

wants of the Province, taking into account the transition state of education, local peculiarities and the migratory habits of teachers." Undoubtedly much valuable pioneer work was performed by many of the gentlemen appointed and serving under this system. It was not, however, we think, calculated to secure a vigorous and thorough inspection of the schools as to the character or *quality* of the work done in them. For some years after the Free School Act came into operation, the strictly inspectoral functions of the so-called inspectors were necessarily subordinated to the particularly pressing practical duties growing out of the introduction of a new order of things. As clerk of the County School Board, as the most important member of the Commission appointed to divide the county into new school sections, as a sort of educational missionary to enlighten the ignorant as to the advantages of education, to vanquish unfounded prejudices, and to overcome selfish opposition, the inspector—who in most of the counties had his own private business to keep in motion—found the time at his disposal for legitimate inspection of educational work done exceedingly limited. It is only natural to suppose that to some extent the character of school inspection in Nova Scotia was determined by the circumstances of its inception. In more senses than one it is true that "the beginning is more than half of the whole work." One thing is certain, that from its beginning to its close the system of inspection, to which we refer had its educational effectiveness seriously impaired by the fact that the Inspectors were not salaried officers, devoted to one work, but simply persons paid certain fees for performing certain duties—such performance being deemed quite compatible with the practice of a profession or the pursuit of a business. We believe that in two or three of the larger counties the duties of inspection engrossed the whole time of the Inspector, but we suppose it is equally true that in these the fees were considerable enough to furnish a decent livelihood. That the Inspectors of the smaller and less remunerative districts gave collateral attention to their private avocations is nothing to their discredit. A necessity is never a disgrace. But it is plain to be seen that the system itself provided in but an imperfect degree the conditions of impartial, thorough-going inspection. However, a Government Inspector is quite a different official from a local supervisor of schools. The duties of the latter begin and end with the care and improvement of the schools placed under his supervision. The former is a guarantor of the fact that the public money has been honestly earned; and there should never be established a competition between one's duty and his interests.

The remedy provided, as we understand the action reported, consists in dividing the whole Province into ten Inspectoral Districts. The Inspector henceforth is to be an officer devoting his entire attention to the duties of inspection. The precise bounds of the Districts and the names of the new Inspectors have not been announced at this writing. It is well understood, however, that the general principle of division to be adopted is the grouping of two contiguous counties to form an Inspectoral District, with probably the metropolitan County of Halifax standing by itself, and perhaps two

Districts formed from three of the largest counties. We have no reason to doubt that the introduction of this new system will be accompanied by such minor improvements and modifications of the practical work of inspection as will secure the most satisfactory results.

Though New Brunswick was seven years behind Nova Scotia in the establishment of the Free School system, she preceded her many years in making provision for the inspection of schools receiving Government aid. The Educational Act of 1847 provided for the appointment of *two* School Inspectors for the entire Province. These gentlemen had a wide field of exertion placed before them, surely. In 1852 this system—foredoomed to be nugatory—was replaced by one providing for the appointment of an Inspector for each county in the Province. In 1858, this, in turn, was superseded by the division of the Province into four great Inspectoral Districts, which continued in existence until swept away by the well-known legislation of 1871, which, on this point, recurred to the system established in 1852 and provided for an Inspector for each county. The office of County Inspector, thus created, or restored, was apparently intended to be but of a temporary nature. The sum provided for its remuneration was too small—both relatively and absolutely far below that appropriated for similar services in Nova Scotia—to secure exclusive devotion to the work of inspection. In fact the officials themselves were Inspectors in little more than name, their chief duties having been of a practical character, connected with the introduction of a new system. Indeed this is explicitly stated in a published "Remark" of the Board of Education:

"* * * It is believed that the interests of education will be best promoted by the employment of Inspectors, for a limited period, chiefly in the work of making practically known to the people the provisions of the law, the steps to be taken to secure its advantages, the requirements respecting school accommodation, the careful and proper adjustment of boundaries. * * * As soon as this is reached, the work of inspection proper will require special attention, and demand professional qualifications for its successful discharge. * * *"

The changes from the imperfect and preliminary system of County Inspectors which have recently come into force can be briefly summarized. "The work of inspection proper" is now fully provided for. By an Act passed at the last Legislative Session, provision was made for the division of the Province into eight Inspectoral Districts by the Board of Education, and for the appointment thereto by the same authority of qualified Inspectors. Both the Districts and Inspectors under this Act have been announced. Good security has been taken for the thoroughness of the work of inspection, in so far as this depends on the qualifications of the Inspectors. A regulation of the Board of Inspectors provides that:

"In view of the operation of Section 13 of the Act, all candidates for the office of Inspector thereunder shall have taught for a period of at least three years, and shall have obtained a license of the Grammar School class * * * ; and upon appointment to office each Inspector shall spend one term at the Provincial Normal School, or such term as the Board of Education may require. * *"

We assume that the recent appointments have been made under this regulation. We may add that a very responsible duty is by law assigned the new Inspector, viz., that of deter-