

promote this primary and highest work of our country's civilization and greatness.

Yours faithfully and sincerely,

(Signed) E. RYERSON.

Toronto, March 1st, 1876.

III.—*To the Inspectors and Teachers of High and Public Schools.*

In addressing to you a few words on the termination of my long official connection with you, I cannot address you wholly as *gentlemen* (as I have done Municipal Councils and School Trustees), since of the 5,736 teachers employed in the public schools, 3,135 of them are females. I address you as friends and colleagues—having been myself a grammar school teacher two years before I commenced my public life.

(*Elevation of the Profession*).—In devising a system of public instruction for our country, the first thing needful was to exalt the office of the teacher. To do this two things were necessary: first, to elevate the qualifications and character of teachers; secondly, to provide better and more certain remuneration for their services. I need not say, what so many of you know, how low, a generation since, were the qualifications of by far the greater number of teachers, and how lower still was their moral character, and how poor and uncertain was their remuneration, and how wretched the places in which they taught. There were noble exceptions in all these respects—but they were exceptions to the general prevalence of ignorance, vice, and neglect. Of course much allowance is to be made on account of the infancy of the country, and the sparseness and penury of its hard-working inhabitants. But all the old inhabitants will bear witness that the state and character of the schools and teachers were such as I have indicated.

(*Normal Schools, Teacher's Remuneration*).—To improve the qualifications and character of the teachers two things were requisite—a school for the training of teachers, and competent Boards to examine and license them, making good moral character one element of qualification. A normal school trained and could train but a small proportion of the public school teachers; but it has furnished examples, and given a standard for qualifications of teachers and of teaching, the influence of which is felt in every part of the country. With the improved qualifications and character of teachers naturally followed their better remuneration; and to aid in promoting and rendering this more certain, the laws were improved, investing trustees with larger powers and securing to teachers the prompt and certain payment of their salaries. Though there is still much room for improvement, a contrast, rather than comparison, may be instituted between the qualifications, character, remuneration, social position and place of labour of the teacher of the present day and the teacher of thirty years ago.

(*County Boards—Improved status of the Teacher's Profession*).—For several years after the establishment of County Boards of Public Instruction for examining and licensing teachers, it was complained that teachers were subject to examination by Boards the members of which were not teachers themselves, and many of them incompetent for the office. That just ground of complaint has been removed by the qualifications of members of Examining Boards being prescribed by law, and none being eligible for the office except graduates of some English or Canadian University, with testimonial of experience as a

teacher, and teachers holding Provincial life first-class certificates. Another just ground of complaint remained, namely, that the schools were superintended and inspected by persons who had not been teachers, and were not qualified for the work. Now, no person is eligible to be a public school inspector who does not hold a certificate from the Education Department of the highest grade of the highest class in his profession. Thus is the profession of the public school teacher placed upon the same footing as the professions of law and medicine. It now only remains that the school text-books (the copyright of which is public property, under the control of the Education Department) be subject, as occasion may require, to the revision by select members of the teaching profession, and by them only.

(*Superannuation of Teachers*).—The heart almost recoils at the recollection of years of varied and often discouraging toil required to overcome the prejudices and obstacles in order thus to elevate the teacher's profession to its true standard of competence, dignity and permanence, and you are all aware of the storm of opposition which was raised against the last and most humane step taken to give increased value and stability to the teacher's profession by providing for the relief of its aged and disabled members—a provision now universally popular both within and without the profession. In 1853, the Legislature was with difficulty induced to grant \$2,000 a year, which was afterwards increased to \$4,000 and then to \$6,000, in aid of superannuated or worn-out public school teachers. High school teachers are now included, and the Legislative grant for the last year reported (1874) was \$23,100, nearly one-half of which was contributed by the profession itself.

(*Salaries of Teachers*).—I am aware that the remuneration of the profession is not yet what it ought to be. It should be the aim of every teacher to add to the value of the profession and its labours by good conduct, diligence and increased knowledge and skill; and the experience of the past shows that the country will not be slow to increase the remuneration of labours thus rendered increasingly valuable; for while the amount of salaries paid to 2,706 Public School Teachers in 1844 was \$206,856, the amount of salaries paid to 5,736 Public School Teachers in 1874 was \$1,647,750. It is gratifying to reflect that whatever sums are provided and expended for any educational purposes are all expended in the country, and therefore do not impoverish it in any respect, but tend to enrich it in the highest respect and in various ways.

(*The High Schools*).—In regard to High Schools, formerly called Grammar Schools, the law for their improvement and their administration by the Education Department dates back to only 1852, at which time their number was 84, the number of their pupils 2,643, and the Legislative Grant in their aid was \$20,567; in 1874 there were 108 High Schools, 7,871 pupils, and the Legislative Grant in their aid was \$75,553, in addition to which a sum equal to half that amount was required to be raised by County and City Councils, all of which to be sacred for the payment of salaries of masters and teachers; and corporate powers in Boards of Trustees to provide additional means for the payment of teachers, and the erection, repairs and furnishing of buildings. In 1852 there were no inspectors of High Schools; now there are three very able and efficient High School Inspectors. In 1852 the whole amount of salaries paid High School Teachers was \$38,533; in 1874 the amount of salaries paid High School Teachers was \$179,946. The improvements in the operations and efficiency of the High Schools have, I believe,