

4. But the 18th section of the Supplementary School Act provides another mode of distributing the school fund among the school sections of a township. It enacts, "That for and notwithstanding anything contained in the Upper Canada School Act of 1850, the Chief Superintendent of Schools shall have authority to direct the distribution of the common school fund in any township among the several school sections or parts of school sections entitled to share in said fund, *according to the length of time in each year*, during which the school shall have been kept open, by a legally qualified teacher, in each of such sections or parts of sections." In the course of my visit to the several counties of Upper Canada, last year, I was assured by practical and experienced persons, that, in some townships, thinly-settled school sections could not compete with thickly-settled ones in regard to the average attendance of pupils at school, but they could, if each school was aided according to the length of time the school is kept open by a qualified teacher. To give the weak every facility possible to compete with the strong, this provision has been introduced into the act; and it appears to me to be equitable, especially since the Supplementary School Act (13th section), *limits all rate bills throughout Upper Canada to one shilling and threepence per month, for each pupil attending school*, and leaves it with the school electors in each section to decide whether they will even retain a rate-bill to that amount or not. It is therefore no longer in the power of short-sighted and selfish persons to exclude any class of children from the schools, by imposing high rate-bills; and as the schools are now, by the general law of the land, made so nearly free to all classes of children, it is most desirable to encourage the keeping of each school open, by a legally qualified teacher, during as large a portion of the year as possible.

5. But I must request and authorize you to exercise your own discretion as to which of these two modes you will adopt the present year, in the distribution of the school fund to the schools under your superintendence. I must, however, remark that the two modes of distributing the school fund cannot both be adopted in any one township; the one or the other mode must be adopted for all the schools in each township for the whole year, and be based upon either the *length of time*, or *average attendance* reported in the semi-annual return of the trustees.

6. Some complaints were made to me last year on the part of Trustees of both public and separate schools, that the Local Superintendent refused to make an apportionment to them, because their semi-annual returns were not made on the exact day required by law. Now, although the law requires these returns to be made on the 30th of June and the 31st of December, of each year; yet I think you can and ought to

tendents, whether, in townships where the basis of *average attendance* in distributing the school fund to school sections is adopted, they should take into account the *length of time* the schools have been kept open. We answer, yes; the principle of the law being to give the most help to those that help themselves most, and to encourage the keeping open of schools the full year. This principle of the law was fully explained and illustrated in the circulars issued in this *Journal* last year, and in the Chief Superintendent's annual report for 1851, pages 170-174, as well as in the note to the circular accompanying the apportionment of the current year, and the instruction to local superintendents at the foot of the trustees' half-yearly return. The law directs that (where average attendance is adopted) the *mean average* of the several schools shall determine the amount to be apportioned to each school, and this mean average can only be obtained by taking into account the comparative length of time—months and days—such school has been kept open. Where *length of time alone* is adopted, the school open for the longest period, will, of course, obtain the largest share."

allow a few days indulgence—say a fortnight, for the making out and transmission of these returns, before you proceed to the half-yearly distribution of the School Fund.

7. As to union sections, the 14th section of the Supplementary School Act provides that "local superintendents of adjoining townships shall have authority, and they are hereby required, to determine the sum or sums which shall be payable from the school apportionment and assessment of each township in support of schools of union school sections, consisting of portions of such townships; and they shall determine the manner in which such sum or sums shall be paid; and in the event of one person being local superintendent of two or more townships, he shall act in behalf of such townships; and in the event of the local superintendents of townships, thus concerned not being able to agree as to the sum or sums to be paid to each such township, the matter shall be referred to the warden of the county or union of counties for final decision."

8. In regard to the apportionment to separate schools, the provisions of the 4th section of the Supplementary School Act, in connection with the 19th section of the school Act of 1850, are so explicit, that I need only observe that one-half of what a separate school may be entitled to for the year, according to average attendance, should be paid at the end of the first half year, and the other half (more or less) should be paid at the end of the second half-year—in each case after receiving the semi-annual return required by the *second* proviso in the 4th section of the Supplementary Act, and on being satisfied of its accuracy. It is to be observed that separate schools are subject to the same inspections, visits, and regulations in regard to reports, &c., as are public common schools.

9. The Supplementary School Act provides for the expenditure of a sum not exceeding £500 per annum "in special aid of common schools, in *new and poor townships*." The local superintendent of any such township is requested to communicate before the end of August, at the latest, any cases of peculiar need and desert, and the circumstances connected with it; and when I shall have examined and compared all the cases thus submitted, I will make the best distribution in my power of the £500 in question, and notify the parties concerned accordingly.

10. The organization of our common school system being now complete by the provision and regulations for the establishment of public libraries, and its success, even when but partially organized, having exceeded general expectation, I hope our united exertions this year will contribute still more to its improvement and extension, that in schools and intelligence, as in civil liberty and the materials of physical comfort, the people of Upper Canada may have no reason to envy the condition of the people of any other country.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

E. RYERSON.

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TORONTO: Printed by LOVELL & GIBSON, Corner of Yonge and Melinda Streets.