

Superintendency of Common Schools, (provided for in the Common School Bill then—in 1841—before the Legislature), which Office would afford the Incumbent a most favorable opportunity, by his communications, preparation and recommendation of books for libraries, etcetera, to abolish differences and jealousies on minor points; to promote agreement on great principles and interests; to introduce the best kind of reading for the Youth of the Country; and the not onerous duties of which Office would also afford him leisure to prepare publications, calculated to teach the people at large to appreciate, upon high moral and social considerations the Institutions established amongst them; and to furnish, from time to time, such expositions of great principles and measures of the administration as would secure the proper appreciation and support of them on the part of the people at large.

Lord Sydenham expressed himself as highly gratified at this expression of my views and feelings; but the passing of the Common School Bill of 1841 was then doubtful; although his Lordship expressed his determination to get it passed, if possible.

Apart from this statement of the intention of Lord Sydenham, it was also clear that the determination of Sir Charles Metcalfe, the Lieutenant-Governor, to appoint Doctor Ryerson to a position in which he could carry out a comprehensive scheme of Public School Education, and this was his decision come to some time before the question was discussed by Doctor Ryerson of the differences between Sir Charles Metcalfe and his late Councillors in 1843.

The Honourable Robert Baldwin prepared an elaborate Bill to remodel the constitution of the Toronto University. In December of that year, (1843,) Lord Metcalfe's Private Secretary wrote to Doctor Ryerson and stated that His Excellency would be happy to have some conversation with him in regard to the University Bill.

Doctor Ryerson soon afterwards went to Kingston and saw Lord Metcalfe. In a letter to the Honourable W. H. Merritt at the time Doctor Ryerson stated that:—

Sir Charles Metcalfe sent for me to consult me in regard to the University Bill, as I was connected with one of the Colleges I explained to His Excellency my views, and added that the educational condition of the Country at large was deplorable, and should be considered in a System of Public Instruction, commencing with the Common School and terminating with the University; being connected and harmonious throughout, and equally embracing all classes, without respect to religious sect, or political party. Sir Charles was much impressed and pleased with my views, and expressed a wish that I could be induced to give them public effect.

Doctor Ryerson having expressed his opinion verbally to Sir Charles on the Baldwin University Bill he reduced them to writing, and having sent them in a letter to Sir Charles, his Secretary acknowledged the communication as follows:—

The Governor-General is so sensible of the great value of the aid you would bring the Government in the intellectual improvement of the Country, that he anxiously hopes, as suggested, that some arrangement may be devised satisfactory to you to obtain your co-operation; and His Excellency will keep his mind bent on that object, and will be happy to hear any further suggestion from you with a view to its accomplishment.

The result was that, in September, 1844, the Reverend Doctor Ryerson was appointed Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada.

SCHOOL LEGISLATION OF FIFTY YEARS, 1841-1891.

Grammar and Common School Acts passed by the Legislature since the Union of the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada in 1840.

The Solicitor General Day's Common School Act, applicable to the two Provinces, passed in 1841; the Upper Canada Common School Act of 1843; the (Ryerson) Upper Canada School Act of 1846; also the Grammar School Sites Act of 1846; the (Ryerson) Upper Canada City and Town Common School Act of 1847; the (Malcolm Cameron) Common School Act of 1849; (which Act never went into operation;) the (Ryerson) Common School Act of 1850; the (Hineks) Common School Fund Act of 1850; the (Ryerson) Restoration of certain Roman Catholic Separate School Rights of 1851; the