

THE

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FOR THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

EDUCATIONAL GRANTS FOR 1867.

THE fact that in the Estimates passed by the Legislature at its present session, Education is set down for a smaller sum than was expended last year, has given rise to an impression that the schools have been suddenly deprived of a large proportion of the legislative aid which the people were led to expect. In answer to several enquiries on the subject we beg to state that there exist no grounds for any fears in relation to the matter. The amounts payable to the several classes of teachers were fixed by law in the legislative session of 1866. The scale then adopted has not since been touched. It will be found in the 18th section of the "Law concerning Public Schools." Every teacher will receive to the full the amount to which he or she is entitled under that section. The other grants in connexion with public schools remain as specified in the published law, and will be paid as they become due. It will therefore be plain that any sudden diminution of the aid for schools is impossible. The legislature has given to the people the power to determine how much shall be drawn annually hereafter from the Treasury for the support of schools. If the schools are few and taught by inferior teachers the amount drawn will be small; if many, and taught by well-qualified teachers, the amount drawn will be large. The Province has thus adopted the wise principle of paying each Section according to the amount and quality of the teaching work performed in it during each term.

A word of explanation in reference to the estimated expenditure. It has hitherto been customary to estimate the expenditure for education a year in advance. This system worked very well while a fixed sum was granted to each County to be subdivided among such teachers, many or few, as might chance to be engaged in it during any term. But under the amended law it is no longer possible to estimate so far in the future with anything like the requisite accuracy, since it is impossible to know how many schools will be in operation for a term which is yet a year in the future. At the request of the Superintendent, the Hon. Financial Secretary confined the last Estimate for Education strictly to the financial year, which ends on the 30th of September. The amounts payable to teachers in November next are therefore not included. This explains the smallness of the sum voted.

SALARIES AND CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHERS.

THE Report of the Superintendent of Education for the school year 1866 has been printed, and a copy for each Commissioner, and for each board of trustees, has been forwarded to the several Inspectors. Some facts showing the great progress which has been made in the education of the province, will be found under "Educational Intelligence." We make the following extract from the report:

The total number of teachers employed in the winter was 929, and in the summer 1,190, showing an increase for the respective terms of 223 and 237 over those of last year. The amount expended in the Province for teachers' salaries during the school year was \$235,825.67, an increase of \$45,730.28 over the previous year. The sources whence these salaries were derived, and the amount from each source,

were as follows.—Province, \$95,339.27; Counties, \$55,258.64; Sections, \$85,227.76. Applying to the sum of these amounts the scale of proportions for salaries recommended by the Council of Public Instruction, the approximate average of the salaries of the several classes of teachers for the whole school year was at the following rates: Male Teachers, Class 1st, \$392; Class 2d, \$294, Class 3d, \$196. Female Teachers, Class 1st, \$291; Class 2d, \$196; Class 3d, \$147: average salaries of teachers for the year, without respect to class, \$258.53. This does not include the salaries of the Head Masters of County Academies. In 1865, the average was \$239.67; and in 1864, \$146.85. The increase in the salaries of teachers is one of the most gratifying and significant features in connection with the recent educational reform. We may now reasonably expect that much talent of a good order will seek employment in the work of teaching, and that an increasing number of those who engage in this, one of the noblest of callings, will do so for life. It is abundantly evident that the people, with the assistance of the provincial and county grants, are not unwilling to provide a fair remuneration for teachers. Any deficiency in the number of teachers will be found to be but temporary and local, as the supply hereafter will chiefly depend upon the demand at remunerative rates.

An adequate and expansive mode of support having now been established by law, the examination and classification of teachers becomes one of the most important matters in connection with the system. "As is the teacher, so is the school," is, with obvious limitations, a sound educational maxim; and everything that contributes to the elevation and progress of teachers as a class, contributes also to the progress and efficiency of the schools. The object of the examination and classification of teachers is to ensure to each community and to the Province that the school training of the youth of the country is not assumed by incompetent or unworthy persons, and the children of the land thus defrauded of that preparation for the coming duties of citizenship which the law declares to be their right. The existing enactment provides thirty-four local committees of District examiners, and a committee of Provincial examiners for the Normal School. The great majority of these committees have discharged their important duties with diligence and care, and their appointment has proved to be one of the most beneficial provisions of the law. In consequence, however, of the adoption by the Legislature of the present admirable arrangement for the payment of fixed provincial grants to teachers, a different provision for their examination and classification seems to be required. Every teacher of the same class is now entitled, and justly so, to an equal grant from the public treasury for his services. In order, therefore, that justice be guaranteed to the Province, and to the teachers in different Districts and Counties, a uniform examination and classification are indispensable. This can not be secured under existing arrangements, since thirty-four different committees must of necessity adopt thirty-four different scales of classification, notwithstanding that they have a uniform outline of subjects before them. Many of our ablest examiners have repeatedly pointed out to me this defect, and many committees in consequence of this want of uniformity have been compelled, in a conscientious discharge of their duty, to require the re-examination of all teachers from other Districts. In fact, this is the only safe course for them to adopt in order to maintain the character of their schools, and to do justice to all their teachers. But while this course is necessary under present arrangements, it excludes the very flower of the teaching profession from the enjoyment of those immunities to which their attainments and ability entitle them, and subjects them to continual and in their case needless re-examinations. Every teacher of established character and ability should have the range of the whole Province before him in choosing his field of labour, and every board of trustees desiring to procure the services of such a teacher should have a like range