

Treasurer's receipt for the school-money paid out by him. The duty of the County Auditors will be plain and easy; and the school moneys will be best secured against every kind of misappropriation.

3. The next most important duty which the new School-Act devolves upon the County Council, is the annual appointment of Local Superintendents of Schools. I believe that it is generally agreed that it is not expedient or desirable to have both County and Township Superintendents; but as to which class of these local school officers should be provided, there is considerable diversity of opinion—some preferring a County Superintendent, others desiring Township Superintendents. The new School Act leaves the decision of this question to the choice of the Local Representatives of the people assembled in County Councils—each Council having authority to appoint a School Superintendent for each Township, or for two, three or four Townships, or for a County, provided it does not contain more than one hundred Schools. In some municipalities, where the duties of the office have been very imperfectly discharged, doubts are entertained by many persons as to the utility of the office at all; but this is not the case where the office is filled with ability, diligence and skill; and School Countries are unanimous in their judgment and practice as to the vast importance of an efficient local inspection and supervision of schools.*

The new School Act, by fixing the minimum of the allowance of a Local Superintendent, has relieved the Municipal Council of what has often proved an embarrassing and thankless duty. During the last session of the New-York State Legislature, a Bill was introduced, on the recommendation of the State Superintendent of Schools and the Report of a Select Committee, providing for the abolition of the office of Town Superintendents and the appointment of a School Superintendent for each Legislative Assembly District—analogueous to an electoral riding with us. The salary of each Superintendent was fixed at \$500 per annum. There are 128 Assembly Districts and 11,000 Schools in the State—giving an average of about 86 schools to each Superintendent, who was required to visit each school twice a year, with a remuneration of nearly six dollars per school. With us, under the new School Act, the Local Superintendent is required to visit each school under his charge at least once in each quarter, and to deliver a public educational lecture in each section once a year, besides various other duties prescribed by law; and the minimum of his remuneration is fixed at one pound per school—a less sum than is given to Local Superintendents by most of the Township Councils from which I have heard the present year. Persons who offer their services at a very low figure in order to get an office, generally do little that is of any value after they get the office, and then justify their inefficiency by the plea that they do more than they are paid for. It is of very little importance to the people at large whether a Local Superintendent receives a few shillings more or less per school; but it is of the greatest importance to them and their children, whether an able supervision be provided for their schools. Under the provisions of the new School Act, new and feeble Townships can be provided with an efficient School Superintendence, and aided, if not altogether relieved, in regard to its remuneration.†

* The following remarks, from a late New-York School Report, deserves the deep attention of all Municipal Councils, School Trustees and other friends of popular education:

"The success of schools is based upon two things which are closely connected and mutually dependent on each other; viz. the pre-eminent moral and intellectual qualifications of teachers, and the active and vigilant supervision of inspectors to render the methods of teaching more and more perfect. If either of these be wanting, the whole fabric receives a shock from which it is unable to recover. The great and important object is to have good schools. To have none is a great disadvantage; but to have bad schools in which error is taught and learned, is a great misfortune. A superintending power is the main spring of all schools. A moment's reflection will satisfy any one that the whole must hinge upon it. If the education of the people be seriously taken up, we may rest assured that the whole vigor and life of that education will depend upon the system by which it is to be regulated. If it be weak and insecure, the schools will make no advance; they may, by some transient circumstances, have a momentary success, but there will be no security that they do not speedily fall back into a deplorable state of languor. If, however, these schools are placed under a vigorous and active government, the spirit of that government will be communicated to every part of the machine, and will impart to it life and motion."

† This provision in regard to the duties and minimum of Local Superintendents, I first submitted to the consideration of the Government on the 23rd of February, 1849. It formed the 23rd Section of a then proposed "Draft of Bill making further provision for the improvement of Common Schools in Upper Canada,"—designed to remedy the defects of the then existing School law, and to adapt it to the provisions of Mr. Attorney-General

The School Act imposing upon a local Superintendent not only miscellaneous duties which require judgment and knowledge of men and things, but a visitatorial examination of each School once a quarter, (which, if conducted as the law expressly enjoins, cannot be performed in more than two Schools a-day,) and a lecture on education in each School Section once a year, and the examination of Teachers for the Schools, the County Council should spare no pains to search out and appoint men as local Superintendents who will command public attention as lecturers, who understand the true principles of school organization and the improved modes of school teaching, who will do justice to the great interests entrusted to them by their examinations of teachers, their visitations of schools, and their patriotic exertions to diffuse sound education and knowledge as widely as possible. I doubt not each County Council will respond to the spirit of the New-York State Superintendent of Schools, when he says, "It is fervently hoped that in every election hereafter to be made of a Local Superintendent, the most competent individual, without reference to sect or party, will be selected. On such a subject, where the good of their children is at stake, men should dismiss their narrow prejudices, and tear in sunder the shackles of party. They should consult only the greatest good of the greatest number of the rising generation. They should direct their preferences to those only who are the ardent friends of youthful progress—to those only, the smoke of whose incense offered in this holy cause, daily ascends to heaven; whose lips have been touched with a burning coal from the altar."

And as the selection to the office of Local Superintendent of Schools should be made upon the sole ground of personal qualification and character, and irrespective of party considerations, so should the duties of the office be performed in the same spirit. During the recent discussions in the Legislative Assembly on the School Bill, it was averred on all sides that the office of Chief Superintendent of Schools was and should be non-political—that whatever might have been the political opinions of the incumbent, or of his mode of advocating them, previously to his appointment to office, that, as in the case of a judge, he should take no part in party political questions during his continuance in office. On this principle I have sacredly acted since my appointment to office, as was admitted in gratifying terms by all parties in the discussion referred to; and I think the same principle should be insisted upon by each County Council in respect to each local Superintendent of

Baldwin's Municipal Council Bill, then before the Legislature. The following are the reasons I assigned for this provision:

"The Twenty-third Section confers upon Township Superintendents, within the limits of their respective jurisdictions, the powers of District Superintendents, with two vitally important provisos:—The one fixing the minimum of the allowance to Township Superintendents, [at one pound per School] the other prescribing additional duties of the highest importance to the progress of Common Schools [namely, that the Superintendent should visit each School once a quarter, and deliver a lecture on Education in each Section, once a year.] Without these provisos, I think the system of Township Superintendents will prove a failure, as it has done in the State of New-York; with these provisos, I think it will add very greatly to the efficiency of our Common School System. In the 'Municipal Corporations Bill,' I perceive the minimum of allowance to certain officers is prescribed by law; and I think such a provision absolutely essential to the efficiency of the office of Township Superintendent. The inefficiency of the late office of Township Superintendent was, I am persuaded, chiefly owing to the absence of the provisos which I here propose. In some instances, persons offered to perform the duties of Township Superintendent gratuitously, and such offers were invariably accepted: but that gratuitous zeal soon subsided; and as gratuitous service is irresponsible service, those who performed it considered themselves entitled to gratitude for the little that they did, rather than liable to blame for the much that they did not. Besides, when there were rival candidates for the office, the lowest bidder almost always received the largest suffrage; but when once in office, he would proportion his work to his compensation. Such was the tendency and practical effects of the system: although there were many honourable exceptions. And a still worse effect of that system was, the appointment, under such circumstances, of many incompetent persons. The first proviso which I propose, will remove all competition for the office upon pecuniary grounds; and while the compensation will be such as to secure the services of competent persons, the duties enjoined by the second proviso can hardly be discharged, or even attempted by incompetent persons. The second proviso will prevent the Councils from appointing persons who are not competent to prepare and deliver lectures; and persons who are competent to do that will be most likely to be qualified to inspect and superintend the Schools—their qualifications for which will be necessarily increased by their obligations to prepare public lectures on such subjects. The second proviso will produce, per annum, 12,000 school visits of Superintendents, instead of 3,000, as at present, besides, 3,000 public school lectures,—one in each School Section in Upper Canada. The vast amount of good which will result from such an arrangement, can scarcely be estimated."—"Correspondence on the subject of the School Law for Upper Canada," lately laid before, and printed by order of, the Legislative Assembly, page 32.