

## THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM OF NOVA SCOTIA.

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IN 1832 the province was divided into School Commissioners' Districts, averaging the territorial size of half the larger counties, the members of the various Boards acting gratuitously, and the schools being organized on the voluntary system. In 1835 the attendance of pupils was 15,000. About 1850, the present Sir John William Dawson was appointed the first Superintendent of Education for the province, and when he accepted the Principalship of McGill University in 1855, the Provincial Normal School was opened under the charge of the Rev. Alexander Forrester, D.D., who was at the same time Superintendent of Education. In 1863 the school attendance was 31,000.

The free school system was introduced into the legislature and passed in 1864, under the leadership of the present Sir Charles Tupper, the late Sir Adams G. Archibald being leader of the Opposition, which also supported the measure. While the Rev. Dr. Forrester remained principal of the Normal School, one of his staff, the present Dr. Theodore Rand, of McMaster University, became the Superintendent to administer the new order of things. In 1869 he was succeeded by the Rev. A. S. Hunt, M.A., who, on his death, in 1877, was succeeded by David M. Allison, LL.D., of Mount Allison University, who was in turn succeeded by the present incumbent in 1891.

The Council of Public Instruction is the head of the educational system, is endowed with extensive powers, and is constituted of the members of the Executive of the Provincial Government, with the Superintendent of Education as secretary.

The Superintendent has practically the same functions to discharge as a Minister of Education, with the exception of what is implied in his being responsible to the Government rather than to the Parliament and an elective constituency.

Ten inspectors are under his immediate direction, in charge of the inspection of schools, teachers, returns and educational matters generally within the ten inspectorates into which the province is divided. The inspector is also secretary of the Boards of District School Commissioners, referred to as created originally in 1832, which may be within his jurisdiction. The functions of these Boards now are little more than the modification of the boundaries of the School Sections, which are the ultimate territorial subdivisions of the province, averaging an area of from three to four miles in diameter, and the creation of new school sections, subject to the ratification of the Council of Public Instruction. The school section, of which there are now about 1,900, is really a small corporation or self-governing community for school purposes, is governed by a board of three school trustees (except in the case of incorporated towns and cities, where a larger board of "commissioners" is appointed, partly by the town councils and partly by the Governor-in-Council), of which one is elected by the ratepayers of the section present at the annual meeting, which is held shortly before the beginning of each school year, normally on the last Monday in June, and is the annual parliament of the section. The board of trustees here present their estimates for the support of the school for the ensuing year, and after discus-