

of Art and Design, adapting the School System to that of Township Councils—were recommended in my communications and Drafts of Bills dated the 14th October, 1848, and 23rd February, 1849: but they are so mutilated and so connected with the incompatible and most strange provisions, as to be neutralized and rendered useless. The new Act seems to be the creation of inexperienced theorism and the collection of Sections and parts of Sections from several Acts and Bills without any clear perception of their relation the one to the other, or their working as a whole. Some of the most objectionable provisions were not in the printed copy of the Bill, but were introduced when this Act of forty-nine octavo pages was pressed through the Legislative Assembly in a single hour at the very heel of the Session, after most of the Members' copies of the printed Draft of the Bill had been destroyed by fire, and when perhaps not five persons could form the least idea of its contents, and when the only Member of the Assembly who was a Member of the Board of Education and who understood the law practically as well as by careful examination, and who had expressed his preparedness and intention to offer suggestions and amendments, was known to be absent from his place in the House.

It being necessary that some decisive action be taken in respect to the School System as affected by the new Act, I take the liberty of submitting the following recommendations to the Governor-General in Council:—

1. That the Corporations of Cities and Towns be advised to take no steps at present, towards cutting up the constituencies which they represent into little independent petty School Sections, but allow the present Board of Trustees to remain for the time being; and under the 17th Section of the new Act, these Boards of Trustees will be invested with all the powers with which it invests any newly elected Trustees. Thus will confusion and the breaking up of all that is doing in Cities and Towns, be prevented until the Session of the Legislature.

2. That in each of the rural School Sections throughout Upper Canada, one Trustee be elected, as seems to be intended by the 23rd Section of the new Act taken into connexion with the 17th Section [as has been advised by the Attorney-General] and as should have been the case had not the present Law been interfered with. Thus there will be no break in the existing School Corporations, and the evils resulting therefrom will be avoided.

3. That as the fourth clause of the Second Section of the new Act provides that the Schools shall be conducted according to such forms and regulations as shall be provided by the Chief Superintendent, the present Forms and Regulations (which are in the hands of all the Trustee Corporations throughout Upper Canada, and are familiar to them) be continued unchanged until the ensuing Session of the Legislature. Then as the 73rd Section of the new act continues the present District Superintendents in office, with their present powers and duties, until the first day of next March, all the operations of the Common School System can be maintained inviolate until that time; no provisions of the new Act will be contravened, and the manifold evils of its introduction will be averted.

4. That on the meeting of the Legislature, the new Act be withdrawn, and the present Law continued with such amendments to remedy its defects and adapt it to the approaching Township Municipal System as I proposed in a Draft of a short Bill transmitted to the Provincial Secretary the 23rd February last, together with any further amendments that a careful examination and consultation with persons of practical experience may suggest.

Thus will the people feel themselves relieved of the dreaded task of beginning again to learn the forms and regulations of a new and complicated Law; the friends of Education will feel that there is some stability in the great principles of the system they have laboured so much and so successfully to establish, and that it will not be subjected to the caprices of party legislation or the mutations of party power, while it will, from time to time, undergo those amendments and improvements which experience and the progress of society shall demand.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed,) E. RYERSON.

The Honorable
JAMES LESLIE,
Secretary of the Province,
Toronto.

REPLY TO THE FOREGOING LETTER.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
Toronto, 15th December, 1849.

SIR,—I have the honor to inform you that His Excellency the Governor-General has had under His consideration in Council your letter of the 7th instant, containing several suggestions with respect to the carrying into effect of the new School Act. His Excellency feels that your practical knowledge of the working of the School System, entitles your opinion to much weight; and as the suggestions offered in your letter appear consistent with the great principles of the School Act, His Excellency has directed that they should be considered in Council with a view to Legislation on the subject during the next Session of the Provincial Parliament. In the meantime, I am instructed to authorize you to adopt such measures as may appear to you expedient, to continue the present Forms and Regulations and to maintain the present system of management of Common Schools in Cities and Towns, so far as you may be able to do so in accordance with the Law.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed,) J. LESLIE,
Secretary.

The Reverend

EGERTON RYERSON, D. D.,
Superintendent of Schools, U. C.,
Toronto.

C I R C U L A R,

Addressed by the Chief Superintendent to the District Superintendents and Trustees of Common Schools in Upper Canada, relative to the Local School Reports for 1849.

GENTLEMEN,—I adopt this public method of replying to the various inquiries which have been addressed to me respecting the mode of proceeding at the ensuing Annual School Meetings, to be held at noon on the second Tuesday in January next. I also desire, at the same time, to offer such suggestions as may enable you to pursue the simplest and best course in the performance of your duties for the time being.

In reply to the oft-proposed question,—“Will one or three Trustees have to be elected at the approaching Annual School Meeting in each of the present School Sections?” I answer, only ONE, and that in place of the Trustee whose term of office then expires, and elected in precisely the same manner as you would have proceeded in the election of a Trustee under the present law. This answer is given on the advice of the Honorable Attorney General for Upper Canada, who is of opinion that in the present School Sections (which, with their present Trusteeship, are perpetuated by the 17th Section of the New Act,) the proceedings of the ensuing Annual Meetings should be conducted as provided for in the 23rd Section of the New Act,—which requires, that “the landholders and householders present shall, by a majority, elect one fit and proper person who shall succeed the Trustee whose term of office shall have expired, and the person then elected shall continue in office three years, and until his successor shall have been elected; Provided always, that the person whose term of office shall have expired, may be re-elected, if he be willing.”

2. Blank Trustees' Reports having, about two months since, been forwarded to the several District Superintendents for distribution to the various Corporations of Trustees within their respective jurisdictions, I would recommend the Trustees, in all cases, to have these blank reports filled and read at their Annual School Meetings, and then transmitted immediately to their District Superintendent. Thus will their constituents be informed of what has been done by their Trustees-Representatives during the year, and the year's work will have been done at the year's end. Every possible care should be taken to fill up every column of the Report correctly. The law imposes a forfeiture and fine upon Trustees or Teachers who shall have been proved to have exaggerated any of their returns in order to obtain an undue share of the School Fund. Punctuality, correctness, and completeness in Trustees' Reports are at the foundation of accurate and full information in regard to the educational state of the country. With this fact I hope every Corporation of Trustees will be duly impressed. Let nothing prevent them from