

THE BILINGUAL SCHOOLS OF ONTARIO.

REASONS FOR THEIR EXISTENCE—LANGUAGES.

1.—THE PROVINCE AND ITS INHABITANTS.—Three languages are quite extensively spoken by loyal British subjects in the province of Ontario. English, French or German are the mother languages of 1,725,275 Canadians whose origin was British ; of 158,671, whose origin was French and of 203,319 whose origin was German, (see table xi, Origins of the People-Census of Canada, 1910). These languages are still taught and spoken through a bilingual system of teaching which was evolved by the Reverend Dr. Egerton Ryerson some fifty years ago, when, as Chief superintendent of Education, he sought to harmonize the habits, customs and aims of the three distinct races of people who had founded communities in several counties of the province.

2.—CLASSICS AND MODERN LANGUAGES.—Considerable importance was attached to the teaching of classics—Latin and Greek—in the days of the Grammar and Common schools, and in this subject of study, the Chief Superintendent was unhesitatingly supported by the late Dr. Goldwin Smith who claimed that a knowledge of Latin and Greek was the the gateway to higher education. But, perhaps more special encouragement was given in addition to English—to French and German notwithstanding the high standing that could be attained in the classes of the Common Schools by a thorough grinding in the popular three R's.

Mr. J. G. D. Mackenzie, Inspector of the Normal, Model and Grammar schools, in 1868, reports as follows: (See Sess. Papers, No. 3 for 1869). "By far the greater portion of pupils who have taken up French are girls. It is gratifying to observe this growing taste amongst our girls for a graceful and elegant language."

3.—LOCAL SUPERINTENDENTS, COUNTY INSPECTORS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.—In 1849, under Lord Elgin's administration of Upper Canada, the municipal system was organized, and till 1871, official reports bearing upon local school matters were periodically transmitted, by local superintendents, whom, in most cases, were clerks of the Township councils. It is interesting to read the reports of Victor Ouellette, Esquire of the township of Rochester and that of Daniel B. Odette of Anderdon, in the county of Essex, wherein frequent references are made to the building of new schools, the excellent assistance derived by school trustees and teachers from the "Journal of Education, the good behaviour, neatness and politeness of pupils. The whole machinery of education seemed to have formed one harmonious whole.

In 1851, that most zealous promoter of education, Lord Elgin, laid the corner stone of the first Normal school in Upper Canada. In 1852, he recommended to the Home government the granting of an Imperial charter making Laval a national university. In 1854, he was present at the inauguration of this institution and delivered an eloquent address. He left Canada deeply regretted the same year.

But the ardor of the various races of people in Upper Canada, in matters of Education had not abated. They sought to perfect the system under which they derived such benefit, and the population, who, in 1871, numbered 1,620,851 souls, welcomed the new School Act which had become law in that year. By it, County councils could appoint