

authorization of text books. The distinguished gentleman was understood to speak on this matter somewhat as follows. He said that, no doubt, there must be a Minister of Education for the management of public funds and for the general administration of the Department, which a body like the old Council of Public Instruction was incompetent to undertake. But at the same time he thought that the Minister might be relieved of a great deal of embarrassment, and that much acrimonious, and possibly partisan, controversy might be avoided, if the choice of text books were vested in some body like the old Council, which stood entirely clear of party and of commercial influence. In thus speaking Mr. Goldwin Smith had voiced the opinions long held by this journal.

SUPERVISION.

THE generation of scholars taught under the care of the officials who supported and assisted Dr. Ryerson during the introduction and maturing of our present school system is now "bearing the heat and burden of the day" in Ontario. Many of the boys and girls of that time, now men and women, have kindly memories of the township or county superintendents. Some of these gentlemen were deficient in scholarship; one smart glib school boy would leave them far behind in the mere matter of cyphering or in giving the rules for the formation of the "paragraph;" but they were not all so.

The writer, then a lad, remembers with pleasure the annual visit of our county superintendent (this county was one of the largest in Ontario), his kind, intelligent face, his suave, courteous manner, his sensible and inspiring words of encouragement to the shy boy or girl honoured by his notice. Even those of them who were not

familiar with letters were "men of affairs," of common sense and good judgment, carrying themselves in the discharge of their duty with becoming meekness and soberness, and, doubtless, many are to be found in the inspectorship of to-day combining the desirable qualities of both classes.

In 1870, when the country still had the services of the learned and able veteran, the Rev. Dr. Ryerson, as chief superintendent of education, assisted by the trustworthy council of public instruction, the patriotic and upright Hon. M. C. Cameron being Provincial Secretary, it was thought well, the time being opportune, to make important changes in the school system, seeking thus the further advancement of the cause of education in Ontario. Accordingly, a Bill providing for these changes, prepared by the Chief Superintendent and the Provincial Secretary, was laid before the Legislature by the latter, and after several amendments suggested and promoted by the Ontario Teachers' Association became law. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, township superintendents were done away with, and inspectors of counties or electoral districts substituted, the name Public School was used for Common School, and High School, or, under certain conditions, Collegiate Institute for Grammar School.

The first change involved the appointment of so many new men that the standard agreed upon had to be lowered to suit the unprepared condition of some seventeen gentlemen who were desirous of placing their services at the disposal of the public.

The immediate effect of these changes and appointments was to give quite an impetus to the studies and general work done in the Public Schools. These new inspectors, with some exceptions, were superior in scholarship to the men whose places they had been appointed to fill, but