

Appendix (D.)

In many schools where there were not 20 scholars *bonâ fide* taught gratis (the number requisite before the gratuity of 10s. a head was to be granted), I was assured that it was a very usual device of the master to ask of his neighbours, or of another school, the loan of a sufficient number of children to satisfy this condition. Indeed, where children were scarce, parents were known to lend themselves to this good-humoured arrangement. The trustees, when they knew all this, generally connived at it willingly enough, because they generally wished well to the master, who was of their own appointment, and because the gratuity did not come out of their pockets, but, on the contrary, was pretty sure to find its way into them, the master being very frequently in their debt, and, as they well knew, having no other means of paying them.

In 1830 and 1831, two other Acts were passed, slightly amending and explaining the provisions of that of 1829. By the latter, the Governor was empowered to appoint 19 visitors, who, with the members of the House of Assembly resident in the country, and the resident rector or curate of the parish, were to divide the country into school districts, visit the schools annually, and report their state to the legislature, with any recommendations they might be disposed to make.

Schools rose rapidly under the Act of 1829. In that year 48 houses were built, under its provisions, and 351 schools received the Government allowance. In 1830, 60 more houses were built, and the number of elementary schools increased to 899. In 1829, the whole cost of education to the province was 13,785*l.* 16*s.* 3*d.*, including, in addition to the expenses of the elementary schools, 2,115*l.* 10*s.* for the 84 under the Royal Institution, and 5,250*l.* 3*s.* for special grants. In 1830, the gross amount under these same heads was increased to 26,019*l.*, and in 1831, the whole number of elementary schools was 1,216, and the whole cost of education 32,470*l.*

It is time here to explain the meaning of these special grants. The general educational Acts which have been noticed were meant to embrace only the elementary schools in the rural districts. Many of those, originally established by voluntary associations in the three towns of Montreal, Quebec, and Three Rivers, as well as sundry superior academies and colleges, dispersed over various parts of the province, were the subjects of separate annual appropriations. The first of these was in 1823, when 200*l.* was granted to a school in Quebec under the management of the Education Society in that town. In the following year there was only this same grant. In 1825, a like sum was also given to the British and Canadian school at Montreal. Every subsequent year fresh institutions received similar aid, and the grants under this head have been shown, in 1830, to have increased to 5,250*l.* 3*s.*

In 1831, the House of Assembly appointed a standing committee of 11 members (five to be a quorum), to report from time to time on all subjects connected with education.

The Act of 1829 having expired in May 1832, the 2 Will. 4, c. 26, was passed for the continuance of the system for two more years. Before noticing the peculiar provisions by which this Act is distinguished from its predecessors, it will be proper to advert to the reasons given for such distinction by the Education Committee. In 1831, they report, "that they cannot but regret that they have had evidence that in several instances too much dependence has been placed on legislative aids, and, in some cases, to a degree which seems to have had the effect of relaxing the exertions which were formerly made. Your committee cannot too strongly impress upon the House the mischiefs which would result from such a dependence, and placing the public money in the hands of societies or individuals practically liable to no sufficient responsibility, or regular or strict accountability, unless they at the same time have to apply a considerable portion of their own money along with that of the public."

The same committee, remonstrating against large legislative grants, dwells on "the abuses and corruption which uniformly attend the lavish expenditure of public money. Education itself suffers in the estimation of the public; false ideas are spread abroad among the people, that education is rather an object which concerns the community than themselves individually, and it is undervalued, while in reality it is become nearly as needful in the present state of things in this province as religious instruction, or instruction in the means of gaining an honest livelihood, for which it is the bounden duty of every head of a family to provide to the utmost of his power. To draw the money from the people by taxes, to be restored to them for these purposes, after undergoing all the diminution of the expenses of collection, management and waste, would soon impoverish them without effecting the object in view."

In 1832 the Committee report, that the increasing applications for public money render certain regulations necessary, and as warning to the public that less reliance than theretofore must be placed in aids from the general funds, and more from the localities immediately interested; and that, for these reasons, it is desirable, 1st, to grant no new allowances, except on the most urgent grounds, but rather to diminish those already granted; 2nd, to confine aids for elementary instruction in the towns, as much as possible, to one elementary school connected in some degree with one of each of the principal religious denominations, where all the poorer classes may have easy admission. It goes on "to regret that the applications during that session were nearly as numerous and great in amount as in the previous one. The extraordinary efforts which were made by the legislature under the unfortunate state of things which had so long retarded education in the province, and in a prosperous state of the public funds, have widely spread abroad the idea that the expenses of the education of youth were to be defrayed out of the public revenue;