

will permit. Let us then seriously consider whether our present system is the best adapted to the situation or that we can make use of! Might it not be well to enquire whether we are not attempting too much in some directions and too little in others? I hesitate about expressing the opinion that an effort is being made to increase the number of certain so-called superior educational institutions to the detriment of a true elementary system more in correspondence with the requirements of the masses of our people, in other words, that the tendency is in the direction of higher education, which under the circumstances must be limited to the few. It must not be imagined that, in the matter of education generally, we are retrograding in this province. On the contrary, we are making most commendable progress.

(Here the President quoted from the last report of the Superintendent figures in proof of this statement).

Our position, the Protestant position I mean, is undoubtedly a peculiar one. But I have had special opportunities of judging and I now wish to say that I believe the majority are disposed to deal with us in the fairest and most conciliatory spirit. (Hear, hear.) We have the almost entire direction of our educational institutions under the control of a superintendent of education whom in my official capacity I am happy to welcome here to-night and whose broad and liberal views are well known, ably assisted as he is, among others, by a gentleman who is no stranger to this association, I refer to your former secretary, Mr. Rexford. The Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction is composed of a body of men, who wish well to the cause of education and who devote themselves unremittingly to the task that lies before them. I know that there is a disposition, as there always is in matters of this kind, to criticise at times the management of this body. But, when the multiplicity of difficulties that surround them are taken into account I think that much credit is due and will be freely and generously given them for the zealous manner in which they work. (Applause). They have made very considerable and praiseworthy progress, for instance, in the mode of distributing the superior education money. Formerly, it was entirely a matter of political favour so far as our academies and high schools were concerned. Now, the system of inspection of our academies, high schools and model schools, has, I rejoice to say, permitted the accomplishment of a great deal and, if in no other way, it has had the effect of apportioning the superior education money according to the merits of the respective institutions. The reports of the inspectors establish beyond a doubt that very considerable improvement is being made in the matter of

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and I only trust that the incentive which the Committee desire to offer may have the effect of leading to still further improvement in that direction. If I might be permitted an observation, it is this, that I would like to see our academies or high schools—for the terms are really convertible—confined to our large rural centres. Our population is sparse and a