

of the Common Schools, that the provision of the Act of 1846 was introduced, constituting Clergymen, Magistrates, and District Municipal Councillors, as School Visitors, and authorizing each of them, as such, to act within their respective Townships or charges, and—

To visit Schools—especially to attend the Quarterly Examinations of Schools, and at the time of such visits to examine the progress of the pupil and the state and management of the School, and give such advice to the Teacher and pupils as they may deem expedient, according to the regulations and directions for Visitors, which shall be prepared by the Chief Superintendent of Schools.

By the 15th and 16th Sections of the Act of 1846, Visitors are likewise authorized to adopt other voluntary measures for promoting the interests of the Common Schools, and diffusing useful knowledge in their respective localities.

The two-fold objection made by some against this provision of the Law, namely, that School Visitors would not act without being paid, or, that they would officiously and injudiciously interfere in school operations, has been entirely obviated by facts. I am not aware of a single complaint of any misuse of any privilege, or power, on the part of any single Visitor in Upper Canada, and the visits of the Visitors to the Schools are more numerous than I had anticipated. It is surely of no small importance to the cause of popular education to bring to its assistance the moral and social influence of the Religious Instructors of the people, as well as that of the local Representatives and the Guardians of public order; and the securing of no less than 3,908 voluntary visits from Clergymen, Magistrates and Municipal Councillors to the Schools, during the year 1847, is an important fact in the history of Elementary Education in Upper Canada, as well as an ample justification of this provision of the School Act of 1846.

1. Number and Kind of Visits Paid to the Schools.

The largest number of school visits by both District and Township School Superintendents reported for any one year, under the late Act (of 1843), was 6,751; the number of school visits of District Superintendents and Visitors reported for the year 1847, was 7,457,—besides 5,218 visits of other persons, making a total of 11,675 made to the Common Schools in 1847. It appears, from Statistical Table and Abstract E, that, of these visits, District School Superintendents paid 2,549; Clergymen, 1,823; District Councillors, 882; Magistrates, 1,203; other persons, 5,218. Statistical Table E exhibits the number of visits by each of these classes in every Township of Upper Canada; and the Statistical Abstract E presents a view of the same classification of visits in each of the several Municipal Districts. It will be seen that, in one District, the visits of the Superintendents are equal to only two-thirds of the number of Schools; so that more than two hundred Schools, in two Districts, have not been visited by the District School Superintendent at all, during the year. It is, however, gratifying to observe that the Local Superintendents' visits in some Districts far exceed the number of Schools. The Superintendents of the Midland and Johnstown Districts have made the greatest number of school visits during the year,—the former having made 292, and the latter 245. I find the visits of the Clergy in one District, (London,) amounting to 201, and those of the Magistrates in another District, (Johnstown,) to 136. In the State of New York, the Law requires a Summer and Winter visitation on the part of Local Superintendents, and of its importance there can be no doubt. In connection with such visitations, conscientiously and thoroughly performed, the cordial co-operation of the resident Clergy, Magistrates, and others, is of vital importance; and, I have been informed, that the voluntary visits and the Quarterly Examinations have given a new and unprecedented impulse to the Schools in several Districts. I trust that, in the course of a year, or two, this feeling will become general, and that the Common School examination and celebrations will be among the most common and interesting social festivities of the people.

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