

gard to all school legislation. This he did himself every few years, by means of Public Meetings and County conferences.

3. That the interference of the Education Department, by aid, or otherwise, should take place only when it could most effectively be used to stimulate, regulate and assist local effort in the work of education.

4. That a thorough and systematic inspection of Schools by competent Officers, was essential to their vitality and efficiency.

5. That the rateable property of the Country should be held responsible for, and should contribute towards the education of the entire youth of the Country ; and that, as a complement to this legally imposed rate upon property, "compulsory education should necessarily be enforced."

Such were the practical principles of School Legislation which Dr. Ryerson had embodied in the School Bills of 1846 and 1847, and especially in the more complete School Bill of 1850, which has always been regarded as the Charter of our School System.

Under the operation of the School Act of 1850, public opinion, in favour of widening the scope and broadening the foundation of our School System had, so far matured in 1871, that he prepared the comprehensive School Act of that year, which was then passed. It happily put an end to the yearly contests in the rural School Sections in favour of Free Schools, for, under that School Act, they became the law of the land.

This Act of 1871 introduced into our School Code for the first time, some important principles, which, as yet, had not received Legislative sanction. They were chiefly those which related, among other things, to the following matters :—

1. Governmental, combined with improved local, Inspection of Schools.

2. A high and fixed standard of qualifications for Inspectors of Public Schools.

3. The abolition of non-certificated Township Superintendents of Schools, and the substitution therefor of duly licensed County Inspectors.

4. The institution of Simultaneous and Uniform Examinations in the several Counties for Teachers desiring Certificates of Qualification. This principle was soon extended to other Examinations, including Competitive Examinations in Counties, etc.

5. The fixing and rendering uniform of a higher standard of qualification for Public and High School Teachers.

6. Giving the Profession of Teaching a fixed legal status, and providing more fully and equitably for the retirement and united support, by the profession and the Legislature, of worn out, or disabled, Teachers.