

our own system and methods of diffusing education and useful knowledge among all classes of the population. With this view, I have, several times, visited all the Counties of Upper Canada, and been permitted in 1850-1, and again in 1855-6, to make educational tours in the United States and Europe, as also again in 1866-7. During this last tour, I was directed by the Government to make special enquiries in regard to Institutions for the education of the Deaf and Dumb and Blind, with a view to some effective legislation and measures for the education of those afflicted classes of our fellow creatures.

A Supplementary Report on this subject will be shortly laid before the Legislature.

It is my pleasing duty to add that in each of these tours of inspection and enquiry, I was favoured by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—on former occasions by the Earl of Clarendon, and last year by Lord Stanley—with letters of introduction to the British Ambassador at the Court of each of the countries I intended to visit, and through whom I obtained every document and facility of enquiry requisite for my purpose.

Under these circumstances, and on the creation of a new Legislature, and the inauguration of a new system of Government, it seems appropriate to review the principles and progress of our system of education in the light of the educational systems of other countries, and determine to be second to no country in our plans and efforts to secure to the whole of the rising and future generations of this Province of the Canadian Dominion the advantages and blessings of a sound, Christian education.

It would be easy to occupy a quarto volume of a thousand pages with historical and practical expositions of systems of instruction in foreign countries; but I think I shall best perform my present task by condensing in the narrowest possible space a summary view of the educational systems of the principal countries to which we are accustomed to look for example and instruction in this noblest work of a nation, making such references and applications to our Province as the topics discussed and our circumstances may suggest.

COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY BY OTHER COUNTRIES.

In this course of foreign educational enquiry, we have but followed the example of older educating countries. Three distinguished American educationists, besides ordinary travellers, have visited Europe for the express purpose of studying its educational systems. In 1837, Doctor Bache, then Director of Girard College, Philadelphia, was commissioned by the Trustees of the College to make a tour of inspection in Europe, where he pursued his mission with great industry and ability for two years, and presented, in 1839, an elaborate report of upwards of 600 octavo pages on the educational systems and institutions of most of the German States, Great Britain, France, Holland, and Switzerland.

In 1838 Professor Stowe inspected and made a brief but excellent report on education, and especially on the system of Normal Schools in Prussia; and in 1843, the late Horace Mann, then Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, made a school tour in Europe, and reported especially upon the character and methods of school discipline and teaching in Holland, Prussia,