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EDUCATION IN THE EASTERN PROVINCES.

I. PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

(Extract from the Report of Henry Fisher, Esq., Chief Superintendent, for the year 1858.)

INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW LAW—PUBLIC MEETINGS.

In presenting the seventh Annual Report of the state of the Training, Model, and Parish Schools, throughout New Brunswick, I feel that there are circumstances which render the performance of this part of my duty peculiarly difficult. The Law under which the School Service is conducted, came into operation on the 15th April, and two days subsequently I received my appointment as Chief Superintendent. One of the terms of the year had already expired, and my sphere of duty has been limited to the other. The new Law having made important changes in the general management of the Schools, as well as in the duties of my own particular office, it became necessary at once to prepare to give effect to its provisions.

The change made in the system of inspection was a necessary

one, and will, I believe, in various respects prove of immense benefit. Besides other advantages, the Chief Superintendent and the Inspectors can now move with a full understanding of each other's views, and all the operations of the Department be conducted more effectively and more harmoniously.

The duties of the Chief Superintendent were greatly increased, and one of the most important and necessary of these duties was, "that he should collect information on education, and hold public meetings in different parts of the Province, and address such meetings on the subject, using all legitimate means to excite an interest therein." In accordance with this provision, as soon after my appointment as other engagements would permit, I officially announced a series of public meetings in all the different counties, and in the most important places in each county. Such meetings were a novelty in the Province, and were generally largely attended. I found the most hearty concurrence on the part of the Trustees, Teachers, and the public generally, both in giving publicity to these meetings, and in securing convenient places for holding them, as well as a large and respectable attendance.

My design was to explain to the people everywhere our real educational position; to show them what our system had been, and what we are striving to make it; and especially to urge certain advantages which may be attained under the present Law, which could not be attained under any former Law. I was determined to keep the movements of my department above and beyond the party differences which exist in the Province, feeling that education is a work which requires the co-operation of all. I believe that I was successful in this effort, and I can gratefully record my acknowledgments for the kindness with which I have been received on every occasion, as well as for the assistance rendered me by gentlemen holding different opinions on less important subjects, and for the disposition generally manifested to promote my personal comfort, and to render my labors agreeable. The importance of establishing Superior Schools, and School Libraries; the advantages to be derived to education throughout the Province from adopting the principle of assessment; the necessity of improving the character of the School Houses; the importance of adopting a uniform set of School Books, Maps, &c.; the necessity of Teachers possessing sound moral as well as educational qualifications, were the topics on which I mainly dwelt at my public meetings.