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fifteen years to the time when I was a school boy in one of those typical red school houses with which these Townships are fairly supplied, I see that great changes have taken place. The country has made great progress in almost every direction; I have but to notice the great change in farming implements and house furniture to see what rapid progress the country has made. We see machines employed on every hand where none were to be found fifteen years ago; and machines then in use have been superseded by others more serviceable and less expensive. And if we take a look into our farm houses we find the same improvement Sewing machines, harmoniums and the latest style of churn are now numbered among the necessaries of life. In fact if Rip Van Winkle, having slept his twenty years sleep on one of the beautiful hills of our Townships, should make his appearance among us to-day I am sure he would be more astonished at the changes that have taken place than he was when he descended from the Catskill Mountains. One familiar object, however, would now strike his attention, he would at once recognize an old friend in the red school house. The exterior is the same, and if he entered he would find the interior a little more dingy but the furniture is much the same stove with the legs spread out as though determined never to budge an inch, the water pail, the tin cup, the black board, the lump of chalk would all be familiar objects to the Rip Van Winkle of twenty years ago; and this is the apparatus with which the teachers of the Townships are expected to work to-day. Our farmers have been very active in the improvement of our agricultural implements. They have spent their time and money liberrall in promoting the railway interest of the country, but they have yet to learn that the material prosperity of the country can best be promoted by a thorough and efficient common school system where their children can be thoroughly grounded in the elements of an English Education. Much might be said in this connection about the careless manner in which teachers are engaged,—about the little trouble that is taken to ascertain the qualifications of a teacher. A contrast might be drawn between the care that is taken to secure a well-qualified man to mould the farmer's

### A Few Thoughts on our District School System.

*A paper read before the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers at Bedford, on Thursday, Oct. 24th, 1878, by Rev. Edson Irving Rexford, B. A.*

I do not propose to enter into any elaborate discussion of this subject but I wish to bring before this Convention thoughts which must occur to every one who takes the trouble to examine into the common school system as it exists in many part of our Eastern Townships. By this means I desire to bring clearly before those of influence amongst us some of the great and unnecessary evils that exist in our common school system, and to show the easy manner in which some of them may be removed. I feel a pride in being able to claim the Eastern Townships as my home; I take a deep interest in all that concerns their moral, intellectual and material progress. As I look back over a period of