

The County Council, to render the County inspectorial system perfect, would be called upon, as it has even the power by law now to do, to appoint a County inspector with duties in connection with the County Council similar to those of the sub-inspector in connection with the township boards, but with more extensive powers, supervising over one superintending the whole. He should also be a common school teacher, of high celebrity in the County as one, and of at least fifteen years' experience in his profession.

The Department of Education in Toronto should be empowered to create four head inspectors at least to represent the legislative school fund, with duties in connection with the department similar to those of the County inspectors, but of course with powers more extensive. They alone should be empowered to grant Provincial certificates, holding examinations for this purpose in central situations twice every year. The County inspector and sub-inspectors of each County would of course form a county Board of public instruction, with power to grant County Board certificates. Or a plan might at once be adopted for granting Provincial certificates to all competent teachers, and obliterate for evermore the distinction between Provincial and County Board certificates. It is this: let the Province for this and inspectorial purposes be divided into as many districts as there are head-inspectors; let each head-inspector, accompanied by the County inspector of said district, meet at some central place within the district, and there hold an examination for the purpose of granting certificates good for the whole Province. Those who would be unable to obtain certificates in this way should attend the Norman School; and in every case the latter would be the most preferable method, if it would suit the convenience of all. Should this or some similar inspectorial system be adduced, there is no doubt but that the educational interests of the country would receive an impetus that would soon place the country, in point of intelligence and virtue, in a position that would compare favourably with any other at present in existence.—*Brantford Courier*.

2. SCHOOL CONVENTIONS IN UPPER CANADA.

At the School Conventions Rev. Dr. Ryerson proposes doing away with the school sections altogether, and leaving the management of matters with some Board having jurisdiction over a whole Township. As an argument in favor of this, he contends that it would do away with much of the petty quarreling and prejudice now prevalent. As far as this proposal is concerned, we must say that we most decidedly favor it, since it will be apt to secure one great boon, the permanency of a teacher's position. That unfortunate individual is now subject to the caprices and whims of every parent whose children are under his tuition. With the power centralized, these whims will have to have more than a shadowy foundation before they can be exercised in such a way as to injure the teacher. Another advantage that would arise from this is that the salaries would be equalized, and more system established in the manner of payment.—*Pictou North American*.

3. COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN UPPER CANADA.

We promised to-day to notice the methods adopted in some of the States of the neighboring republic, to secure the attendance, for at least a portion of every year, of all the children of the State. May-hew, in his interesting work on popular education, gives a resume of these, and to it we are indebted for the facts which we to-day present to our readers. In some of the States of Europe the laws in this respect are exceedingly stringent. In Prussia, for instance, when a parent refuses without satisfactory excuse, to send his child to school, for the time required by law, he is called before the Court, tried, and if he refuses compliance, the child is taken from him and sent to school, and the parent to prison. This is probably the extreme limit to which the power of the State could go, and it is very doubtful if the spirit of the people of this country would submit to a law of this kind. It is similar to the laws which prevailed a couple of centuries ago in the New England colonies. The following curious passage occurs in the Massachusetts Colony Laws of 1642:—"Forasmuch as the good education of children is of singular behoof and benefit to any commonwealth, and whereas many parents and masters are indolent and negligent in their duty in that kind, it is ordered that the selectmen of every town in the several precincts and quarters, where they dwell, shall have a vigilant eye over their brethren and neighbors, to see, first, that none of them shall suffer so much barbarism in any of their families as not to teach by themselves or others, their children and apprentices so much learning as may enable them perfectly to read the English tongue, and knowledge of the capital laws, upon penalty of twenty shillings for each neglect therein."

According to the statutes of Massachusetts of 1850, each of the several cities and towns in that State is "authorised and empowered

to make all needful provisions and arrangements concerning habitual tenants, and children not attending school without any regular or lawful occupation, growing up in ignorance, between the ages of six and fifteen years: and also, all such ordinances and by-laws respecting such children as shall be deemed most conducive to their welfare and the good order of such city or town; and there shall be annexed to such ordinances suitable penalties, not exceeding for any one breach a fine of twenty dollars." And in order to carry out this provision, it is made the duty of the authorities to appoint annually three or more persons, who alone are authorized to make complaints for any violation of the law, and carry out the decisions of Justices of the Peace in cases of the imposition of penalties. And the Justices before whom an offender is brought are vested with authority, instead of imposing a fine upon the parent, "to order children proved before them to be growing up in truancy, and without the benefit of education provided for them by law, to be placed for such period of time as they may judge expedient, in such institution of instruction, or house of reformation, or other suitable situation, as may be assigned or provided for the purpose in each city or town" availing itself of the provisions of the Act. And this power has been taken advantage of by many of the municipalities, and incorporated into their municipal codes. In Boston, for instance, children whose parents are dead, or if living, neglect to send them to school, may be sent by the Court to the House of Reformation. In addition to this House of Reformation, there has been established under a recent Act, a State Reform School where children whose parents ignore their duty towards them are "instructed in piety and morality, and in such branches of useful knowledge as shall be adapted to their age and capacity," and from which they may be borne out to some trade.

Analogous to these institutions are the House of Reformation for juvenile delinquents in New York, and the House of Refuge in Philadelphia. In both of these are excellent schools, where those who would otherwise grow up in crime, are instructed in such knowledge as should tend to make them useful citizens. But all these institutions imply that in cities at least some similar machinery is necessary before a system of compulsory education can be enforced. We believe that, as a matter of economy, it would be much cheaper to erect them than to permit the children of the vicious and depraved to grow up in ignorance and in association with crime. As we have said, the subject is one of immense importance in our school system; and we have no doubt that in the convention which is to be held to-day it will secure that consideration to which it is so fully entitled.—*Hamilton Spectator*.

4. LOCAL SUPERINTENDENT'S AN IMPORTANT OFFICE.

The letter of the Hon. Billa Flint in a recent issue of the *Review*, and doubtless also the recurrence of the period of the year when county and township appointments to office are made, have prepared the public mind for a re-opening of the question as to the propriety or otherwise of appointing a Local Superintendent of Schools for the county, or one for each section of the county, instead of for the municipalities singly, as has heretofore been the rule. The idea is rapidly gaining ground that such a change would be highly beneficial, and the experience of neighboring counties who have adopted the plan of County Superintendents would seem to be in its favor.—There are two leading causes to the growing dissatisfaction with the present system. The first is the difficulty, in many municipalities, of finding a suitable man, although aspirants for the office may be numerous; and the second is owing to the fact that the supervision of the schools of a single township is not enough to occupy more than a passing share of attention, and being only a secondary duty, to be attended to in the intervals of some leading and more engrossing pursuit, it can hardly be expected to be entered into with the zeal and pursued with the devotion which its importance requires.

Two visits in the year to each school is the number which the law requires; and as usually only two schools, and in many cases but one, can be visited, and the pupils examined, in a single day, involving probably many miles of travel, the sum of four dollars for each school per year—the highest paid in this county—can by no means be regarded as munificent remuneration, especially when it is remembered that many additional days are spent in receiving and examining reports, apportioning moneys, and annually preparing from very inaccurate data a full report to the Educational Department; to say nothing of a lecture anticipated at least once a year in every school section, for all of which the aforementioned sum is presumed to be an adequate equivalent. Can it be wondered at that public duties thus brought into competition, and sometimes into collision, with private interests and a man's main pursuit in life, should under these circumstances be pushed into the shade, and in time come to be treated as secondary instead as of paramount importance?