

James J. Macdonald, Esq., Portland, &c.: "I have much pleasure in informing you that six out of the eight schools in operation have adopted the free school system."

Thomas Higginson, Esq., West Hawkesbury, &c.: "In the schools under my charge this year, the several branches of study are taught in a more enlightened manner; the text-books are more uniform; and parents and trustees are willing to pay a higher salary for the better class of teachers; the free school system is becoming more and more general; nearly half the schools being sustained upon that plan."

Samuel Graham, Esq., Kitley: "I am happy to state that in this township education is engaging a considerable share of public attention, and that in eight sections the free school system has been adopted; and also in various sections the necessary arrangements for more commodious school houses are being made."

Rev. Isaac B. Aylesworth, Camden East: "A number of sections have, this year, adopted the free school system; others have it in contemplation."

Philip Hodgkinson, Esq., Malahide: "The new school Act gives better satisfaction than any other, and the schools are better organized now than last year."

Edwin Mallory, Esq., Fredricksburgh: "The school Act of 1849 having been found so complicated and imperative, several of the schools were closed, and the people became almost indifferent to education; but I am happy to add that the new school law has given a fresh impetus to the people of this locality, and some of the sections have already availed themselves of the noble provision made therein for establishing free schools."

J. A. Murdock, Esq., Drummond, &c.: "I am happy to state that the question of free schools has deeply engaged the attention of the public in this quarter. Last year a few school sections made the experiment of raising the rate bill by taxation, and the result which followed the bringing out the children to school, and the facility afforded the trustees in settling with their teacher, has been the means of inducing a great many school sections to adopt this mode of making up the teachers' salaries for 1851."

Rev. R. Wallace, West Oxford: "I find an increasing interest in the subject of free schools, and I am aware that it is the intention of some gentlemen to endeavour to introduce the free school system generally throughout the County of Oxford. We have some free schools already in operation. In one case, however, a difference of opinion exists as to whether persons above 18 and under 21 years of age should attend free. Have the kindness to state the law and the views of your office on the subject in the *Journal of Education*. [The law requires trustees to permit all residents in their school "section between the ages of 5 and 21 years to attend the school, so long as their conduct shall be agreeable to the rules of such school," and so long as the free school or other rate shall be paid by them or on their behalf. *Ed. J. of Ed.*] I am happy to be able fully to approve of the general features of the present school Act. I have by me several of its predecessors, and, it is, in my opinion, a decided improvement upon them."

Dr. John Finlayson, Nichol, &c.: "The subject of free schools has been pressed upon the attention of the trustees and others of this township in the superintendent's annual lecture. In the contiguous township of Woolwich, there is one free school in operation."

John Walton, Esq., Peel, &c.: "I am happy to report that two of our sections have free schools, and it appears to me that their example will soon be followed by many others."

Rev. Wm. Hay, Burford: "I have great pleasure in stating that the system of free schools is rapidly gaining ground in this township. The great advantages attending free schools are becoming every day more apparent, in the increase of attendance, the comfortable and well-furnished school house, and in the little trouble connected with the system when compared with others."

Thomas Vauston, Esq., Escott: "The present school Act I find is decidedly better than any other heretofore, and will calculated to give education to a certain class who had been heretofore deprived of it on account of poverty or limited circumstances: I mean in the privilege or choice of free schools, which increase beyond the most sanguine expectations. I find where they are established the school houses are filling up."

Hugh R. McGillis, Esq., Cornwall: "The frequent changes in the school Act did not tend to benefit the establishment of good schools in many parts up to this year; but now the people begin to understand the law better. It cannot be surpassed if properly acted upon. I cannot but admire the skill and talent that have been displayed in framing the new school Act. I was myself a trustee from 1843 up to last year, and it actually did bid me defiance to have a good school established upon anything like a permanent footing until the new Act passed. I undertook the office of superintendent with no other view than to reconcile parties formerly at variance, and I have the satisfaction to state that I succeeded far beyond my sanguine expectations."

ON SOME OF THE COLLATERAL ADVANTAGES WHICH MAY BE DERIVED FROM A WELL-ORGANIZED SYSTEM OF

PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

[COMMUNICATED.]

The special object of school instruction is to prepare individuals for the duties of after life. The annual sums devoted to this purpose, by those nations whose general progress is at all commensurate with that of the age, forms a very important item of expenditure. In Upper Canada, the disbursements last year, on account of education, could not have been less than eight hundred thousand dollars, or at the rate of about one dollar for each inhabitant. If we suppose, that throughout the United States and British America, the annual outlay for the same purpose averages one dollar per head, we shall have a sum total of twenty-three million dollars expended in 1850, on account of education alone. It is highly probable that this sum does not represent the actual outlay, it is nevertheless sufficiently indicative of the importance attached to education, and of the great care which should be devoted to all disbursements for that purpose, in order that the greatest amount of available good may be derived from them. The public at large take little interest in the method and subjects of instruction, which obtain in private schools and colleges, as long as they are not directly opposed to morality and good government. With state or public schools, the case is widely different. The public have a direct interest in what they assist so materially in establishing and maintaining. Every man wishes to get a dollar's worth for the dollar he expends. In past days of obsolete legislation, it was not the custom for men holding official stations, to give to the world the details of the expenditure of the moneys committed to their charge. Now, however, every man that is taxed thinks he has a right to know how the general funds to which he contributes are expended; and he also demands as a right, that all disbursements of public money shall be made in such a manner, as will most conduce to the good of society. The collateral advantages which may be made to flow from a well-organized system of public instruction, are many in number, and of vast importance to the country in which such a system obtains. As yet, these collateral advantages have been greatly neglected, even when a general system of school organization and government have been established for years. The State of New York set the example of forming her numerous academies into an association for the advancement of science and general knowledge, as early as the year 1825. She has greatly extended and improved her system since 1849, as will be shown in the sequel. In 1847, Germany, and especially Prussia, re-modelled an organization of the same character, which had been in existence for many years. France and Ireland have not as yet taken advantage of their extensive machinery for the acquirement of additional knowledge; and England has no system of public instruction on which she can engraft a simple, popular, and yet highly advantageous scheme, for advancing certain departments of science, which require simultaneous observations to be carried on over a wide extent of country. We propose now to give a brief description of these adjuncts to a system of public instruction, for the purpose of promoting scientific enquiry, and making positive advances in knowledge. We shall take for our illustration the method adopted and the results attained in the State of New York. It will be sufficient for our present purpose to remark, that a large number of academies and colleges scattered over the whole of the State, are subject, either *voluntarily*, or by the act of their incorporation, to the visitation of the regents of the university. When any academy places itself under the visitation of the regents, it becomes intitled to a distributive share of certain moneys granted to academies for special purposes. A