

to the several sections, according to the school population of such Sections respectively; it made no distinction between the able male teacher who taught sixty scholars, and the young woman who taught twenty; it had no regard to engagements which may have been made by Trustees according to law; it required of teachers conditions which the law had not enjoined, and proposed to deprive many of them of advantages which the law had conferred. Besides, the boundaries of the school sections having been changed in the course of the year, the school population returns from the several sections the preceding year would not answer as the basis of distributing the Legislative Grant to them for the current year. The District Superintendent was, therefore, compelled to address a circular requiring each set of Trustees to make a return to him of the number of children of school age in their school section, according to its *new boundaries*. When I visited and held a Public school Meeting in this District the latter part of last October, all these returns had not been received, and not a farthing of the school grant for the year (payable in August) had yet been paid to the poor teachers! Of course, I pointed out the illegality and injustice of the By-law above quoted; and it was not acted upon. At the session of the Council held the commencement of the present year, a resolution was adopted, praying the Governor-General to dissolve the Council, that the sense of the inhabitants of the Dalhousie District might be taken on the School Law! Whereas the law had not been fairly in operation in that District—the Council not having proceeded according to its letter or spirit. It is doubtless probable that many of the inhabitants have not distinguished between the provisions of the law, and the proceedings of their own Council—attributing to the former what has been occasioned by the latter.

Inconvenience has been experienced in some instances, besides those which have occurred in the Western and Dalhousie Districts, by alterations in the boundaries of school sections after the estimates and engagements had been made by the Trustees for the year, and appeals have been made to me on the subject by parties interested. In January last I drew the attention of the Councils to the evils of altering school sections in the middle of the school year, and suggested the propriety of all such alterations taking effect only at the commencement of the year.* Several of the Councils have adopted By-laws or resolutions to that effect; and I think little difficulty or dissatisfaction will in future be occasioned by an inconvenient time of altering school sections. Indeed, from what I have been informed, I believe District Councillors, as well as Trustees, are becoming generally and deeply impressed with the disadvantage of *small* school sections, or of frequent changes in their limit, except in cases of extreme necessity, or with a view to their enlargement. When these primary Municipal School divisions of each District are once judiciously and permanently established, a most important step will have been taken towards the establishment of good schools throughout Upper Canada.

5. *Discretionary powers of Councils as to modes of proceeding.*—In one or two instances doubts have been expressed by the Councils as to the extent of their discretion in the manner of exercising their power in dividing and altering school sections—as to whether they could exercise this power only during their sitting by formal votes, or by the appointment of committees for particular Townships or sections, subject to the approval of the Council. I have expressed my own opinion and advice in favour of this latter construction of the Act—that the provision was general and indefinite, leaving each Council to its own discretion, according to circumstances, as to the mode of exercising the general powers with which it has been invested by the Act; and I have suggested the propriety of each Council laying down some general rules as to the average extent of school sections, and then appointing a committee for each Township composed perhaps of the Councillors and District Superintendent, with a view of adjusting, as far as practicable, all the school sections of such Township according to the general rules adopted by the Council, and thus lay the foundation for future uniform and permanent operations. I do not think that any amendment of the School Act on this point is necessary; I believe that all that is required is experience, care, and discretion on the part of Municipal Councils. In a comparatively new department of

Municipal Government, it is not to be supposed that the most intelligent and patriotic men will, at all times, act to the best advantage; but experience and increased interest on the part of Councillors in the great work of educating the people, will, I think, be a better corrector of any imperfections and evils in this department of the school system, than the frequent changes in the law.

II. SCHOOL MONIES.

1. *Amounts raised by Local Assessments and Rate-bills.*—The amount of money voluntarily raised by the inhabitants of the several Districts, whether by Council assessment or Trustees' Rate-bill, and the number of pupils attending the schools, are the true tests of the feelings of the country in regard to the school system, and of the progress of elementary education. In both respects I am happy to say that the year 1847 is in advance of the preceding year, though 1847 was a year of great commercial and financial depression throughout the Province. The accompanying Statistical Table A, presents a view of what has been obtained from all sources for the salaries of Common School teachers, not only in the several Districts, but in the various Townships of Upper Canada, and the General Abstract A, exhibits the results in each District. The total amount of Council assessment for 1847 was £22,955 2s. 8d.; the total amount of Council assessment for 1846 was £21,871 16s. 6d. The total amount collected by Trustees' Rate-bills in 1847 was £30,543 10s. 5½.; total amount collected by Trustees' Rate-bills for 1846 was £29,385 12s. 4d. The total amount of Local Council assessment and Trustees' Rate-bills for 1847 (exclusive of the Legislative Grant of £21,000) was £53,498 13s. 1½., just two hundred and fifty per cent. more than was raised by assessment and Rate-bill in 1842. From the General Abstract A, it will be seen that there were balances of school moneys of former years in the hands of District Superintendents at the commencement of 1847, amounting to £5,915 14s. 6d.; that the amount of these balances, January, 1848, was £5,614 19s. 0d. The total amount of money reported, derived from all sources, and expended for the payment of salaries of Common School teachers for 1847, was £77,599 11s. 4½.; the total amount of the preceding year reported, was £72,109 8s. 6½d. This includes the single item of teachers' salaries, irrespective of the moneys expended for the erection, repairs, furnishing, and warming of school-houses, &c., &c.

2. *Comparison with the State of New-York.*—The whole population of the State of New-York is upwards of three millions: the whole population of Upper Canada may be set down at one-fifth of that of the State of New-York. Now the amount of money raised by County assessment in the State of New-York in 1847 was \$275,000.00; while the amount raised in Upper Canada in the same way was \$91,820.60,—one-third the amount raised in the State of New-York, in the same way and for the same purpose.

Again the amount paid in Rate-bills for teachers' salaries in the State of New-York for 1847 was \$462,840.00; the amount paid in Rate-bills in Upper Canada for the same purpose, was \$122,174.00—more than one-fourth that of the State of New-York.

Furthermore, the amount arising from the State School Fund and Legislative appropriation in the New-York State for 1847 was \$275,000.00; the amount of Legislative grant in Upper Canada for the same purpose was \$34,000.00,—nearly one-third the amount granted in the neighbouring State, with a population more than five times that of Upper Canada.

The school system of Upper Canada has been in existence but seven years; that of the State of New-York has been in operation five times seven years.

These facts are an appropriate reply to the attacks which have been made upon our present school system, and they cannot fail to be grateful to the feelings of every friend of general education in Upper Canada.

There is, however, one point of comparison in the Common School Expenditures of the two countries, which must cause the deepest pain to every patriotic Canadian. In the State of New York, in 1847, the State appropriated \$55,000.00 and the people raised, by local assessment, \$38,000.00 for Common School Libraries; while not a farthing has yet been appropriated by our Legislature for the same object in Upper Canada; I hope before the beginning of another year, we shall have reason to congratulate our country in this respect also, in comparison with that of our American neighbours.

* See *Journal of Education* for U. C., Vol. I, page 6.