

The Committee reported in favor of the principle of the Central Board in 1883; but, owing to legislative and other difficulties, the provisions for a Central Board were not carried out until 1888, when the system of examinations was established under which we are now working.

In 1877 Messrs. *Weir* and *Emberson* were formally appointed by the Committee to inspect and examine the superior schools. The *inspection* and *examination* were conducted at the same time, as the inspector passed from school to school. As the examination was practically the same in each school, and as three or four weeks intervened between the first examination and the last, this scheme can hardly be called satisfactory, although it was a great advance upon the former method of determining the grants for superior schools.

In 1886 a special inspector was appointed to give his whole time to the superior schools, and the work of inspection was separated from that of the examinations, which were held simultaneously in all the schools of the Province.

It is scarcely necessary for me to trace the various stages and changes by which the first list of text-books of 1876 has gradually passed into the list of 1890; but I may point out that the present has been reached only through a great amount of careful thought and examination, in which the Committee has had the advantage of the suggestions of this Association.

During the earlier meetings, the Committee put forth strong efforts to reach the Protestant elementary schools. The Department of Public Instruction was requested to give full statistics concerning the number, locality, attendance, etc., of these schools; the inspectors were requested to make special reports upon the elementary schools of their respective inspectorates; special regulations were issued for the guidance of inspectors; the Government was requested to raise the grant for common schools to \$200,000 when the actual grant was less than it is now, and to provide for extra payment to municipalities where trained teachers are engaged. If this admirable programme had been carried out, the status of our elementary schools would have been greatly improved. The Committee's efforts in this direction did not produce satisfactory results, and the reasons of the failure are quite apparent. In the first place, the careful oversight of the work of 1,000 schools necessarily involved very frequent or very prolonged sittings of the Committee neither of which could reasonably be expected. And in the second place, as the grants to elementary schools are given according to population, the Committee had no