

pense of maintenance while attending those schools. It is not intended that candidates shall attend longer than two months—and they are expected to successfully pass an examination at the end of that period in the theory and art of teaching. This class of candidates will not be called upon to attend classes of general instruction in the Normal School, but are to take advantage of the Model Schools in connection with the Normal School, so that by practice and observation they may obtain a knowledge of the best methods of teaching, and the two Normal Schools can thus, without excluding students who are anxious to get the fullest advantage from them, so as to obtain first-class certificates, be made available for a large number of those who desire to secure second-class certificates, and it is hoped that the result of this experiment will be a large and early accession to the teaching ranks of holders of second-class certificates. It is not proposed to interfere in any sense with the regulations, so far as the status of those now in the profession may be concerned, but it seems to me that by the scheme now proposed the great problem, how to afford a sufficient number of second-class teachers to the different schools which are anxious to obtain them, can best be solved. The required attendance at the Normal School being only for the short period of two months, and facilities being afforded for passing the subjects of examination through the High Schools, there should no longer remain any substantial difficulty in the way of annually adding to the ranks of the profession a sufficient number of adequately trained teachers. The amendments proposed are to enable the Department to frame general regulations which may enable it to carry out the necessary details of this scheme.

When we come to the amendments in the law respecting Public Schools, it will be found that these are necessary for the improvement of the system, and in some instances for more accurately expressing the law. In many points there will not be found room for much difference of opinion or much discussion, as regards the taking of land for school sites, the different holidays, and the like. But I, however, propose to introduce a new machinery for the formation of Township Boards. Township Boards may now be formed under certain conditions mentioned in the School Law, but unfortunately those provisions are not sufficiently explicit to free any attempt of this kind from difficulty. I propose to make the formation of Township Boards much easier and more acceptable than in the past. These provisions are entirely of a permissive character, and will enable school sections if they think proper, to form Township Boards. It is optional with the school sections to adopt them, and cannot be imposed upon them by the Department. I understand the cardinal principle of our system of education to depend on the people themselves, in applying their own means and local knowledge in the management of the public schools. * * *

It is not, therefore, proposed to ask any school section to give up its separate existence as a corporation unless the requisite majority of the school sections agree to that course. But the new machinery introduced for this purpose will be found on the whole satisfactory. And the general character of this amendment is that the school corporations themselves can alone take advantage of these provisions.

I also have dealt with another practical difficulty in the formation of union sections between parts of different municipalities. I do not disturb the law as it exists in reference to unions between portions of the same township. I offer new machinery for settling the complications which exist as to unions between parts of different municipalities. The details can be more fully considered on the second reading of this Bill.

I also found, upon my entering the Department, another difficulty in connection with the working out of the principle established by the Separate School Acts. Honourable members will understand that there are two Acts relating to Separate Schools—one in relation to Separate Schools which may be taken advantage of by Protestants and coloured people, and the other for Separate Schools which may be formed by Roman Catholics. The machinery for the purpose of giving effect to the principle contained in these two Acts has been found to be defective. Without assuming in any way to interfere with the principles contained in those Acts, I propose to introduce by a very simple expedient, means which will be effectual in relegating to each class of schools its proper supporters. In examining into decided cases, I find that the steps now necessary for defining the supporters of Separate Schools has always given rise to disputes, and whenever a legal question has been raised it has turned out that the steps taken in order to secure the status of a supporter of the Separate School have in most cases been illegally taken. The cases which I find reported have not related to Roman Catholic Separate Schools but to Separate Schools which Protestants and coloured people are allowed to establish. One case arose in the township of Ops, and the other in the township of Anderdon, in the County of Essex. The judges in these cases showed how unsatisfactory the existing machinery

was for the purpose of arriving at the simple result of securing to the supporter of a particular school—public or separate—his true position of liability as a ratepayer. I propose to take advantage of existing municipal machinery for the purpose of showing the respective liabilities of the supporters of Public and Separate Schools, and the machinery will have this great advantage over the present, that no ratepayer in the municipality can then escape the responsibility of contributing according to his assessment towards some particular school. Many do escape in connection with the present system. It is a system which necessarily leads to confusion, and provides very imperfect machinery for carrying out the principle which the Legislature of the former Province of Canada gave effect to in these Acts. I hope the experience of Honourable Members may be found to agree with mine in considering that the proposed provisions will overcome all those difficulties which in certain municipalities have produced much irritation between supporters of Public Schools and Separate Schools.

I have mentioned the main features of the amendments. I propose to make more clear some clauses as to compulsory attendance. I wish to make it perfectly clear that the trustees on the School Board are to be allowed to judge whether the ability or the child to attend school has not been excused by one of those valid excuses which the law permits. Now it seems to be a question whether it is the duty of the Trustees or School Boards to see that a child's not attending for a certain time was caused by proper reasons or not. It is proposed to make that quite clear.

The next, in regard to High Schools, is a subject which probably presents more difficulty at the present time than almost any other. The Province has contributed to these schools very liberally, and from year to year its contributions have been increasing. I have a statement showing that while in 1869 only \$27,613 of Provincial funds was appropriated in aid of Grammar Schools, we contributed in 1875 as much as \$80,000; and that while the contributions from the Provincial revenues, in connection with the High Schools, have been increasing in that rapid ratio, there does not appear to have been the same increase in the contributions of the different localities which derive special and peculiar benefits as distinguished from the general benefit derived by the Province. The question is now being discussed what area in a county can be properly called upon to contribute to the maintenance of a High School situate in any of its towns or villages. The original intention at the institution of the Grammar School evidently was that it should be an institution for a county as the Common School should for a township. By the Act of George III. under which a large portion of land was set apart for Grammar Schools, the expressed intention was that a public school on the plan of the English public schools should be established in every county, and thus the means for higher education secured. As I have mentioned, our High Schools have recently received an impetus in their development which is very satisfactory, and calls for further efforts now. The Grammar School being originally a county school, the County Council gives origin to every High School in the county just as it can take the initiatory steps for abolishing the High School. The main question in either establishing or discontinuing High Schools is the money resources for its maintenance. In many counties the liberality of the Council and the people is quite satisfactory, while in other counties there is extreme parsimony, and this has led many counties to confine the area of taxation for the support of the High School to the town or village in which it is situated. In considering the question, it appears that the whole benefit is not derived by the town or village in which the school is placed, but that the surrounding country is deriving substantial benefits from the School, and the return I have prepared shows that, so far as the attendance of children from the outlying districts compared with those from the town or village, the proportion is one-third to two-thirds. Under these circumstances it would appear to be unfair to leave the whole or a larger portion of the maintenance of the School upon the particular locality. There has been a good deal of discussion on this question. Some County Councils are prepared to admit that there should be a larger amount of liberality shown, considering the benefit the county as a whole gets from the High Schools, and the large contributions from the Provincial revenue. The county now only pays one-half of the amount contributed by the Province; this is an anomaly which I think merits discussion. The reverse prevails in the case of High Schools to that which prevails in regard to Public Schools (Hear, hear). While in the latter case the contributions from the Provincial revenue, are less than \$1 per head, in the case of High Schools it exceeds \$8 per head. There are under 9,000 pupils attending these High Schools, and we are giving \$72,000 a year for the support of those schools. It appears to be a sound principle, on which to lay the proportion of Provincial as compared with local burdens that in cases where the locality is especially benefited, the burden should be borne by the locality