

who was counsel for Mr. Borthwick, on points which he regarded as extra-judicial, and which in an ordinary Court of Law it is possible might not be pressed. I have some knowledge of the law of evidence, and I could quite sympathize with his views as a barrister; but, as I said at the outset, while we would be guided generally by the law of evidence, we had another object in view—that was, to get at the simple facts of the case in the best and most direct way, so as to lay them before the Chief Superintendent in such a manner that the parties concerned should be dealt with fairly and justly, and the public interests guarded for the future. We desired that the alleged facts should be clearly brought out, and all the events connected with the proceedings of the Board of Examiners during the last four or five years reviewed. I think it was unfortunate that this matter should have been allowed to remain over the head of the Inspector for so long. It is now four or five years since the law was passed, and the whole of the inquiry has legally extended over the period I have named, from 1871 to 1876. In the inauguration of a new system, it was probable that many of these inadvertencies or irregularities might have arisen from thoughtlessness or mistaken kindness. To bring them up years afterwards is indeed a hardship, though it might not mitigate the offence in any particular. We have endeavoured, from first to last, to conduct the investigation in the best spirit; and now that it is closed, I think the effect of it will be most beneficial and salutary throughout the country. I think that teachers will see that the Department, having put forth these Regulations founded on some experience, will insist upon their being strictly enforced in all cases in their integrity, without fear, favour or affection. The investigation will also have a good effect in showing to all parties concerned that it is better to adhere strictly and literally to the Regulations than to evade or disobey them; as the certificates obtained under the facts and circumstances brought out in this investigation are of little value, obedience to the rules was the more desirable, as in all cases of hardship represented to the Education Department, arising from the iniquity of any rule, the complaint was listened to, and, if desirable, modifications made to meet particular cases of hardship. I know that the general principle of the administration in the Department has been to deal with every case on its merits, in the best and most practical spirit, and in no instance to enforce a rule rigidly and inflexibly. In each individual case the circumstances connected with it are considered, and, if it is possible, in the interests of the Public Schools, and of the profession of teaching, to relax any rule which might press unequally or unfairly on anybody. Instances might be adduced to show that the recommendations of the Inspectors have been invariably respected, and in most cases concurred in. I think my reverend friend, knowing these facts, might rather have relied more implicitly upon the Department, if he thought the rules too hard or inflexible, than to have departed from them as he has done. These Regulations, as every Inspector knows, have the force of law, and can only be set aside by competent authority. The law as it exists at present is different from what it was in regard to its administration through the County Boards and through the Inspector. Formerly the County Boards were independent bodies, and could act according to their judgment and the provisions of the statute law on the subject. The Inspectors were also to some extent independent of the Chief Superintendent. But the law has been, as experience shows, wisely altered. None of these bodies or individuals are now wholly independent. All they do must now be according to the law and the instructions received from the Chief Superintendent. In no case has the authority of the Chief Superintendent been exercised arbitrarily, and in no case is it likely it ever will be. It must occur to everybody (when they know the administration of the School Law affects about 12,000 Trustees, and very nearly 100 Inspectors) that unless there is some defined responsibility to some central authority, a great many irregularities, inconveniences and difficulties would be constantly arising, to the great detriment of the schools. I know as a matter of fact that the administration of the law has been greatly promoted and simplified, from the fact that there is now a more clearly defined central authority recognised by statute. During my connection with the Department, and especially since the new law of 1871 was passed, great care has been exercised in the reversal of a decision of any Inspector. In all cases where it has been thought advisable to differ from him, the decision of the Inspector has been, as far as possible, reversed either through or by himself. Under these circumstances we always look for an honest enforcement of the Regulations. Personally I have experienced a good deal of satisfaction in coming here and meeting all parties concerned. I think I can see some useful modifications which may be made in these Regulations, which I will suggest to the Chief Superintendent. I appeal to all parties concerned in this matter whether it would not have been better, in the interests of the School Teacher and the public, to have adhered most rigidly to the Regulations as prescribed by law; and in cases of difficulty, as

I have intimated, appeal to the highest authority, who is always willing to listen to any complaints or suggestions made? In regard to this particular case which is now closing, it may have escaped the attention of the Inspector, that in showing favour to the candidates in Ottawa—even with the kindest intentions—he was inflicting a most serious injury upon all the other candidates in every other part of the Province; and, so far at least as Ottawa was concerned, vitiating the entire examination over which he presided. It was well known that the examination for teachers' certificates are held at the same hours, on the same day, and in the same subjects, in every county and city of the Province. Regarding every city or county as a separate room in a large building in which examinations such as I have indicated are going on simultaneously, it must be patent to every one that if the examiner in one room (or county) gives information to the candidates in his room (or county), in regard to the contents of the papers of the examination, he places all the other candidates at a disadvantage as compared with the favoured ones, and, in point of fact, entirely vitiates his own examination. This is all the worse when medals are in competition, as has been the case during the present year. Although the investigation has been a most painful one, yet we, as commissioners, have sought to conduct it in as fair and equitable a manner as possible.

Mr. McDowall, the complainant, expressed himself perfectly satisfied with the manner in which he had been treated in this investigation. He also explained that he was not aware of the facts on which his charges were founded until some three or four months ago, which was his reason for not asking for an investigation sooner.

Mr. Borthwick, the defendant, thanked the Commission for the courtesy and impartiality with which he had been treated during the inquiry.

Dr. Hodgins then asked if any one present wished to address the meeting, and no one responding, he declared the investigation closed.

III. Advertisements.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE JOURNAL.

While communications on educational subjects of general interest are invited, they must be considered as expressing the views of the writer. Political discussions are to be avoided. The essentials of each communication should be conciseness, and a subject-matter relating to school management, discipline, progress, teaching and other questions of administration.

Inspectors, Trustees and Teachers, as well as all others interested in education, are invited to avail themselves of *The Journal* for this purpose.

NORMAL, PUBLIC AND HIGH SCHOOL EXAMINATION PAPERS.

The sets of Examination Papers used in the Normal School during the 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th sessions can be sent free of postage on receipt of 30 cents each. Those of the 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 31st, 33rd, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, and 44th sessions, at 40 cents each, and those of the 45th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st and 54th sessions, at 50 cents each.

The entire sets of Examination Papers for First, Second and Third Class Teachers for July, 1873, December, 1873, or July, 1875 or July 1876, neatly stitched, can be sent free of postage on receipt of 55 cents per set. Those used at the County Examination for Second and Third Class Teachers for July, 1871, July, 1872, or December, 1873, can be sent, free of postage, on receipt of 50 cents per set.

The High School Entrance Examination Papers for the following years can be supplied, free of postage, at 15 cents per set:—Autumn 1873, January, 1874, June, 1874, December, 1874, June, 1875, December, 1875, or June 1876; also the Intermediate Examination Papers for June 1876.

STATUTE LABOUR BY TEACHERS.

Teachers frequently write to the Department, remonstrating against their being required to perform Statute Labour, or to pay any equivalent for it. As the obligation arises under the Assessment, and not under the School Law, the Department has no jurisdiction in the matter, and cannot therefore interfere in it.