

GRANTS FOR EDUCATION.

It is to be hoped, nay it should be confidently expected, that whatever may be the need of larger revenue in New Brunswick, there will be no further interference with the amount devoted at present to education. That the common schools are by far the most important charge of the Local Legislature no intelligent person will dispute. Any interference with their revenues cannot fail to cripple them accordingly. It may be argued that *this* Province gives more or *that* Province gives less toward the support of its schools, but it has been the privilege of the people of New Brunswick to receive stated amounts in aid of education and any curtailment would be a most unpopular measure. Can it be expected that railroad after railroad can be subsidized and permanent and expensive highway bridges be built, and the grants to the roads remain unimpaired? If a few colleges had been endowed, or the high school grants been largely increased, the common schools might be expected to share the expense, if the needs of the revenue required it. There has been no increase, save the natural one, which has been small for some time, in the expenses of the school service. There has been an increase in nearly all the other departments.

In connection with this subject it may be noted that the Charlottetown *Patriot* makes the following comparison between the grants to education in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

"Let us first note New Brunswick's government grant for education. For teachers' and inspectors' salaries, school libraries, and \$8,844 for the provincial University, her expenditures for education amounted to only forty-three cents per head of the population. Ours in the same year was \$113,626, or \$1.04 per head of the population.

Do the people of New Brunswick therefore pay less for education than Islanders? By no means. Here is what was given from three sources of support for paying New Brunswick teachers' salaries in 1890. Provincial \$137,410. County Fund, \$94,504. District assessment, \$183,636. Total \$415,550.

This sum amounts to \$1.29 cents per head of the population of New Brunswick. In 1890 our Government paid toward teachers' salaries \$90,756 and the districts paid in supplements only \$9,348. This makes a total of \$100,104 for teachers' salaries, or only ninety-one cents per head of our total population. We therefore pay thirty-eight cents per head of our population less to teachers than they do in New Brunswick. But our Government pays eighty-three cents per head of this amount, while the people in the districts, on an average, pay only eight cents per head for teacher's salaries, in comparison to about eighty-seven cents per head paid directly by the people of that Province. If the Island Government only paid the same rate for education per head as the New Brunswick Government, their expenditure under this head would only be \$52,000, instead of \$113,000. Such a reduction in the vote for education would leave our Government without a deficit, but we could not advise such a course."

THE BATHURST SCHOOL TROUBLE.

Considerable attention has been attracted to the Bathurst schools of late by reason of correspondence in the papers relating to them. The grounds of complaint seem to be that the trustees of Bathurst have engaged some of the Sisters of Charity to teach in the public schools; that they have placed in charge of the primary department of the Protestant (so called) school an inefficient teacher, inasmuch as she has only had a short term's training at the Normal School; that more teachers are employed than there is any necessity for. Exception is also taken to the manner in which the sisters are licensed, they not being required to attend the Normal School.

In employing sisters to teach, the trustees have only done what many boards of trustees throughout the province have done with satisfactory results. Since 1874 members of any religious order who make teaching a life work as the Sisters of Charity do, have been permitted to undergo examination for license without actual attendance at the Normal School. The schools taught by the Sisters receive no religious instruction during school hours, follow the same course of instruction as other schools, and like them are subject to government inspection.

The trustees of Bathurst seem to have acted in some respects in an arbitrary and impolitic manner. It is quite within their rights to employ sisters to teach, but it certainly is not fair to the ratepayers to employ more teachers than are necessary. They also have discharged a teacher who gave satisfaction, to make room for a cheaper teacher and one licensed with the implied intention of teaching in poor districts. The spirit of the school law is that no teacher should be employed who is not suitable to the needs of a district, and the trustees should be notified accordingly, if it can be shown that the teacher in question is not competent.

The whole question seems rather of local than provincial significance.

TALKS WITH TEACHERS.

Have your agreement sealed. It is proper and business-like and implies no want of faith in either party. Some teachers and some trustees are very lax in the matter of agreements, and difficulty has been caused in consequence. Do not make an agreement in any other than the prescribed form. Above all things beware of engaging by the month, as by so doing you are making the trustees a present of the holidays which the law allows you. When your agreement is by the term, of which perhaps you have only taught four months, do not accept two-thirds of a term's pay, but reckon it in the same way as your government money is computed. The law will allow you this.