

Lower Canada, the difficulties which still exist in consequence of the state of the roads in certain parts of our country, is at the least as large in France and in England as in Canada, if it be not larger.

Mr. Jourdain, in a work entitled, "*Le budget de l'instruction publique (en France) depuis la fondation de l'université impériale jusqu'à nos jours*," gives some interesting details on the subject of inspection. While the amounts of the salaries, which he rightly considers very small, may to us appear to be absurd, it must be remembered that the value of money in France is very different from what it is in Canada, and that the salaries attached to all public offices in that country are small. It must also be remembered that the travelling expenses of the inspectors are defrayed by the State.

"After the 1st of September 1850," says Mr. Jourdain, "the sub-inspectors disappeared; but the number of inspectors was raised to three hundred; it might have been raised to three hundred and forty-three, had the Government adhered to the letter of the 20th section of the law of the 15th March, 1850, which created an inspection in each section. The inspectors were divided into classes; those of Paris received 4,000 fr.; those of the Departments 2,000 fr., 1,800 fr., 1,500 fr., and 1,200 fr. The total expenditure, in 1851, was 748,006 fr. 85c.; of which 455,738 fr. 57c. for salaries, and 292,268 fr. 28c. for incidental expenses. In 1852, it was still 741,132 fr. 93c. A certain number of vacancies and of delays occurring in making inspections, reduced it in 1853, to 715,884 fr. 39c.; in 1854, to 706,721 fr. 61c.; in 1855, to 715,884 fr. 39; in 1854, to 706,721 fr. 61c.; in 1855, to 707,982 fr. 73c.

"No doubt these figures are high, and yet upon a careful examination of the position of the inspectors, it is easy to see that the small salary they received is out of proportion with the importance of the functions entrusted to them, and the duties imposed upon them by the rank they occupy in the State. What position can be more distressing than that of an inspector—the father of a family—without personal means, who receives from the State 1,200 fr., reduced by monthly deductions to 1,140 fr., whose duties prohibit him from engaging in any other kind of business; and who, nevertheless, is compelled to make a certain appearance. It is of the utmost importance that this state of things should cease to exist, and that the *minimum* of the salaries should be raised to 1,800 fr. This would, it is true, be an additional expenditure of 200,000 fr., and some persons would, perhaps, prefer to abolish the service, but the sorry saving thereby secured would inevitably result in the ruin of primary instruction. If during the past twenty-five years, popular education has made any progress amongst us; if the schools are better conducted; if the communes consent to make the sacrifices necessary to their support, it is in a great degree to the primary inspectors that the result is due. The best judges in such matters have always looked upon inspection as the main-spring of the system, as they have always asked that it should be entrusted to special men.

"It is to be hoped that these ideas may prevail, and that far from weakening a useful institution, the government will endow it with resources indispensable to the welfare of the parties and the service."

In England there were, in 1859, 54 inspectors, and 20 sub-inspectors visiting 6,641 primary schools (forming 9384 divisions or departments), 38 normal schools, 539 charity schools, and 118 reformatory, ragged, or industrial schools; in all 7336 institutions. This is a greater number than 27 inspectors for 3200 schools, which is the case with us; and if, on the one hand, the number of pupils in the schools in England is greater in proportion, on the other, the extent of country to be travelled is much smaller, and the communication is incomparably easier. A measure recently adopted in England will confer yet higher importance on the inspection of schools. The inspectors, under the authority of the *revised code of public education*, divide the pupils in the school into classes, according to the degree of knowledge possessed by them,

and the number of pupils in each class regulates the amount of the Government grant to the schools which receive it. The inspectors may withdraw different proportions of the grant payable to each school, for various reasons, and their duties on this point and on every other are prescribed by Order in Council with the greatest care. Such a measure must tend to increase both the number of inspectors and the cost of inspection.

Should the Government decide in favor of the plan set forth in Table B, I would request to be permitted to make two suggestions.

The first is that the law should, in that case, provide that the office of Inspector shall not be given in future to any but teachers holding academy diplomas, who have taught in Lower Canada for at least five years, and who have, moreover, undergone an examination on the legislative enactments and regulations relative to public education. I consider it right to insist upon this point, because the office of Inspector, already very much coveted at the present time by men who have no experience in teaching nor any administrative ability, would be still more so under this new system both on account of the appointments being higher, and on account of their increased importance. Besides, a formal legislative enactment would be a species of compensation to the teachers for the diminution of the chances which are now offered to them, whilst at the same time the new office would be of itself a much more worthy object of emulation. In France the qualifications for the post of an inspector are that the candidate be a bachelor of arts, a director of a normal school, or a teacher of a superior class; that he have been a teacher five years, and that he have, moreover, undergone a special examination. One-third of the places as inspectors are reserved for teachers.

The second suggestion is that, if the government should find no means of indemnifying those inspectors now acting, who would, by the adoption of the new plan, be removed from office, it might be only gradually adopted and applied only as vacancies might occur.

III.

The local and municipal system is that which exists in Upper Canada. The number of Inspectors is 326. In the country parts they are appointed by the County Councils; in the cities by the Boards of Trustees. Each Inspector receives five dollars for each school visited. The great number of Inspectors required by such a system, and the small emolument accruing from the office have produced such a result in Upper Canada as might have been foreseen. Of the 326 Inspectors, 146, or nearly one-half, are members of the clergy.

In Lower Canada there would be the same necessity of having recourse to the clergy for the working of such a system. The teachers could not undertake it, because it would draw them from their occupation, neither would it afford them a competent remuneration. Besides these two classes of men, it would be difficult to find a large number with taste, aptitude and education enough, who would be willing, for such paltry fees, to set aside their other business engagements. Frequent changes and great irregularity would be the consequences.

With respect to the Catholic clergy of Lower Canada, it would probably be difficult to induce the ecclesiastical authorities to allow the Curés or a certain number of them to fill an elective office for which they are to be paid, in which they would be liable to receive orders and injunctions from the civil authorities, to take the character of Government officers, and undergo election by a Municipal Council. The very nature of the duties of an Inspector in many parishes in which, law in hand, a constant war is to be waged with the local authorities, with men whose ill-will, whose views and tendencies are to be constantly combatted, would be a sufficient motive to deter a priest from undertaking a mission so different from his own. Under the present system the Curés are *ex-officio* visitors; they may be elected to be Commissioners; they have the selection of the books of religious instruction. They have done and daily do a great deal for education; but, in order