

system to an intellectual one has done a world of good. The Irish National School Books, too, have been very generally adopted; and they cannot be used by any Teacher, however dull, or stupid, without leading the child to think for itself,—to become interested in its work,—to read intellectually; and this is the grand point to be attained, to teach the child to think for itself. I have done as much as I possibly could to consign to disuse the unmeaning, the unintelligible and enslaving columns of the Spelling-Book,* and to show the proper use of those invaluable National Text Books; and I am happy to know that I have been very successful in this matter. In my tour this Winter, I found fifty of these National School Books in use, where there was not one in use before, (in 1846); and the sale of them in Belleville has been very large; very much, however, remains to be done, and I have no doubt that under this very Act (if people only have a little patience to allow it to be better understood,) those who have interested themselves in the good work of educating the people, will have the satisfaction of knowing that not a single sane adult now under twelve years of age will in a few years hence be ignorant of reading and writing,—the machinery by which to acquire education."

The School Superintendent of the Newcastle District, (Mr. Benjamin Hayter, R.N.), observes:

"The Common Schools in this District are being greatly increased, and many of the Trustees are actuated by a laudable spirit, and are anxious to introduce the National Series of School Books. Wherever these Books are used, great improvement is visible, even in the discipline of the schools."

The School Superintendent of the Colborne District, (Mr. Elias Burnham,) remarks:

"With respect to the state of the Common Schools in this District, I regret that I cannot speak of any material improvement therein during the past year. But I must, however, bear witness to the desire manifested by all classes of people to avail themselves of the benefits of education, and of their uniform conviction of the advantages of giving their children the means of obtaining knowledge at any cost. The public mind, in this respect, has undergone a most salutary change during the last four years. The apathy and carelessness which formerly prevailed have given way to activity and energy; and the prevailing desire now is to extend and advance knowledge, and to instruct and enlighten the rising generation in the principles and practice of a sound education. I augur well for the future. I can discover unmistakable indications of the right direction of the public mind in regard to our Schools, and of the necessity of their more general and liberal support; and I feel satisfied that, within a very short period, the most gratifying evidences of progress in this respect will mark every part of this fine and rapidly increasing District. During the year 1847, general harmony appears to have prevailed among all the Schools of this District,—at least, no complaints were made to me. I look upon this as auguring well for the intelligence and interests of the people. It shows that private differences have been made to give way to the general advantage, and, that individual, or local prejudices, or feelings, have not been allowed to mar the prosperity of the Schools. May it ever be so!"

The School Superintendent of the Simcoe District, (Mr. Henry Adolphus Clifford), observes:

"It is somewhat cheering, and prophetic of a better state of things, to compare the present state of things, and the present state of the Schools in this District with that which characterized them six years ago. Then there were scarcely any Schools in continuous operation but those of West Gwillimbury and Tecumseth, the two oldest and

*See Chief Superintendents' remarks on this subject on page 170 of the Sixth Volume of the Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada.