a point accessible to all. In no case have the people availed themselves of the privilege of 'Township Boards,' and the abolition of 'sectional boundaries.' To remove the common complaint above alluded to, and numerous other irregularities and incongruities, I would welcome the trial, in at least one of our townships, of the Township Board system, feeling satisfied that the reform would soon become general. If we would establish a uniform rate of taxation; if we would furnish equal advantages and privileges to all; if we would put an end to all difficulties and quarrels respecting section lines; if we would diminish the aggregate expenditure for schools, and secure better schools, better teachers, more permanent teachers, more uniform work, and I may add more reliable school returns, then let us adopt the 'Township Board System.'"

Township Boards are to be found in successful operation in Ennis-killen, Tuckersmith and Macaulay.

Having regard therefore to the importance of this question in securing further efficiency combined with greater economy in the working of the rural Public Schools of the Province, it is my duty to call your attention to the provisions of the law under which it is competent for the rate-payers in every School Section, at their next annual meeting, which takes place on Wednesday, the 31st December next, to discuss and consider this question in all its bearings, and if such discussion should result, the object of this circular will be attained.

ADAM CROOKS,

Minister of Education.

Toronto, November 13th, 1879.

## MEMORANDUM OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AS TO THE EFFECT OF THE INCORPORATION OF A VILLAGE OR A TOWN UPON RURAL SCHOOL SECTIONS.

1. Several cases have occurred which make it desirable that this question should be considered, and my opinion expressed thereon.

2. The Villages of Parkdale and Waterdown are illustrations of the difficulty which arises when a village is incorporated out of portions of the township without the township having taken the proper preliminary step of arranging the boundaries of the school section in that event, while the incorporation of the Village of Harriston into the Town of Harriston presents a similar question.

3. It is upon the proper interpretation of the effect of the 83rd section of the Public Schools Act that the conclusion depends. The Court of Common Pleas, in giving judgment in the case of "Re Minister of Education and Macaulay," in Easter Term, 41 Vic., 1878, Vol. 29, Common Pleas Reports, p. 122, had this section under consideration.

4. This 83rd section of the Revised Act is the same as sec. 74 of the Act 37 Vic., Chap 28; and Mr. Justice Gwynne states that it enacts in effect that where a part only of a rural section becomes incorporated as a village or town, the part not so incorporated becomes nevertheless part of the village or town for school purposes, and the whole of the former rural school section becomes in effect and is designated the school division of the village or town, and is under the exclusive control of the Public School Board of the village or town, "until the boundaries of such school section or division should be altered under the provisions of the Act;" and in this view he decides that the Village of Bracebridge was incorporated in January, 1875, the whole of school section No. 1 of the Township of Macaulay, out of a portion of which the village was formed, ceased wholly to be a school section of the township and became wholly the school section or division of the Village of Bracebridge.

5. This, then, being the immediate effect of the incorporation of the village, or the extension of the limits of the village on its being incorporated into a town, it would follow that, in order to alter this result action should be taken by by-laws of the Councils respectively of the village or town (as the case may be), and of the township in which the section affected was situate. Such by-laws, under Sec. 84 of the Revised Public Schools Act, are required to be passed not later than the 1st of