

results in France, in Belgium, and in the United States; but in this country, where the salaries generally paid to teachers are so unremunerative, it would not be just that they should be taxed with the expense of the establishment and organisation of these useful societies, all the benefits they derive from them, being returned to our children a hundredfold. The Government should in justice contribute towards their support, with the same liberality that it evinces towards all branches of the public service.

The Superintendent then alludes to the provisions of the *Act for the encouragement of Superior Education*, by which he is intrusted with the task of preparing a Report to be submitted to the executive government yearly on the apportionment to be made of the grant to the several institutions. This he says has considerably increased the duties, and responsibility of his office.

The sums granted every year by the Legislature were gradually increasing, and this budget, in consequence of some misunderstanding between my predecessor and the Inspector General, caused a deficit in the finances of this Department. It is probable, inasmuch as a like cause would produce a like effect, that the continual increase of this particular budget would in the end have completely absorbed the share granted for Elementary Education, had not a law been passed for restraining this excessive liberality. By obliging every Institution desirous of obtaining Government aid, to transmit to the Education Office a detailed report shewing, as far as figures will permit, a correct statement of its resources and of its usefulness, and by requiring that the grant should be apportioned by the Executive, the Legislature had no doubt in view the obtaining a more correct classification of these Institutions, and a distribution of the grant more conformable to the exigencies of public instruction. But such a classification could not be firmly established, or rigorously acted upon, all at once; and the budget of last year, therefore, to a certain extent, became the basis of the first apportionment under the new system. For the first year they might even have urged a species of acquired right, and alleged that the expenses incurred by them were incurred on the faith of the ordinary annual aid being granted to them. It is only gradually and after much discussion and explanation that a complete system of distribution can be framed which will not interfere with any legitimate right or injure any new Institution susceptible of development.

If the Legislature or the Government had taken the initiative in the foundation of Institutions of Superior Education, it would have been easy to establish a program in the first place, and then distribute them over the whole face of the country according to the number and wants of the population. But it was otherwise; these institutions are, in many parts of the country the spontaneous fruit of the zeal of an intelligent people; they sprung up as it were by chance, and they expanded and improved, in proportion to the assistance they were enabled to procure from time to time, under the old order of things. Institutions which were originally nothing more than good elementary schools, have become academies and commercial colleges in which almost every branch of Education is successfully taught. They would certainly never have attained their present state of usefulness, without the assistance that they received when first established, and which might have been refused them, either, under the pretext, that they were not then of sufficient importance, or by representing the wants of other localities better entitled to receive it. It is however, to the assistance of the impulse thus given to that which is understood by "Superior Education," that we are indebted for the desire for learning now become so general throughout the country parts of this Province, for having awakened them out of their state of moral lethargy, and for the whole system of education itself, being enabled to overcome the many obstacles, which, for such a length of time opposed its progress. It is not my intention here to extol the system heretofore followed, or rather a state of things, which, if I may so term it was self-created, I merely compare the benefits derived on the one hand, with the difficulties resulting from it on the other; but I wish, above all, to show its position just as it is found now that for the first time the head of this department has to deal with this new and difficult task.

There never was then, from the very outset, any regular classification of the institutions, nor any proportion established between the amount of aid granted, and their real value, or the number of scholars, neither was there any territorial boundaries assigned to any of them, nor did the figures representing the population of the several great districts of Lower Canada correspond at all with the amount

of the grant distributed within each of them. The names even of the Institutions are generally speaking, those which their founders thought fit to give them, and unfortunately, notwithstanding that they were, in certain cases, undeserved, these names did not fail to exercise a certain influence in the apportionment of the grant.

Would it, however, be expedient to adopt rigorous measures at once, which, if based on the exact proportion to be given to each district, would ruin several institutions well worthy of support? Ought we not rather to take into account the efforts and the sacrifices, made and submitted to by the inhabitants of those localities that are better provided for, than to allow, what actually exists, to go to decay, merely for the purpose of establishing institutions which, as yet have no existence? Will it not happen that what may have been prematurely done or undertaken, will, by reason of the increase of the population and the clearing of the land, become insufficient, instead of being superfluous, and would we not, at a latter period be exposed, in many instances, to re-establish at great cost, the institutions which we had allowed to go to ruin after having spent so much money and care upon them?

It is my opinion, that it would be better, in all cases which do not surpass the bounds of Justice and all reasonable proportion, to allow the several institutions now on the list, the benefit of the *fait accompli* and to confine ourselves to prevent the establishment of new institutions whenever they would come unjustly into competition with those of an earlier date. Beside which, this restriction, altogether a negative one, and which only consists in abstaining from granting any aid, is the more strictly enjoined by the insufficiency in the amount of the grant, increasing yearly, while, made by the Legislature, but which, under the new arrangement even the first year was considerably diminished.

With few exceptions I have therefore limited myself this year, to the making of a general proportionate reduction. This reduction affected principally the extraordinary grants, which had almost become ordinary ones. Unless a special fund be appropriated for this object, it will be impossible in future to grant any sum as an aid for the erection of buildings. If any such aid be granted, it should only be allowed to institutions newly established in the remote districts of the Province, where, as yet, none have ever been founded. By one of the most judicious requirements of the new law, colleges and academies can only be aided by the government when they are actually in full operation. Before asking for support for new establishments the friends of education in each locality will have to give evidence of their earnestness by making themselves the necessary outlay. The danger of demands being made in each locality through a reckless spirit of imitation or in order merely to secure to the place, what is considered its fair share of the grant, will thus be greatly diminished.

I found it necessary to make alterations in the amounts granted to some institutions. They are specified in the statements, and my reason for doing so, given at length in my special report to the Executive Council, forming part of Appendix B. These alterations were generally made for the purpose of repairing errors which appeared to me to be equivalent in fact to relative injustice in the previous grants, and it is my intention next year to make many more alterations for the purpose of attaining a more equitable distribution, founded on the class of the Institution on the one hand, on the number of scholars attending it, on the other.

This classification, so much required will be very difficult to make, under the circumstances which I have explained. The Legislature has given the name of College, (either by special statute which, it may be said, confers it more formally, or in the annual budget to institutions whose program did not comprehend all the branches of Education generally taught in Establishments bearing that name.

(To be continued.)

OBITUARY.

Died, on Sunday, the 25th of April last, Dame Marie-Opportune-Adeline Roy, wife of Alexandre de Lusignan, Esq., of the Department of Education, aged 24 years. Madame de Lusignan was the daughter of Mr. Justice Roy, of Chicoutimi, and niece of the hon. P. J. O. Chauveau, Chief Superintendent of Education for Lower Canada. From the advantages with which nature had endowed her, from those acquired by education, from her affability and her kindness of disposition which endeared her to all who knew her, her loss is severely felt by her relations and by a large circle of friends.