

## THE NECESSITY OF FREE SCHOOLS IN THINLY SETTLED LOCALITIES.

To the Editor of the Journal of Education.

SIR,—The necessity of Free Education is strikingly manifest, if we consider the state of things as they are in this part of the country.

1st, In almost every School Section where there are any amount of settlement, there are found a few, who are anxious to have their children educated. These require (owing to their fewness,) to make extra efforts, to raise a school-house, and hire a Teacher; and manage with the government aid to keep their school going six months in the year. There are, however, often one half of the families, and in some cases two thirds of them (I speak, sir, from actual knowledge,) who take no interest in the education of their children. These not only in many cases give no aid or support to the school, but indirectly injure its peace and prosperity. The result of such a state of things is, that there is found only a miserable log hovel of a school-house. This is badly lighted, heated, and furnished. They have to hire an inferior Teacher, at a paltry pittance. The education given is, of course, imperfect, and being in operation only one half of the year, the children in such a school make no headway. Or if they chance to get an efficient Teacher, his efforts are so thwarted by want of text books, furniture, or school apparatus, that he cannot, by any pains or labour, interest or cheer forward his little flock. The necessity of putting an end to such a state of things must appear plain. An universal property assessment for educational purposes is imperatively necessary. The burden *then* would not fall on the willing few, nor on the indigent poor. The burden of education would cease to be a burden to any man. The poor man would pay, proportionably to his means, and so would the more wealthy; whilst, the children of all would be educated.

2nd, Another reason I would beg leave to refer to, as shewing the necessity of a property tax for educational purposes, viz. There are in this district of country large tracts of land of the very best quality, lying wild and unoccupied; which were purchased when the Townships were first surveyed, by men of large capital. These men will either not sell at all, or at such prices as actual settlers will not give. The consequence is, that there are blocks of several miles square, in numerous directions, lying unoccupied and wild. All around such block, neither roads nor schools can be obtained, and every public improvement languishes. But were these lands assessed for public education, schools all around would rise up, and the children of actual settlers—of poor but working men, would be educated and not left to pine away in ignorance and barbarism.

It is my opinion, and that of all with whom I have had an opportunity of conversing on the subject, that until free education prevails, we never will have nor can have our common schools placed on a proper and prosperous footing.

Your very obedient Servant,

J. A.

Port Sarnia, 30th August, 1850.

## THE CORRECTNESS OF THE NEW PRINCIPLE OF APPORTIONING SCHOOL MONEYS TO SCHOOL SECTIONS ILLUSTRATED.

To the Editor of the Guelph Advertiser.

SIR,—In anticipation of the new rule of distribution of the school grant being carried out this year, I had divided the apportionment for Guelph and Puslinch in conformity therewith, and was about to distribute it, when my attention was called to a circular to Township Superintendents in the last *Journal of Education*, directing its distribution to be made for the present year as under the old law.

The prospective effect on the funds of the respective school sections of a transition from the old to the new rule of distribution, seem to me of sufficient importance, to demand the serious consideration of those persons who have hitherto paid little attention to the subject; not indeed with a view to resist the adoption of the new law, but that they may be induced to treat the matter as one in which they have a personal and pecuniary, as well as an intellectual interest; and in which, also, an attention to their own interests and those of their offspring, has a direct effect in warding off from their own neighbourhood, the infliction of a pecuniary loss, and the still more grievous infliction of the loss of the services of a qualified Teacher.

No qualified Teacher will sacrifice himself to furnish such parties with intellectual food. They may learn, too late for their own children's good, the force of the starved philosopher's mild rebuke to his wealthy but inconsiderate disciple, "Those who use the lamp should not forget to furnish it with oil."

The new law is designed to "help those who help themselves," in conformity with the maxim that "those who will not help themselves cannot be helped."

I think no one can compare the two lists I have herewith given of a division according to population and a division according to average attendance, without acknowledging the propriety of these remarks.

Taking sections 6 and 7 of Puslinch as examples (extreme it is admitted but still real examples) of the opposite effects of good and ill attendance in determining the proportion of the grant the different sections may respectively receive when the new rule comes into operation, it will be seen, that were the division made according to the last annual school report, section 7, with 107 children of school age, would receive only £2 13s. 11½d. while section 6 with 108 children, only one child more, would receive £8 9s. 11d.!! the school attendance of the latter averaging 44, and of the former only 14!!!

Let no one cry out against this as unfair. It is not the law that robs the teacher, but the people who object to send their own children to school: and who, also, by so doing, rob their own children of the benefit which the law had brought to their own door: for even of the little that finds its way into their section, they do not allow their children to derive one farthing's worth of advantage, and therefore an entire cessation of the school grant would be no loss to their children.

But the evil does not end here. The Teacher who labours on through the year at his thankless task, and is defrauded of his due at the end of it, through, perhaps, no fault of his own or his Trustees, is not the only victim. The Trustees come in for a share of the penalty, in having the disagreeable task of making starvation contracts with men who only submit to such terms because their bodily and mental energies are not adequate to command a better remuneration elsewhere; and the section, as to educational results, goes a-head just as fast as would a farmer who should attempt to plough his land with dogs. Talk of the injustice of compulsory assessment for free schools indeed! The most tyrannical and profligate government could not inflict a greater wrong than do such self-complacent, but short sighted complainers by their own perverseness, help to perpetuate against the most valuable and enduring interests of their offspring and country.

Yours respectfully,

JOHN KIRKLAND,  
Local Supt. C. S.

## SCHOOL MONEYS.

GUELPH APPROPRIATION BY				PUSLINCH APPROPRIATION BY			
Sec.	School	Attendance.	By Popula-	Sec.	School	Attendance.	By Popula-
	n.		tion.		n.		tion.
1	149	£10 0 11½	£9 3 0	1	132	£8 1 10½	£6 17 2½
2	289	21 2 0	17 15 2	2	120	3 19 0	6 4 9
3	125	9 18 5½	7 13 7	3	120	4 6 8½	6 4 9
4	112	9 10 11	6 17 6½	4	105	6 14 10	5 9 1½
5	76	6 5 7	4 13 4	5	91	4 6 8½	4 14 7
6	132	10 3 5½	8 2 1½	6	108	8 9 7	5 12 3
7	161	6 0 7	9 17 9	7	107	2 13 11½	5 11 3
8	222	10 16 0½	19 15 6	8	108	3 15 2	5 12 3
	1366	£83 18 0	£83 18 0	9	91	6 5 3	4 14 7
				10	86	4 6 8½	4 9 4½
				11	90	5 0 2½	4 13 6½
				12	58	5 4 0	3 0 4
					1216	£63 4 0	£63 4 0

Puslinch, Sept. 4, 1850.

REGULAR AND IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE OF PUPILS AT SCHOOL.—The late De Witt Clinton, Governor of the State of New York, once remarked—"Two years of constant and regular schooling is better than ten of occasional and interrupted attendance."

THE REAL OBJECT OF EDUCATION is to give children resources that will endure as long as life endures; habits that time will ameliorate, not destroy; occupation that will render sickness tolerable, solitude pleasant, age venerable, life more dignified and useful, and death less terrible.—Rev. Sydney Smith.