

The first sections of this Act confers on the Minister of Public Instruction certain powers concerning the encouragement of Science, Letters, and Art.

Although, in the actual state of the finances of the Province, this provision may not produce immediate important results, nevertheless, it will prepare the way for measures which will place our country on a better footing regarding interests that more pressing wants have caused to be left, perhaps, too exclusively to individual action.

It is well known how much the Minister of Public Instruction has, at heart, the progress of Letters and Art, and we are certain that if he be only seconded in this, by public opinion as the Government has been in all that concerns Agriculture and Colonization, we shall soon derive great advantages from the new organization of this Department.

The second Act, to which we call the attention of our readers, provides for the augmentation of the resources of the School Commissioners Catholic and Protestant of the two large cities of Montreal and Quebec. It authorises the Municipal Councils of these two cities to levy a special tax, should they not be able to economise a sufficient sum from their other expenses; but they must, in all cases, furnish the sum now required of them.

We are glad to learn that this measure will enable the Catholic School Commissioners of Montreal to realize a project they have had in view for some time, namely, the establishment, on a large scale, of the Commercial Academy directed by Mr. Archambault, and to build for this institution, an edifice of which the plans were recently submitted to the Minister of Public Instruction, by the Chairman, the Revd. Mr. Rousselot, of the Seminary of St. Sulpice, to whom Montreal is already indebted for the founding of the magnificent *Salles d'Asiles* or Infant Schools.

The Minister of Public Instruction, who has visited, as may be seen from his report, the Commercial Schools of France, Belgium and Germany, takes the greatest interest in this important enterprise and has been for a length of time in communication with its promoters.

There is every reason to hope that several new Schools for the poorer classes, in which the Instruction will be gratuitous, are going to be opened in our two great cities, and we are certain that the diffusion of such useful instruction among the poorer classes will more than repay any sacrifices that may have to be made.

The Act that we publish contains also some provisions which enable the School Commissioners of every Scholastic Municipality to double the sum hitherto set apart for the building of School-Houses. When this sum was fixed by the Legislature, the wants and the progress of Education were very different from what they are to-day; besides the price of material and cost of building were much less. Several Municipalities found themselves embarrassed by this restriction, which gave rise to more than one law suit and led to many difficulties. We would call the attention of the School Inspectors, School Commissioners, and the friends of education in general to the new provisions of the law, and exhort them to take advantage of them to ameliorate the material part of teaching, which, in this country, is perhaps the most urgent. The greatest inconveniences result very often, not only to education, but to the health of the pupils and even

to their morality, from the bad construction of School-Houses and insufficient accommodation.

In the first and second volumes of this journal, will be found a series of articles on the construction and furnishing of School-Houses, which it would be well to consult before incurring fresh expenses.

The Revd. Principal of Jacques Cartier Normal School has also commenced the establishment of a small pedagogic museum, a visit to which as well as to the Normal and Model Schools annexed, would amply repay any inconvenience suffered.

An act respecting the office of Minister of Public Instruction. Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislature of Quebec, enacts as follows:

1. The lieutenant-governor may appoint from time to time, under the great seal of the province, a Minister of Public Instruction, and all the provisions of this act shall apply to the Minister of Public Instruction already appointed and actually in office.

2. The duties and functions of the Minister of Public Instruction shall be:

1. All those now vested by law in the Superintendent of Education;
2. All those which shall be assigned him by His Excellency the lieutenant-governor in council, respecting the formation or encouragement of art, literary or scientific associations, the establishment of libraries, museums or picture galleries by these associations, by the government or by public institutions assisted by government, competitions, examinations, the distribution of diplomas, medals or other marks of distinction for attainment in literature, science or art, the distribution of all funds which may be placed at his disposal, by the Legislature, for similar objects, and generally respecting everything which relates to the patronage and encouragement of science, letters and art;

3. To provide for the establishment of schools for adults and for the instruction of workmen and mechanics; and for this purpose, the powers and duties of the commissioner of agriculture and of public works or part of these powers and duties in so far as regards the board of arts and manufactures and mechanics' institutes, may be, by the lieutenant-governor in council, transferred to the Minister of Public Instruction;

4. To collect and publish statistics and information concerning all educational institutions, public libraries, scientific, and literary and intellectual progress.

3. A secretary and assistant secretary shall also be appointed to the office or department of public instruction, and all other officers who shall be required for the administration of the laws respecting public instruction; and the nature of the functions and duties of all such officers shall be prescribed, from time to time, by the lieutenant-governor in council, and when it shall appear that certain duties and powers of the minister of public instruction cannot be fulfilled by him in person, these duties and powers may, by order in council, be assigned to the secretary, assistant secretary, or to any of the officers of the department or school inspectors; and when such duties and powers shall have been so assigned, either by an order of a general nature, or for special cases, the signature of such functionary to whom these powers shall have been assigned, shall be with regard to such matters equivalent to that of the minister of public instruction; but every such deputed functionary shall be held to act in conformity with the instructions and under the direction of the minister of public instruction; and mention of such delegation in every document signed or certified by the minister of public instruction or by the secretary or assistant secretary of the department of public instruction, shall be sufficient evidence of the fact before any court of justice, till proof to the contrary.

4. The signature of the minister of public instruction, or that of the secretary or assistant secretary of the department of public instruction, shall be proof before any court of justice, of every document certified by them to be conformable to the original, and every document certified by them to be conformable to the original shall be deemed to be so, and every document purporting to bear their signature, shall be deemed to do so till proof to the contrary be made.

5. The minister of public instruction shall be a member of the Executive Council, and eligible to the Legislative Assembly, or though receiving a salary may be summoned to the Legislative Council; and he may also fill at the same time any of the offices designated in section one hundred and thirty-four of the British North America Act,