

JOURNAL OF

Upper



EDUCATION,

Canada.

VOL. XVIII.

TORONTO: SEPTEMBER, 1865.

No. 9.

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THE NEW GRAMMAR SCHOOL ACT OF 1865.

THE giving of the Royal Assent to the new Grammar School Act by the Governor General, and the subsequent reference to the value of the measure in His Excellency's Speech from the throne, marks an important epoch in the history of educational progress in Upper Canada. The Hon. William McDougall, Secretary of the Province, in his capacity of Minister in charge of Education, deserves the cordial thanks of the educational authorities in Upper Canada for his active exertions in getting this Bill through the Legislature. In conferring on the subject with the officer from the Educational Department having charge of the matter at Quebec, he devoted a good deal of time to a careful consideration of Grammar School Education in Upper Canada, and sought in various ways to render the Bill under consideration as practical in its objects as possible.

Some valuable improvements were made in the original Draft of Bill by Mr. McDougall. Among others is the section relating to Elementary Military Education in Upper Canada. This section was highly approved of by the Adjutant General of Militia, and cannot fail to add to the influence of the Grammar Schools. It will be found to be the first practical step which has been taken in the direction of a permanent and systematized plan of military instruction for the youth of our country, to be followed up in some future Canadian Sandhurst or West Point Military Academy yet to be established. Such an Academy must eventually supersede the present temporary system of local Military Schools which are now established at a considerable aggregate cost in various parts of the Province.

Few, except those practically acquainted with the state of the Grammar Schools, can form an idea of the great service which the new Grammar School Act will render to the cause of intermediate education in Upper Canada. Before the beginning of the present year, many of the Grammar Schools were doing little more than Common School work; and some of them even did this work very imperfectly. The effect of the new regulations which went into operation this year, has been, we are happy to say, very materially to improve the condition of most of the inferior Grammar Schools; while, under the provisions of the new Act just passed, the managers of these schools will still further feel the necessity of confining them exclusively to their own legitimate work. This work they will be required to do *bona fide*, to the best of their ability, in order to be entitled to the right to compete for a share in the Legislative Grant. The system of apportioning money to the Common Schools, according to the basis of average attendance of pupils therein, has been found to have had a most salutary influence not only upon the attendance of children at the schools, but also upon the character of the instruction given and the length of time in the year during which the schools have been kept open.

A great drawback to the advancement of the Common Schools, especially in rural villages, has been the facility with which some of the so-called Grammar Schools could interfere with and even reduce the standard of education below that of an ordinary Common School. Under the new Act, however, the Grammar School standard of Education will be definitely fixed and uniformly maintained in all of the schools; while the efforts of the Department can now be directed without hindrance to raising the standard of the Common Schools, so that both classes of schools will be enabled to perform their own work without clashing with each other. There are other projects under consideration for the improvement of the condition of the Schools, and rendering their inspection more systematic and thorough, which are not yet matured, but which will be publicly discussed in due time.

The following analysis of the new Act we take from the editorial correspondence of the *Montreal Gazette*, written during the time the Bill was under the consideration of the Legislature:

"Mr. McDougall has brought in a bill respecting Grammar Schools, for which he deserves credit. Heretofore these institutions have been supported by grants from the Provincial chest without exacting local contributions. Hereafter the counties are to be called upon to contribute half as much as the Provincial grant, and no school can be hereafter opened with a less grant than \$300. This