

Educational Reforms

WHAT THE WHITNEY GOVERNMENT PROMISED—SCHOOL GRANTS OF ALL KINDS LARGELY INCREASED—BETTER TRAINING FACILITIES FOR TEACHERS—STATE UNIVERSITY PLACED ON SOUND BASIS—TECHNICAL AND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION—SCHOOL-BOOK MONOPOLY DESTROYED.

PROMISES

The present Government, on assuming office, was pledged to carry out educational reform with the following objects in view:—

(a) To secure the efficiency of the public schools, wherein 80 per cent. of the children get all their education. Some years ago about 95 per cent. were in the public schools. Since then the percentage has been reduced owing largely to the growth of the Continuation and High Schools under the present administration.

(b) To break up the school-book monopoly which had exacted high prices for inferior books.

(c) To place the Provincial University on a prosperous basis.

(d) To secure to the teachers higher salaries and better training, and a right to be heard on educational subjects.

HOW KEPT

Every one of these promises has been kept:—

The courses of study in both the High and the Public Schools have been brought up to date and carefully adapted to the necessities of the different parts of the Province.

The schools, both High and Public, have been greatly improved in efficiency and in accommodation and equipment.

The school-book monopoly has been broken up, and better books at much lower prices provided.

The Provincial University is prosperous in the highest degree.

Teachers are better paid and better trained and are directly represented in an advisory council.

Liberal aid to both the primary and the secondary schools has re-invigorated the whole school system.

A POLICY OF GENEROUS GRANTS

I. PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The legislative grant to rural schools was increased from \$120,000 in 1905 to \$380,000 in 1907, and to \$400,000 in 1913. The total grant is now distributed with a view to ensuring a maximum of good results throughout the system. Dr. Pyne announced the abandonment of the old plan of paying on the basis of average attendance (whereby a premium was put on inequality of distribution) and substituted for it a basis designed to stimulate local effort and to secure the following results:—

1. Higher salaries to teachers.
2. Encouragement to employ teachers with the best grade of certificates.
3. Better accommodation for the schools.
4. Better accommodations for the pupils.