

teachers, there can be no material improvement in either the qualifications of teachers or the efficiency of the schools, or the education of the country youth; but the lamentations in the annual Reports of State Commissioners and Superintendents will, in my opinion, be the next ten years what they have been the last ten years.

In Ontario there is much room for improvement in these respects; but we have a national programme for the examination and distinct classification of teachers, and nearly uniform methods of examination; our teachers, except in comparatively few cases of trial, are almost universally employed by the year, in the townships equally with the cities and towns. By our method of giving aid to no school unless kept open six months of the year, and aiding all schools in proportion to the average attendance of pupils and length of time the school is kept open, we have succeeded in getting our schools throughout the whole country kept open nearly eleven months out of the twelve; the teachers are thus constantly employed, and paid annual salaries; and are as well paid, all things considered, in perhaps a majority of the country schools as in cities and towns. Some of our best teachers are employed in country schools, a very large proportion of which will favourably compare, in style and fittings of school-house, and efficiency of teaching, with the schools in cities and towns. Indeed for several years at the commencement of our school system, the country parts of Upper Canada took the lead, with few exceptions, of our cities, towns, and villages. Our deficiencies and shortcomings in these respects I shall plainly point out hereafter; but they appear to me to be more palpable, and to exist to a vastly greater, and even fatal extent, among our American neighbours,—so worthy of our admiration in many of their industries and enterprises.

3. A *third* and fruitful cause of inefficiency in the American systems of popular instruction, appears to me, to be the *mode of appointing the administrators of their school systems, and their tenure of office*. In all the neighbouring States, the mode of appointing their State Superintendents has been by popular universal suffrage vote, and for a period not exceeding three years, and in some instances not exceeding two years; in the election of their County or Town Superintendents the same system has been pursued. In New York and Pennsylvania a beneficial change has been introduced in regard to the appointment of their State Superintendents—in the former the State Superintendent being appointed by the joint ballot of the Senate and House of Representatives, and in the latter by the Executive with the advice of the Senate; but the tenure of office in both States is for three years, as it is in the State of Ohio, where the State Commissioner of Common Schools is still elected by universal suffrage throughout the State. In looking at the School history of these States for the last twenty years, there are very few, if any, instances of any one of these highest educational officers continuing in office more than three years at a time. There is no department of civil government in which careful preparation, varied study and observation, and independent and uniform action, are so important to success and efficiency, as in founding, maturing and developing a system of public instruction; which it is utterly impossible to do where no one placed at