

pendent of the common school system in almost every feature of its organization, and so far differs from an American high school, may be collected from the language of the Act which established it.

DUTY OF MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.

The municipal council of the county, township, city, town, or incorporated village (as the case may be), are empowered from time to time to levy and collect by assessment such sums as it judges expedient, to purchase, rent, build, repair, furnish, warm, and keep in order grammar school-houses and their premises, and for procuring apparatus and text books, and for providing the salary of the teachers, and for all other necessary expenses.

It is just here that the first great hitch in the system occurs. The municipal council *may* levy such an assessment, but the law does not say they *shall*; and if they refuse, the trustees have no power, such as is possessed by the trustees of common schools, to collect a rate on their own authority; and many grammar schools are starved in consequence. A special difficulty that meets them is the difficulty of providing suitable school-houses, the erection of which, of course, involves considerable expenditure. And a result of this is that the trustees are often driven to avail themselves of that provision of the law which permits the union of a grammar with a common school, a step which appears from perfectly unanimous testimony to lead to the inevitable degradation and deterioration of the former, with no counterbalancing advantage accruing to the latter.

Indeed, the condition of the grammar schools in Upper Canada up to the present time appears to have been most unsatisfactory, and, what is more, to have been growing from bad to worse from year to year. They are far too numerous for the present wants of the community, and upon the principle that one sheep can be well kept where two would be starved, a limitation of them to one for a county, which would reduce the number from 95 to 42—perhaps even a greater reduction than that—would make them infinitely more efficient for the purposes contemplated in their establishment. Their teachers, in many cases, in spite of the requirements of the law fixing their qualifications, are reported to be incompetent for their position. What the Americans call “partial courses” are too frequently, indeed, all but universally, allowed. The classical culture they impart is the merest minimum. The teacher is too dependent upon the trustees, and these again are powerless to act in many directions in which their action, if liberal and energetic, would be beneficial to the school. Indeed, I found but one opinion prevailing in Canada among persons conversant with the subject, and that was that the whole system as it relates to grammar schools requires reconstruction; and the new regulations, though a move in the right direction, do not move nearly far enough, and in fact leave the system untouched in its most capital deficiencies.

UPPER CANADA COLLEGE.

At present, the only institution in Upper Canada which seems capable of really giving a higher education and of occupying that position in relation to the universities which is occupied by the public schools of England, is the institution originally called the “Royal Grammar School,” but whose title was subsequently changed to that which it now bears—Upper Canada College.* It is situated at Toronto, and was established in the year 1829 by the Legislature, on the recommendation of the then Lieutenant-Governor of the province, Sir John Colborne (afterwards Lord Seaton), and endowed with a grant of 66,000 acres of land. It is placed by its constitution under the control of the Senate of the University of Toronto, but the Principal and other masters are appointed by the Governor. It educates some 220 or 230 boys,—40 to 50 of whom are boarders, paying at the rate of \$180 (about 35 guineas a year), and the rest day-boys, whose annual fee for tuition is \$40, or £8.

OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

Partly in consequence of the deficiency of good grammar schools, and partly, perhaps, from religious motives, other institutions, offering a liberal education, are raising their heads in different parts of the province. The Bishop of Huron has a large one for 250 pupils at London, the Bishop of Ontario another for 200 pupils on the Bay of Quinté; a smaller school is being established in connexion with Trinity College, Toronto, and the Wesleyans have a large female seminary at Hamilton. In all, there are stated to be in the Upper Province 340 academies and private schools, employing 497 teachers, educating 6653 pupils, receiving from fees an annual income of \$58,000. I had no opportunity of ascertaining the quality of the instruction given in these institutions; but it has already been observed that in some places persons were found to prefer them, though at a distance, to the grammar school which

was at their doors; and it will be noticed that they have enrolled upon their registrars upwards of 1,000 more pupils than are enrolled on the registers of the grammar schools, though the average attendance at each is scarcely 20.

LIBRARIES, APPARATUS, PRIZES, &c., HOW PROVIDED.

Two special merits which the Canadian system claims for itself, as compared with any other established on the North American continent, are the provision which it makes for supplying schools with maps, apparatus, prize and library books, and municipalities with libraries; and secondly, its provision for pensioning superannuated or worn-out teachers.

There appears to have been almost a mania in the minds of the framers of the Upper Canada system of education for the formation of libraries. They conceived the idea of a county common school library; a public library in every township; a library in every school section; a county teachers' association library; a county jail library, &c. It is enjoined as a duty upon almost every official body connected with the school system—upon city, town, and county municipal councils: upon city, town and village boards of school trustees; upon town councils, and trustees of rural school sections; upon county boards of public instruction, school visitors, and local Superintendents, to do all that in them respectively lies to establish and maintain public libraries, and foster a taste for general reading. A saying of Lord Elgin's at the opening of the Provincial Exhibition 1854, to the effect that “Township and county libraries were becoming the crown and glory of the institutions of the province,” is quoted again and again as the opinion pronounced by a very competent judge of their social value. The total number of free school and other public libraries in 1863, is reported as 2,948—an increase of 92 in the year—containing 691,803 volumes.

Maps, apparatus and prize books (not text books) are provided by the Department in the same way and on the same terms, the only limitation being that the sum remitted to the Department by the locality must not be less than five dollars for each purchase.

The maps, globes, and other articles of school apparatus issued by the department are nearly all manufactured in Canada, after the most approved patterns, and exhibiting the latest discoveries; and credit is taken to the Department for having thus stimulated local mechanical and artistic skill and enterprise, at the same time that a great boon has been bestowed upon the schools. It is also noticed, as worthy of remark, that this branch of the educational Department is self-supporting, the whole expense being reckoned in the cost of the articles and books procured; so that the only cost to the provincial revenue is the public apportionment which is granted to meet an equal sum provided by the school section or municipality.*

The Canadian system on this point is compared by Dr. Ryerson with the systems adopted in the neighbouring states of Ohio and New York, and pronounced to combine many superior advantages, the chief one being the purely voluntary character of its operation. There is no doubt that the effects of the library system in the states of Ohio and New York, however beneficial they may have been at its first establishment, are rapidly declining, and the school commissioners report that in almost every district the public libraries are falling into disuse and neglect. “Now it is a system of school libraries, thus declining as rapidly of late years as it ‘grew in former years, that we are called upon,’ says Dr. Ryerson, ‘by certain parties to substitute for our present Canadian system of public libraries.’”

There is no doubt, judging from the evidence furnished by the reports, that the library systems of Ohio and New York have proved a failure; and it can hardly be maintained, taking the same evidence as our guide, that the library system of Canada has been a success. Here and there, in perusing the reports of the local superintendents one finds notice taken of a library that is exercising a beneficial and refining influence upon a neighbourhood; but this case is the exception, not the rule; and the general account is either that the people are too indifferent or too poor to establish a library, or too ignorant to use it.

I do not attribute the failure in any of the cases to the system nor to the fact that in one case the impost is voluntary, in the other levied by law. The result appears to be much the same under both régimes, and is to be attributed to certain causes operating in human nature, not to any defects inherent in a system. Taking people as they are, with the average amount of intelligence and the average amount of literary interest, it is almost impossible, unless under very favourable and exceptional circumstances, to establish

* This was written before the Collegiate Institute at London, (U. C.) had attained its present position, and evidently with an imperfect knowledge of the many very superior Grammar Schools in the Province.—*Ed. J. of Ed.*

* Report for 1863, p. 13. I must do the Canadian manufacturers the justice to say that the specimens of their skill and workmanship which I saw in the Depository of the Department were in the highest degree creditable to them—quite equal, it seemed to me, to anything of the kind that we produce in England.