

of the impolitic and mischievous, and therefore unwise, growing practice of legislating separately for the two great component divisions of the same British Province,—as if inhabited by races of utterly irreconcilable habits, feelings, and principles.

It being entirely out of our power to quote at length the various arguments adduced by Dr. M. against the introduction of *District Superintendents* in Lower Canada,—we would have preferred referring our readers to the Report itself; but as that might be considered unjust to its writer, we trust they will rest satisfied with the following brief disjointed extracts.

"10th. Of all the faults of the present School law which have been announced by its opponents, that provision which constitutes only one Superintendent of Education is, according to them, the greatest. But the law, new and imperfect as it otherwise is, like its predecessors, operates generally well under the administration of only one Superintendent. In the Lower Provinces, and in several of the United States, where nothing is spared in providing for the education of the children of the people, and where the people are so prosperous, the general working of the School Law is entrusted to a single Superintendent for each State.

"There are, it is true, twenty-two Superintendents of Education in Upper Canada, whose salaries are paid by a special tax, levied for this purpose upon the inhabitants by the Municipal Councils. *But the inhabitants of Upper Canada, live on a soil and in a climate much more favorable for agricultural purposes, are rich in comparison to those of Lower Canada; and yet they complain of this provision in their law; and their Common School Act does not work better there than ours does here, although they have no political aspirants to decry the law for the sake of gaining popularity with the inhabitants.*"

And again, continues Dr. M. :—

"With regard to this, if I consulted my personal interest, I should willingly agree to the appointment of a Superintendent for each County, or at least for each Judicial District, as proposed, because the duties they would have to perform would tend greatly to lighten the work and responsibility of the Superintendent-in-chief. But there are general interests which I have no right to sacrifice to any particular interest.

"It would be absolutely necessary that these Superintendents should, as in Upper Canada, be indemnified for their disbursements and travelling expenses, and paid for their time and trouble, by means of an additional tax to be levied on our poor country people. And one or two things would happen; either we must allow a tolerably handsome sum, to ensure the services of educated, fit and zealous men, of independent means, or we should not generally be able to induce men having these qualifications, and an honorable standing in society, to abandon their business for the purpose of taking upon themselves the duties assigned to a County Superintendent. These Superintendents must also have a strong feeling of subordination and of perfect submission to the orders of the Superintendent-in-chief, otherwise it would be impossible to reckon upon that regularity and uniformity so desirable in the working of the law. Now, men, possessing the qualifications above mentioned, and whom the offer of a trifling gain could not tempt, would not generally be willing to accept an office of this kind upon these indispensable conditions; and it cannot be concealed that, as these indispensable qualifications might be wanting in some of the men who would offer themselves for the office, they would be incompetent to perform its duties with advantage, &c.

"From all of which it may be inferred that far from being able to reckon upon useful and efficient co-operation on the part of the local Superintendents, we should have every reason to fear that they would contribute to embarrass the local working of the law, and to occasion an increase of expense without producing any effect or result tending to the advancement of the cause, for each would wish to act upon his own system."

Dr. M. then proceeds to infer that for *political* reasons it would be equally unsafe to entrust the appointment of these officers to either *the people, or the Govern-*

ment; and yet, after, at all hazards, proposing two modifications, viz., either dividing the 36 Counties of Lower Canada into 20 School Districts, or appointing a Superintendent to each of the present great judicial Districts, he at length comes to the conclusion that:

"It is, however, very easy to obtain an equally good result without the co-operation of such Superintendents, by means of the local Visitors provided for by the Act, who without removal from their homes or any travelling expenses whatever, are able to visit the schools in their respective localities with as much zeal, interest, and earnestness, as pleasure.

"Let the present system then have a trial of two or three years, and if the visitors fail in their duty, the clergy and the people will have no reason to be surprised, or cause to complain, if the Legislature should assign them *masters*, for the sake of the welfare of our youth."

Now, with every disposition to do justice to so valuable and influential a class of honorary officers as local and general visitors, whether civil, judicial, or ecclesiastical—without whose active and enlivening, as well as wholesome co-operation and supervision no public Educational system can be regarded as complete, we would look upon the *substitution* of such *irresponsible* Inspectors for *paid* District Superintendents, as preposterous and absurd, independent of their duties being altogether separate and distinct.

But setting aside our own particular predilections or prejudices, let us unhesitatingly refer to the results in the neighbouring States, and among these, to that of New-York in particular,—regarding which, by the by, Dr. M. is in error in inferring (p. 37,) that the Educational Department is there managed solely by the Secretary of State, (as State Superintendent), with the aid of an assistant, there having, for the last seven years, been Superintendents to every County, who have proved the very life and soul of the Educational system.*

But if we would contemplate popular Education among our American neighbours, in its most extended and satisfactory light, let us at once turn to the transcendently laudable example set by the New England States,—where, under the powerful impulse of that best of all National arrangements, the *Free School System*, it has been in successful, yet gradually improving, operation for near two centuries; and among which, we believe, at least four, out of the six States, have lately been led to adopt the same improved plan of *Superintendence* as that of New-York, viz., a State Superintendent, with one or more County Superintendents, (yet retaining even a Superintendent to each Township,) and Trustees to every School District.

In fact, such is the general confidence in this recent improvement, that the Board of Education of the State of

* Dr. Potter of N. Y., in his Prize Essay on "The School and Schoolmaster," well observes that, "it was to supply that lamentable deficiency on the part of trustees, town-inspectors, and parents, that the office of county Superintendent was created;—that the creation of this office seemed to be loudly called for from all parts of the State: that the law was framed nearly on the model of that which is considered the best for securing school inspection that the world has yet seen, (that of Holland); and that it is now regarded by the most enlightened friends of popular instruction throughout the country, and he might add throughout the world, as the one measure without which the State system must have remained comparatively inert; but with which it must, if properly sustained, rise to excellence and cover itself with honor."