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In 1816—now fifty years ago, and nine years after District (Grammar) Schools were established—provision was first made by the legislature for the support and maintenance of Common Schools in Upper Canada: \$24,000 per annum were voted for this purpose. Even this grant was, in 1820, reduced to the pittance of \$10,000 per annum; and this small sum continued to be the entire parliamentary grant in aid of Common Schools until 1833, when it was raised to treble that amount. From 1833 until 1840, the grant fluctuated between \$30,000 and \$35,000. No life, however, animated the system, and the people themselves evinced little interest in it, and contributed as small a sum as possible for its support. In 1836, an effort was made to revivify the old system, and to endow it with an annual grant of \$60,000; but the eventful crisis of 1837-8 so dwarfed every other question into insignificance except that of our very political existence as a British province, that nothing was done.

In 1840-1, the turning point was, however, reached; and the first United Legislature of Canada passed an Act in 1841, establishing a definite system of Common School education for the whole province, and endowing it with the then munificent sum of \$200,000 per annum—the proportion of which, coming to Upper Canada, was only \$80,000. In 1845, the proportion of the Upper Canada share was increased to \$84,000. It remained at this sum until 1851, when it was again divided—giving Upper Canada \$100,000. In 1853, and subsequently, it has been divided according to the ratio of population in Upper and Lower Canada.

The School Act of 1841 first embodied the important principle of self-imposed taxation by the municipalities in aid of Common Schools, as a *condition* of receiving a share of the Legislative School Grant. In 1843, the School Law underwent some amendment in its details; and in the following year the Rev. Dr. Ryerson—present head of the Educational Department—was appointed by His Excellency the Governor General. Changes and various amendments were made in the law as it then stood, in 1843, 1846, 1847, and 1849. In 1850, however, a comprehensive School Act, was drafted by the Chief Superintendent. That Act (amended in 1853 and 1860) is still the law of the land, and is the basis of our present school system.

As an evidence of our educational growth during the last twenty-one years, it may be interesting to see from the following summary table the progress which the school system has made during that time:—

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN UPPER CANADA.

In connection with the County School Conventions, now being so successfully held by the Chief Superintendent throughout Upper Canada, it may not be uninteresting to take a brief glance at the progress which the school system has made since its first establishment in the Province.

The great interest which has been displayed at these Educational Conventions is a gratifying proof of the vitality of the school system, and shows how fully alive the people are to the practical importance of the questions affecting the schools which have been brought before them. The discussions thus far have more than realized the expectations of the Department; while the ability and good feeling which has been generally displayed in the discussions afford a good guarantee that any change in the working of our school system will be considered on its own merits, apart from political or personal feeling.

The twenty-five years during which a system of public school education has been in operation in Upper Canada, have been marked by great and important changes—many of which have received the sanction of School Conventions in former years. These changes we propose briefly to review, so as to see what actual progress we have been making during the last quarter of a century.