

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

FOR
Upper Canada.

VOL. II.

TORONTO, AUGUST, 1849.

No. 8.

Annual Report OF NORMAL, MODEL, AND COMMON SCHOOLS, IN UPPER CANADA, FOR THE YEAR 1847. WITH AN APPENDIX.

BY THE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1849.

PREFATORY LETTER TO THE PROVINCIAL SECRETARY.

EDUCATION OFFICE,

TORONTO, 14th September, 1848.

Sir,—I have the honour to transmit herewith my Annual Report of the Normal, Model, and Common Schools in Upper Canada for the year 1847, which the law requires me to make to His Excellency the Governor General. The statistics of this Report are limited to the year 1847; the exposition of School operations is brought down to the time of preparing the Report.

Though I have confined myself within narrower limits than are usually occupied by similar reports in other countries, yet the newness of the system in this country has induced me to extend my remarks on some points to a greater length than I should have thought necessary under other circumstances.

The late reception of several of the local School Reports, the great variety of Statistics which they contained, and the necessity of going over every figure of every one of them in this office, have put it out of my power to transmit this report by the 1st of August.

I submit this Report, not as a controversial discussion of any questions of Common School Polity, but as a simple statement and practical exposition of the operations of the Common School Law of Upper Canada during the last Civil and Scholastic Year.

In some instances, I have instituted comparisons between the state of Common Schools, and the doings of the people in the State of New-York, and in Upper Canada; and the comparisons will be found, in some points, unexpectedly favourable to our own country.

It will be seen that more than four-fifths of the Statistics contained in this report are entirely new in this Province; and I think they furnish abundant proof, that it only requires a judicious and energetic course of proceeding for a few years, to place the Common Schools and facilities for the diffusion of useful knowledge in Upper Canada, upon a level with those of any other country, whether European or American.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed,)

E. RYERSON.

The Honourable

R. B. SULLIVAN,

Secretary of the Province,
Montreal.

PART I.*

To His Excellency the Right Honorable JAMES, EARL OF ELGIN
AND KINCARDINE, Governor General of Canada, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

It now becomes my duty to submit, for the information of Your Excellency, and the Legislature, a Report of the first year's operations of the Common School Act, for Upper Canada, 9th Victoria, chapter 20. I shall do so under the following heads:—

- I. School Sections and Schools.
- II. School Moneys.
- III. Teachers and their Salaries.
- IV. Number of Pupils attending the Schools.
- V. Time of keeping open the Schools.
- VI. Classification of Pupils, and subjects taught in the Schools.
- VII. Books used in the Schools.
- VIII. Methods of Teaching.
- IX. Character of the Schools.
- X. School Houses.
- XI. School Visits.
- XII. Quarterly School Examinations.
- XIII. Grammar and Private Schools.
- XIV. District Model Schools.
- XV. School Requisites and Libraries.
- XVI. Provincial Normal School.
- XVII. General Results.
- XVIII. Miscellaneous Remarks.

I annex hereto, a Statistical Report, containing several Tables, prepared with a good deal of labour and care, comprising abstracts of the Reports of Trustees, and District Superintendents. Though I prepared blank forms, and ruled paper for these Reports, and transmitted them to each Superintendent, and for every School Section in Upper Canada; yet, as they were in a form entirely new, and contained many items never before embraced in School Reports in this country, (though much less minute and comprehensive than the local Common School Reports in the State of New-York), and as several of the provisions of the School Act itself were new, the returns are stated by District Superintendents to be defective in several respects, though more full and accurate than those of the preceding year. The first year's operations of any law are conducted to disadvantage; and this is peculiarly the case with a Common School Law, which is not administered, as other laws, by learned Judges, and specially sworn, and carefully instructed juries, but by the people themselves in their several Municipalities and Sections. Popular provisions of a law suppose the existence of popular information as to the nature and objects of such provisions; but if that information be wanting, the more popular the provisions of a law are, the more efficient will it be in its operations—for no law is self-operative, or operative in the hands of ignorance or misapprehension. I believe this was the most serious obstacle to the success of the School Act of 1843, except in the best informed

*For complete Table of Contents to this Report, including Statistics, Appendix, &c., see Journal of Education, Vol. 1, pp. 277-279.