

## Editorial Notices, &c.

**ESTABLISHMENT AND PROGRESS OF THE NORMAL SCHOOL.**—The attention of legislators and other enlightened friends of education is respectfully directed to the second article in this number (p. 19) on the *Origin and Progress of the Normal School of the State of New-York*,—being part of an Address delivered by the State Deputy Superintendent of Schools, at the close of the last Session of the Normal School. An attentive perusal of that beautiful Address cannot fail to impress every reader with the vast importance attached to the Normal School department of a public school system by the most experienced and devoted friends of education in the State of New-York, and also the great delicacy and difficulty connected with the successful establishment of such an institution as a part of the system of public instruction; and it is only such a view of the subject that will enable public men and general readers to form an adequate notion of the responsibility and care connected with the introduction of this department of the Canadian School System. Whether those on whom this difficult task devolved were more worthy of suspicion and attacks, or of support and sympathy, any reader can judge. That the task has been successfully accomplished thus far, has been admitted on all sides. Yet the new School Act changes the constitution of the Normal School, and that at the instigation of persons who had never even been in a Normal School, much less understood its management, and without consulting a single individual to whose counsels and co-operation the Normal School owed its existence and successful operations. In addition to this, the new Act imposes a condition upon student-teachers, with which no young man of self-respect would comply, and which has never been proposed to be imposed upon the student-teachers of any Normal School in Europe or America. The 62nd Section of the Act does not permit the Board of Education to aid any candidate for teaching to attend the Normal School unless he shall "enter into a bond with two sufficient sureties" to fulfil his promise to teach for a specified time, or pay back the amount granted him. All that the Board of Education has given to facilitate the attendance of candidates for teaching, is £5 10s. each, or a dollar a week during a Session of five months, and that upon the same declaration that the authorities of the State Normal School of Albany have, from the beginning, required of each student-teacher entering the School—namely, that he will devote himself to school teaching, and that his object in coming to the Normal School is to qualify himself better to discharge the duties of his profession. But to value the honour or integrity of a young person producing a certificate of good character at less than £5 10s, and to bind him in a bond with two sureties for that pittance, is, in the view of those who have had the most experience in such matters in different countries, degrading in its moral influence, unnecessary and impolitic. A country receives, rather than confers, a benefit by thus aiding in the training of School Teachers. About nine-tenths of all the student-teachers who have been admitted to the Normal School were school teachers at the time. Though the population of all the State of New-York is about five times as large as that of Upper Canada, the average attendance at the Canadian Normal School has been nearly one half that of the New-York State Normal School. In most of the Districts of the Province testimony has been given of improvement in school teaching and of the salutary influence which has gone forth through the medium of the Teachers who have been trained in the Normal School. The Board of Education,—the members of which have gratuitously devoted so much time to the Institution—is as deeply interested in the public welfare as those who devised the ill-advised provisions of the new School Act, and is quite competent to judge as to what regulations and conditions will best promote the great public objects of the Normal School. Most earnestly do we deprecate any thing that will limit and cripple the usefulness of this Institution; and most fervently do we pray for the still wider extension of its

benefits—given as its instructions are by masters whose superiors we have never seen in any Normal School.

**PRINCIPLE OF APPORTIONING THE SCHOOL FUND.**—In October, 1848, (upwards of a year since) the Superintendent of Schools for Upper Canada, submitted, in the proper quarter, remarks and recommendations for the distribution of the School Fund according to the *ratio of attendance at School*, instead of the ratio of population of school age—taking the average attendance of pupils during both *winter* and *summer* as the basis of distribution. In the draft of Bill which he submitted at the same time, was contained a simple clause for carrying this recommendation into effect. The recommendation did not contemplate any change in the principle heretofore acted upon in the apportionment of the School fund to Districts, Cities, Towns, and Townships, but only a discretionary power in its distribution to the various school sections of a Township, Town or City, according to the *ratio of attendance at School*,—a principle of distribution most earnestly advocated by the Hon. HORACE MANN.

We are happy to find our own views corroborated by the recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools for the State of New-York, who, in his report submitted to the Legislature the first of the last month, makes the following remarks on the apportionment of the School Fund:—

"The annual revenue from the capital of the Common School Fund, \$280,000, together with an equal sum raised by the Boards of Supervisors upon the several towns, and an additional equal sum levied upon the respective counties, under the act establishing Free Schools, is apportioned among the several towns and wards of the State, in proportion to the whole *population* of each, as ascertained by the last preceding census. The town and ward officers apportion the amount thus received, among the several School Districts of their respective towns and wards according to the whole *number of children between the ages of five and sixteen residing therein*. It is respectfully suggested to the Legislature whether the ratio of apportionment and distribution of the School money might not advantageously be so changed as to have reference to the attendance of pupils upon the District Schools for a certain specified period, during the preceding year, instead of being based upon either population or the number of children actually residing in the District. By the adoption of this mode of distribution, strong inducements would be presented to the taxable inhabitants of the several Districts, to place their children in the Common Schools, and to keep them there for a sufficient length of time to secure an additional share of the public money."

**INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF SCHOOLS, &c.**—The first article in this number—from the pen of the Head Master of the Provincial Normal School—is recommended to the attention of Legislators and all friends of educational progress. It is to be hoped the School Law will soon be so restored and amended as to afford facilities for giving some practical effect to the general practical views presented in the article referred to—views which cannot be practically developed under the provisions of the new School Act.

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