

vince and being subjects to the British Crown.'

There was a Board of Education consisting of five members appointed to each district, who had the oversight of the schools. Each school section met annually at what was called the School Meeting, and appointed three trustees, who engaged teachers, and superintended the general management of the schools in their section. The law required that every teacher should be a subject or take the oath of allegiance, and he was paid by a fee of fifteen shillings per quarter for each scholar, and received a further sum of \$100 from the Government if there were not less than twenty scholars taught in the school.

Upper Canada College, the only one in the Province, began this year (1830) under the management of Dr. Harris. Grantham Academy, in the Niagara District, was incorporated, and the Methodist Conference appointed a Committee to take up subscriptions to build an academy and select a site. It was located in Cobourg, and the building, which was begun in 1832, was completed, and the school opened in 1836. There were 11 district and 132 common schools, with an attendance of 3,677 and an expenditure of £3,866 11s. 6½d.*

There was very little change in our school laws for several years. Grants were annually made in aid of Common Schools, but there was no system in the expenditure, consequently the good effected was not very apparent. The first really practical school law was passed in 1841, the next year after the Union of the Provinces, and in 1844, Dr. Ryerson was appointed Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, which office he held for thirty-two years. During that time, through his indefatigable labours, our school laws have been moulded and perfected, until it is safe to say we have the most complete and efficient school system in the world. The influence it

has exercised on the intellectual development of the people has been very great, and it is but reasonable to expect that it will continue to raise the standard of intelligence and high moral character throughout the land. Our Government has, from the very first, manifested an earnest desire to promote education in the Province, and, during Dr. Ryerson's long term of office, it liberally supplied him with the necessary means to mature his plans and introduce such measures as would place our educational system on the best footing that could be devised; and it has been accomplished in a way that does honour, not only to the head that conceived it, but to the enlightened liberality of the Government that seconded the untiring energy of the man who wrought it out.

The advantages which the youth of Ontario to-day possess in acquiring an education over the time when I was first sent to school with dinner basket in hand, trudging along through mud or snow, to the old school-house by the road side, where I was perched upon a high pine bench without a back, with a Mavor's spelling book in hand, to begin the foundation of my education, are so many and great, that it is difficult to realize the state of things that existed, or that men of intelligence should have selected such a dry and unattractive method of imparting instruction to children of tender years. It is to be feared that there are many of our Canadian youth who do not appreciate the vantage ground they occupy, nor the inviting opportunities that lie within the reach of all to obtain a 'generous education.' There is absolutely nothing to prevent any young person possessing the smallest spark of ambition from acquiring it, and making himself a useful member of society. It is the only thing, says Milton in his 'Literary Musings,' 'which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the offices both private and public of peace and war.'

* Journals of the House of Assembly, 1831.