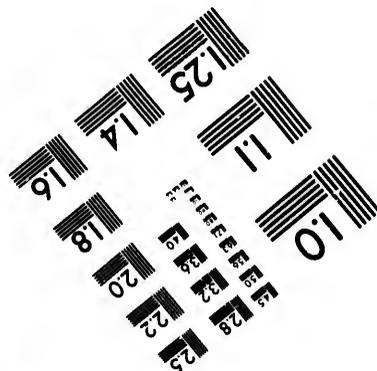
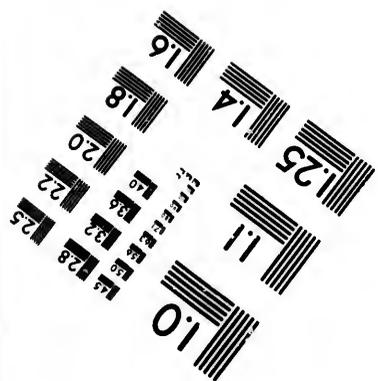
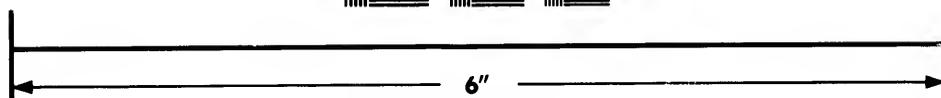
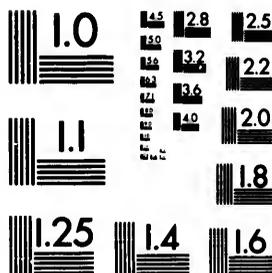


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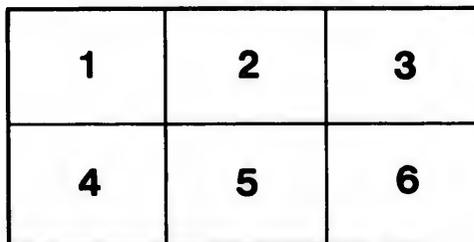
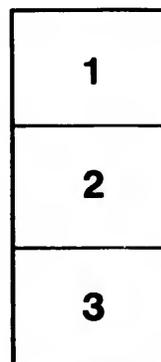
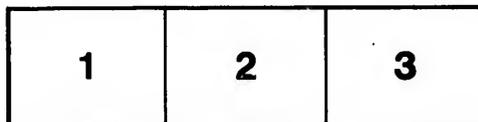
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REMARKS  
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THE STATE OF EDUCATION  
IN THE  
PROVINCE OF CANADA;

BRING

A REPRINT OF TWO ARTICLES WHICH APPEARED IN  
THE BRITISH AMERICAN JOURNAL OF  
MEDICAL & PHYSICAL SCIENCE FOR JANUARY & MARCH, 1848.

By "L."

[Lochlan, Robert]

~~~~~  
"Knowledge is power."— *not wisdom* —

"National rivalries or antipathies would here be completely out of place. The true greatness of a people does not consist in borrowing nothing from others, but in borrowing from all whatever is good, and in perfecting whatever is appropriate."—*M. Cousin's Report to the French Government on Public Instruction.*

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MONTREAL:

PRINTED BY J. C. BECKET, 211½, St. PAUL STREET.

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TO THE FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION OF HIS EXCELLENCY

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

THE EARL OF ELGIN AND KINCARDINE,  
GOVERNOR GENERAL;

AND TO THE

SERIOUS ATTENTION OF THE HONORABLE

THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE;

BUT MORE PARTICULARLY OF

THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE  
OF CANADA,

Now Assembled in Parliament :

THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE FOLLOWING REPRINT OF TWO RECENT  
ARTICLES IN THE BRITISH AMERICAN JOURNAL, ON A SUBJECT  
OF VAST—NAY, VITAL—IMPORTANCE TO THE

FUTURE MORAL AND POLITICAL WELFARE OF THE PROVINCE,

IS MOST EARNESTLY ADDRESSED, WITH FEELINGS OF  
THE PROFOUNDTEST RESPECT, BY

THEIR MOST OBEDIENT AND VERY HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

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## PREFATORY NOTICE.

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It having been suggested to the Writer of the following desultory "*Remarks on the Present State of Education in the Province,*" which lately appeared in "*The British American Journal of Medical and Physical Science,*" that their more extended circulation in a connected pamphlet form might be productive of considerable good, at this particular juncture, he has willingly acquiesced in the proposal;—not, as fancying that they possess any peculiar merit, or exhibit any thing like an elaborate exposition of the merits of so important a question, but simply as furnishing a plain unvarnished statement of facts, and containing sufficient evidence of the as yet unsatisfactory legislation on the subject, and at the same time pointing to the main defects of the otherwise promising existing system so clearly as to be likely to assist in rousing the attention of the Legislature to the necessity of taking further decisive, yet wary, steps to insure the complete success of so important an object. One more reason may be permitted to be assigned for the second intrusion of these humble remarks upon the public,—in the hope of thereby eliciting something like a more generous concordant movement on the part of the public Press—French as well as English—in behalf of a sacred cause, in which all races, sects, and political parties, of whatever shade, may cordially unite,—but regarding which, as far as Lower Canada

is concerned, the two rival races seem to have as little common feeling, as if, instead of being intermingled fellow-citizens and subjects, they were "*wide as the poles asunder.*"

It may also be proper to add, with reference to its having been alleged that as the Writer has ventured so far in his strictures on the present state of our Educational System, he might as well have gone one step farther, and distinctly submitted his own views on the subject to the test of public criticism, that though he considered it more advisable and respectful to the Legislature to refrain from so doing, he has no particular objection to it; and that, if hereafter desired, he will willingly lay aside his anonymous character, and contribute his humble mite of opinion or information, *in propria persona*, before any Parliamentary Committee that may be appointed to report on the subject. But he trusts that, his object being "*prodesse quam conspiceri,*"—to do good rather than be conspicuous,—he may till then be permitted to raise his "still small voice" in support of an undeniably great and good cause, without incurring the unnecessary and unenvied notoriety which would attend his name being before the public.

*Montreal*, 11th March, 1848.

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REMARKS  
ON  
THE STATE OF EDUCATION, &c.

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1. *Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada.* Montreal, 1847.
2. *Special Report of the Measures which have been adopted for the Establishment of a Normal School; and for carrying into effect generally the Common School Act (for U. C.) of 9th Victoria, cap. 20; with an Appendix.* Montreal, 1847.
3. *Annual Report of Common Schools for Upper Canada for 1847.* Montreal, 1847. By the Rev. Dr. RYERSON, Chief Superintendent of Schools for Upper Canada.
4. *Letters on Elementary and Practical Education. To which is added a French Translation.* Montreal, 1841. By CHARLES MONDELET, Esq.
5. *Annual Reports of Common Schools for Lower Canada for 1845 and 1846.* Montreal, 1846 & 7. By Dr. J. B. MEILLEUR, Chief Superintendent of Education, Lower Canada.

PART I.

Of all the objects which can engage the attention of the statesman, the philosopher, the philanthropist, or the Christian, there is not one of deeper interest or higher importance than that which is embraced in the above-mentioned documents; therefore, whatever may be the diversity of opinion which unhappily prevails in this Province regarding the *modus operandi*, in the introduction of a system of *public Elementary Instruction*, every reflecting man must be prepared to acquiesce in the urgent policy and necessity of such a measure, and admit that *the great initiatory step* has at length been accomplished by *the Government and the Legislature*, and that the amount of practical success which shall be reaped, must henceforward depend

on the cordial spirit with which *the people* shall cooperate in the great work.

Unfortunately for our noble Province, the rancour of party feeling, in conjunction with that curse of Canada, the ungenerous and uncalled-for war of races and sects, seems still destined to embarrass and retard for a time even the most unexceptionable attempts at improvement, be it either in our public or social organization. But we are not without hope that better days are in store for us ; and we even trust that much will ere long be accomplished through the medium of the powerful agency of the system of popular education now in operation—though its value may yet, in some quarters, be ill understood or appreciated, and may for a time furnish a few heartless demagogues a fertile source of party strife. If, therefore, we shall, by our humble efforts in favour of the better understanding of so estimable an object, prove at all instrumental in accelerating “a consummation so devoutly to be wished,” we shall ever rejoice in the perhaps rather rash but disinterested patriotic step which we have been induced to volunteer in its behalf, at a rather peculiar crisis.\* We would, however, wish to observe, that in deprecating the mischievous workings of sheer party feeling, and the miserably undignified, and even unprincipled, opposition thereby frequently engendered to the best of public measures, we are not disposed to encroach upon or abridge the wholesome privilege of dispassionate, independent inquiry into the intrinsic merits of every public question, or to deny that much good is derived from these being viewed and examined with a critical eye and probing hand ; and, in proof of this, it is our intention to avail ourselves of this very privilege, in the course of whatever observations we may be induced to make in the present article. It is of the

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\* It may be proper to state that the writer of this Essay is unconscious of any unworthy *party* feelings, and that he is equally free from any personal bias, being altogether unknown to the writers of the different documents which form the heading of this article.

vicious temper, complain such unexpressed anxious

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vicious *primum mobile*, and consequent uncharitable temper, alone, betrayed by certain writers, that we complain; but, unconscious of being actuated by any such unworthy incentives, we trust that we shall so express ourselves as to escape without any very serious animadversion; from our readers on that score.

Having premised thus much, we proceed to commence our remarks on the two leading documents at the head of this article, by observing, that though it is now 50 years since that great *questio vexata*, the creation of a public fund, "for, *first*, the establishment and support of a respectable *Grammar School* in each District," and, "*in due process of time*, of a *College or University*," was first mooted in Upper Canada, the final arrangements connected with neither of these imposing branches of a Provincial Educational System have yet been carried into permanent successful effect! — a fate not much to be wondered at, when we consider that it was making a beginning at the wrong end, in attempting to complete the ornamental superstructure of so vast and influential a national edifice, without, in the first instance, laying that necessary and natural, substantial foundation—*a system of sound elementary instruction for the great body of the people.*

This strange error or oversight, however, was at last discovered, and redeemed about 20 years afterwards, *i.e.*, in 1816, when, the wants of the humbler classes of society demanding their legitimate share of attention, an Act was passed by the Provincial Parliament, for the establishment of COMMON SCHOOLS; and from that date to the present time, *that* estimable popular foundation has been gradually acquiring substantial depth and breadth, until it has at last happily assumed a degree of solidity and harmony, that, though still susceptible of very considerable improvement, will be found capable of supporting any ornamental superstructure, in the shape of *Grammar Schools* or *Colleges*, which the ensuing Parliament may choose to decide upon.

Did our circumscribed limits permit, we should be

disposed to lay before our readers a preliminary connected sketch of the successive fitful attempts at legislation on this important branch of education; but that being out of our power, we rest content with observing, that the first really decisive step in the improvement of Common Schools in Upper Canada took place in 1841, when the outline of the present system was adopted by the Provincial Parliament; that a second was attempted in 1843—when the previous arrangements were considerably modified; and that the third and last took place in 1846, when other modifications were made, and incorporated in the revised Act then passed—and still in force—and to which we must beg to refer our readers for details. The same want of space also precludes our giving anything like a condensed view of the leading features of the system which *has* at length been adopted, either from the Reports before us, or the different authors from whom the Superintendent so copiously quotes; and we do so with less hesitation, as, fortunately, the former has, very judiciously, been extensively circulated in every part of the Province. All that we can at present promise is a few unconnected extracts from the former—more in justice to the writer, than with any idea of criticising or elucidating the merits of the question—that we may thereby be afforded greater scope for the humble efforts which we intend to make, towards counteracting a few illiberal prejudices, and answering some unreasonable objections which have been raised against various parts of the now promising foundation of our great educational edifice,—whether arising, on the one hand, from a sweeping *political* distrust of the principal workman employed, or, on the other, from baseless national prejudice against a few of the most useful materials, because, forsooth, they happen to be of *foreign* origin.

It is unfortunate for the Reverend and certainly talented author of the two Reports referred to, that he has long occupied no inconsiderable space, as a public writer, in the arena of political, sectarian, and even

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educational controversy ; but, however that may have been, he having been at length selected to fill a most important *experimental* public office, aiming at the furtherance of a transcendantly great and good object, and the appointment being in every respect in keeping with the character of his sacred calling, as a preacher of the Gospel, it behoved even his bitterest opponents to suspend their warfare for a season, and give him a fair trial, before they made any further attempt to condemn either him or his labours. But, far from such having been the case, every casual opportunity seems to have been eagerly seized upon to lower his standing in public estimation, as well as to detract from the value or merit of his undeniably zealous exertions in behalf of the important matters committed to his investigation. Nothing daunted, however, the Reverend gentleman appears to have held on "the even tenor of his way" unmoved, or, at most, to have been content with an occasional ejaculation of—"Strike, but hear me," until he had an opportunity of, in some degree, defending himself, on submitting unreservedly to the government and the people, the result of his unwearied investigations in various countries, in his *Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction*—a document, from the perusal of which, whatever may be its peculiarities, we have derived great satisfaction, and from which, we conceive, no unprejudiced man can rise, without acknowledging himself materially instructed and better informed on the interesting and important subject therein discussed ; but which some of the reverend writer's opponents seem to have considered so meritless and objectionable, that they deemed it their duty to condemn it "at one fell swoop," without, apparently, taking the trouble of giving it a perusal. Of this wholesale antagonism, however, more hereafter. In the meantime, we feel bound to allow the reverend writer to speak for, and defend himself, in the language of his prefatory letter to the Provincial Secretary, on transmitting his Report, and thereby enabling our readers to judge for themselves :—

"I can not expect that an implicit and unqualified assent will be given to every remark which I have made, or to every opinion I have expressed; but I trust the general principles of my Report will meet the approbation of His Excellency, and that the several subjects discussed will be deemed worthy of the consideration of the public.

In availing myself as far as possible of the experience of other countries, and the testimony of their most enlightened Educationists, I have not lost sight of the peculiarities of our own country, and have only imitated distinguished examples of other nations. Prussia herself before adopting any important measure or change in her system of public instruction, has been wont to send School Commissioners into other countries, to collect all possible information on the subjects of deliberation. France, England, and other European governments, have done the same. Three enlightened Educationists from the United States have lately made similar tours in Europe, with a view of improving their own systems of Public Instruction. One of them spent upwards of two years in Europe, in making educational inquiries,—aided by a Foreign Secretary. I have employed scarcely half that time in the prosecution of my inquiries; and without having imposed one farthing's expense upon the public. Though the spirit of censure has been in some instances indulged on account of my absence from Canada, and my investigating, with practical views, the Educational Institutions of Governments differently constituted from our own, I may appeal to the accompanying report as to the use which I have made of my observations; and I doubt not but that His Excellency, and the people of Upper Canada generally, will appreciate the propriety of such inquiries, and respond to the spirit of the remarks which that distinguished philosopher and statesman, M. Cousin, made on a similar occasion, after his return from investigating the systems of public instruction in several countries of Germany.

'The experience of Germany, (says M. Cousin,) particularly of Prussia, ought not to be lost upon us. National rivalries or antipathies would here be completely out of place. The true greatness of a people does not consist in borrowing nothing from others, but in borrowing from all whatever is good, and in perfecting whatever it appropriates. I am as great an enemy as any man to artificial imitations; but it is mere pusillanimity to reject a thing for no other reason than that it has been thought good by others. With the promptitude and justness of the French understanding, and the indestructable unity of our national character, we may assimilate all that is good in other countries without fear of ceasing to be ourselves. Besides, civilized Europe now forms but one great family. We constantly imitate England in all that concerns outward life, the mechanical arts, and physical refinements; why, then, should we blush to borrow something from kind, honest, pious, learned Germany, in what regards inward life and the nurture of the soul?'

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But I have not confined my observations and references to Germany alone ; the accompanying Report is my witness, that I have restricted myself to no one country or form of Government ; but that I have borrowed from all whatever appeared to me to be good, and have endeavoured to perfect, by adapting it to our condition, whatever I have appropriated."

Having so far allowed Dr. Ryerson to speak for himself, we consider it but justice to add that we cannot comprehend how, with such direct evidence on record of the great working merits of the valuable system of primary instruction lately introduced among us—come from what country it may—as evinced in its successful adoption in so many other differently ruled kingdoms and states, it should for a moment be regarded as unsuitable to Canada alone ; and we are also not a little surprised that its principal opponents should be among that portion of the provincial press which assumes to itself the title of *liberal*, and as such, advocates every approach to the doings in the neighbouring republics, considering that so many of these very States take a pride in having adopted its leading features. Nay, we should even think that a feeling of consistency might have made that portion of "the fourth estate" rather regard it with no small degree of respect, since it has the merit of being raised on nearly the same foundation, and composed, for the greater part, of the same materials as found such favour in the eyes of "the Reform Parliament" of 1836 ; through the medium of the Report on Education by that noted reformer, Dr. Duncombe. But our surprise is still greater, and it gives us real pain to find a portion of the conservative press, as well as respectable wardens of municipal councils, misled by these *ignes fatui* of pseudo-liberality, and blindly launching forth their anathemas against the continuance of so promising a system, before time has been allowed for either the different parts of its present machinery working smoothly into each other, or admitting of the adoption of such improvements as might ensure its more successful operation. As instances of what we complain of, we may mention that one writer, in the face of the explicit quotation above

given, unblushingly asserts that Dr. Ryerson, "on finding that he could not saddle the Prussian system at once upon the province, had resolved to accomplish it by little and little; and that his aim was to take the management of the common school education out of the hands of the many, and put it into those of a few—one feature of the Prussian system; whereas he (the writer) had always insisted that if there be any subject which more than another claims the supervision and watchful care of parents, it is the education of their children." And, further, in commenting on the special Report on normal schools, (which we regard as furnishing a good deal of interesting matter, besides forming an unerring common school *vade-mecum* or guide, as containing a well digested body of useful information and instruction for all the officials connected with the working of the system, from the chief superintendent down to the trustees of a school section,) the same writer unhesitatingly observes, that that document "displays some of the doctor's most interesting peculiarities, *but that there is very little in it*; and that the superintendent has the signal bad taste to occupy more than one half of that short Report with a covert attack (*risum teneatis!*) upon his opponents, &c., and with the same delicacy impugns the motives of the head of the government!" Nay, more; the same journalist, in concluding another charitable article, in which he coolly taxes the worthy superintendent with having accomplished little or nothing during three years, piously ejaculates:—"Well, we have a prodigy of a superintendent; will government suffer this man to dishonour the situation he holds any longer?" While a still more "Christian advocate" "Extinguisher" goes so far as to denounce "the provisions of the Education Bill as the bane and curse of our fine province."

Such language might be all very well, considering the particular political quarter from whence it emanates; but when we find the editor of a respectable journal in this city condescending to an acknowledgment of some educational pamphlets in uncourteous flippant terms like

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the following, we are at a loss what to think : " Politeness compels us to acknowledge the receipt, from the Education Office, Toronto, of several *blue* books. The postage was also paid, some seven or eight shillings, we presume, at the expense of the people of Canada. We had always supposed the blue books of Dr. Meilleur to be the greatest bore in the province, until we laid hold of those of Dr. Ryerson. It will be a long time before any one will make us believe that the compulsory system of Prussia and the German powers is suited to a British people."\*

Nor have matters stopped here, for,—to return to Upper Canada,—we find more than one municipal council gravely stultifying themselves by praying for either the total repeal or entire modification of the present system, on account of the expensiveness and uselessness of its superintendency, and its inapplicability to the circumstances of the country ; and in one instance recommending, *as an improvement* ! the engaging as teachers of men whose " physical inabilities," and " decaying energies," render teaching a suitable occupation for them ; and further, that *emigrants* may be employed until " their character and abilities are better known, and can be turned to better account !"†

Now, while entering our protest against such sweeping objections as these, and more particularly against the injustice of at once visiting the defects of a system so recently sanctioned by the Legislature, and therefore still new and untried, upon the heads of the practical superintendents of the day, we are free to admit that there is still room for considerable improvement in the present school bill ; but far from regarding the

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\* The above was no doubt induced by the sad evidence at the time afforded of the unsatisfactory working of the last Lower Canada School Bill, of which we shall hereafter have occasion to say a few words ; but that, surely, could not justify a gratuitous violation of courtesy towards either Dr. Ryerson or Dr. Meilleur, and far less towards these gentlemen conjointly.

† Instance the alleged memorial of the Gore District Council, and the circular letter of the warden of that of the Newcastle District.

superintendents, whether provincial or districtal, as either expensive or useless, we look upon them as indispensable, and, in fact, the very life and soul of the system; and, even go further, (following the example of more than one enlightened European statesman) in considering national education a matter of such paramount importance, that we conceive that far from the chief superintendence resting, *ex-officio*, on an already over-burthened provincial secretary, as with us, it should be vested in an officer having no other duties to perform, and who should be recognized as a "*responsible*," though, for obvious reasons, unpolitical member of the government.\*

Lest, after all, the foregoing observations should not prove sufficiently convincing or explanatory, we further beg to refer our readers to the following unobjectionable quotations from Dr. Ryerson's special Report of the measures adopted for the establishment of the Provincial Normal School, (which has since so auspiciously taken place at Toronto) as well as for taking into effect, generally, the common school system,—intended, as it evidently was, in reply to a few of the objections which had been so unsparingly raised against the system placed under his superintendence.

It is not possible to pass a law against which objections would not be made from some quarters, and the introduction of the best law is necessarily attended with some inconvenience. When the Common School Act of 1843 superseded that of 1841, so serious was the derangement of the whole school system of Upper Canada, that many of the provisions of the Act of 1843, could not be carried into effect during the first year of its existence; Trustees, in many instances, could not be elected as required by the Act, the Chief Superintendent of Schools, by order of the Governor in Council, found it necessary to exercise an arbitrary discretion in disposing of many cases brought before him, without regard to the requirements of the Act; no School Reports for 1843 were presented to the Education Office, in consequence of the passing of that Act, and consequently the data contemplated by the act for apportioning and distributing, and paying the Legislative School grants for 1844, were wanting. Under such circum-

\* In more than one of the European governments this is the case; and in France this important officer is styled the "Minister of Instruction," and has a council acting with him.

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stances, there was much embarrassment and confusion, and in some cases, serious loss to individuals.

It would not have been surprising, then, if some confusion had attended the transition from the late to the present School Act. But I am not aware that such has been the case. The machinery of the new Act has gone into operation without occasioning any derangement of our School affairs.

When the School Law in the neighbouring State of New York was first established, many School districts, and even counties, refused to act under it; but I know of no example of the kind in Upper Canada, notwithstanding the efforts of a section of the public press to create such opposition at the time the Act was about to come into operation.

The dissatisfaction created at the time was not against the provisions of the School Act, but against what certain parties represented to be its provisions, before its general distribution; not against its operations, but against what certain parties represented would be its operations. However, the circulation of the Act itself, and its actual operations, have corrected most of the false impressions which had been produced by misrepresentations.

It has been found, that so far from the Trustees having no power to employ a Teacher without the permission of the Chief Superintendent, they have more power than had been conferred upon School Trustees by the former Act, and can employ whom they please, and in what manner and for what time they please; that so far from the Board of Education interfering in matters of conscience between parents and children, and compelling parents to forego cheap, and buy dear school books, the Board has no authority of the kind, and has employed its best exertions to bring within the reach of all parents cheap as well as good books; that so far from the Chief Superintendent of Schools having authority to introduce what books he pleases into Schools, he has no authority whatever in respect to introducing books, and so far from having power to employ and dismiss School Teachers at his pleasure, he has no power to employ a School Teacher at all, or even to give him a legal certificate of qualification; that he has no power to interfere in the affairs of any School Section, unless appealed to by some party concerned; that his decisions have in no case the authority of a Court of Law; that both his power and his duty relate to seeing the conditions imposed by the Legislature fulfilled in the expenditure of the Legislative School Grant; that his power is much less than is given to a similar officer in the neighbouring State of New York, and is an accumulation of labour, and not an exercise of any arbitrary authority; that every act of the Chief Superintendent of Schools is subject to the authority of a Government responsible to the Legislature of the country. But while the constitution of the Board of Education has been ostensibly objected to, I believe the real objection is rather against that with which the Board has been identified, namely, the prohibition of United States School Books in our Common Schools.

It seems to be supposed that if there were no Board of Education to recommend books to be used in Schools, there would be no exclusion of American Books from the Schools. . . .

The fact, however, is, that American School Books, unless permitted by the Board, are excluded by the 30th section of the Statute; whereas the Board of Education is constituted by the 3d Section.

In regard to the exclusion of American Books from our Schools, I have explained, as I have had opportunity, that it is not because they are foreign books simply that they are excluded, although it is patriotic to use our own in preference to foreign publications; but because they are, with very few exceptions, anti-British, in every sense of the word.

They are unlike the School Books of any other enlightened people, so far as I have the means of knowing. The School Books of Germany, France, and Great Britain, contain nothing hostile to the institutions, or derogatory to the character of any other nation. I know not of a single English School Book in which there is an allusion to the United States, not calculated to excite a feeling of respect for their inhabitants and Government. It is not so with American School Books. With very few exceptions, they abound in statements and allusions prejudicial to the institutions and character of the British nation. . . .

Another ground of opposition, in some quarters, to the present School Act, is the exclusion of *Alien Teachers* from our Schools. I think that less evil arises from the employment of American Teachers, than from the use of American School Books. Some unquestionable friends of British Government, and deeply interested in the cause of popular education, represent that the clause of the Act not allowing legal certificates of qualification as Teachers to Aliens, operates, in some places, injuriously to the interests of Common Schools, as Aliens are the best Teachers that can be procured in those places. The provision prohibiting the qualification of Aliens as Common School Teachers, constituted the 37th Section of the School Act of 1843; but as it did not take effect until 1846, it has been erroneously identified with the present Act in contradistinction to the late Act. Trustees and parents can employ Aliens or whom they please as Teachers; but both the late and present School Act confine the expenditure of the School fund to the remuneration of Teachers possessing legal certificates of qualification. Whatever may be thought of the wisdom or expediency of the clause restricting legal certificates of qualification to natural-born or naturalized British subjects in the first instance, I believe the public sentiment is against its repeal, and in favour of having the youth of the country taught by our fellow-subjects, as well as out of our own books. . . .

There is (observes Mr. Ryerson) another clause against which I have been informed, more repugnance is felt than against any other provision of the Act; namely, the latter part of the fifth clause of the 27th Section, in the following words: "And before

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such Trustees, or any one on their behalf, shall be entitled to receive from the District Superintendent their share of the Common School Fund, they should furnish him with a declaration from the Secretary Treasurer that he has actually and *bonâ fide* received, and has in his possession, for the payment of the Teacher, a sum sufficient, with such allowance from the Common School Fund for the purposes aforesaid."

The only objection of which I am aware against such a requirement by the Legislature, as a condition of paying its bounty, is, that parents are not able to pay the Teacher's quarterly fees. But is not each parent more able, and is it not much more reasonable that he should be required to pay the few shillings quarterly fees due from him to the Teacher, than that the poor Teacher should be deprived of the punctual payment of the aggregate amount of School fees due him? In addition to the claims of justice, upon the ground of labour performed, the argument of *need* is much stronger on the side of the *Teacher* than on that of his employers.

My strong conviction is, that this least popular clause of the Act—though attended with some opposition, and perhaps inconvenience in some cases, on its first introduction—will ultimately, if allowed to remain, prove a great boon to Teachers, a great help to Trustees, and a great benefit to Common Schools.

Some attempts have been made to excite opposition to the Act by representing the system as *compulsory*, and that education should be left to *voluntary effort*. The duty of the State to provide for the education of its population has been admitted and avowed by every constitutional government of Christendom, as well Republican as Monarchical; and I do not think the Government and Legislature of Canada will abandon their duty in this respect to gratify the selfishness of some wealthy individuals, or the ultraism of certain partizans. But our system of Schools is not *compulsory*, in the sense in which that term is applied to despotic governments. The vote of the Parliamentary grant is the voluntary Act of the people, through their Legislative Representatives, the reception of a part of that grant and the levying of an assessment is the voluntary act of the people in each District through their Council Representatives; the reception of a part of the School Fund by any School Section, and the levying of a Rate-bill, is the voluntary Act of the people in such Section, through their Trustee Representatives; in addition to which, the present Act does not require Trustees to levy a Rate-bill at all, but authorizes them to adopt voluntary subscription, if they prefer it, and then enables them to collect the amount of each voluntary subscription as promptly and in the same manner as if it had been imposed by Rate-bill.

An objection has been made from another quarter, that the Act does not give to the Clergy sufficient power as School Visitors. I know not what greater power could be given to the Clergy without destroying the School System; and I believe any Clergyman who diligently and judiciously exercises the power

given him by the Act, will find himself able to do much good. If any Clergyman will not avail himself of the facilities which the Act affords him of encouraging and influencing the education of Canadian youth, because it does not give him a positive control in the Schools, which cannot be severed from their Trustees and Provincial management, it is to be hoped that few will imitate his example, but that all will take into consideration the social condition and circumstances of the country, and contribute their pious and appropriate exertions to advance its general welfare.

Such are the *principal* objections which I have heard urged against the present Common School Act. Some of them it will be seen, arise from opposition to *any* public School system whatever; others are founded on misapprehensions produced by misrepresentations; others again relate to clauses which, it is to be hoped, will soon be amended; while others proceed from foreign predilections, and not from any thing unusual in the provisions of the Act. With some provisions for the better establishment and maintenance of Common Schools in Cities and Towns, and the amendment of certain clauses of the Statute, I think action rather than legislation, is required to promote the instruction of the rising generation; that the law should not be changed without a trial; that improvements, as occasion may require, rather than revolutions, should be made in the School System; that experience is a safer guide than speculation in this most important department of legislation and government. I think the foundation laid ought not to be subverted or shaken; the erection and completion of the superstructure must be the work of time as well as of persevering industry.

In fine, observes the Rev. Superintendent,—in reporting the means employed to bring the various provisions of the New School Act into operation, I have thought it proper thus to notice the chief objections which have been made against some of its provisions, and the grounds of such objections. From the increased interest which is felt and manifested in most parts of the Province on the subject of public Education, from the obvious improvement which is reported as progressing in the organization and management of the Schools in several Districts, and from the decline of party feeling and the cultivation and growth of practical and intelligent sentiments among the people, I hope to be able, in subsequent Reports, to present some substantial fruits of the exertions of the Legislature and Government in promoting this most vital and general interest of our common country.

To the above copious extract we consider it an act of justice to add, that had Dr. Ryerson vain-gloriously attempted to foist off the system, advocated by him, as original, and emanating from himself, some offence might have been fairly taken at his presumption; but, so far from this being the case, he took the very oppo-

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site course, nearly one-half of his general Report being, in all candour, composed of unwearied thankful acknowledgments and quotations from the writings, sayings, and doings of the most experienced and enlightened educationists of every country visited by him, *with the view of enabling his readers to judge for themselves*, while he contented himself with avowing his own conviction, that if the system is allowed to have time to be well understood, it will be found to operate to the entire satisfaction of the country.

Having so far done justice to Dr. Ryerson, we now proceed to the discharge of a similar duty to the public, in candidly pointing out wherein we regard the provisions of the Legislature, as well as the disposition of the people in favour of successful general education, as falling altogether short of the desired mark; and this we shall endeavour to exemplify in at least three remarkable instances, namely:

1st. The utter neglect, still manifested, of the just claims of common school teachers to far greater consideration and more substantial remuneration, as a highly respectable, influential, and important class of men;

2nd. The extraordinary manner in which the urgent moral propriety of, as far as possible, providing for the education of the female sex, in separate schools, is almost entirely lost sight of;

And 3rd. The remarkable fact that the establishment of district grammar schools, on a suitable liberal foundation, as the higher of the two branches of primary instruction, and the great connecting link between an elementary or common school, and a university education, though the first to be provided for, should have been shuffled off for half a century, and still remain in an embryotic state,—for it cannot be supposed that either the late generally miserable district schools, or the present contracted grammar schools, were intended to supply their place,—while the less urgent claims of a university, destined for the exclusive benefit of the higher and richer portion of society, who can best afford any extra expense, should have been unceas-

ingly agitated and forced on to precocious maturity, until, becoming the bone of contention among rival political and sectarian parties, it has more than once convulsed the province, and threatened to shake the very government to its centre.

As these are rather serious charges, it would have been very desirable to have been able to take a rather extended view of the grounds on which they are based, although only partially connected with the documents before us; but our space not allowing of such a step at present, we are constrained to refer our readers to such parts of the widely circulated Reports on education as bear upon them, and to content ourselves with prefacing our first objection by a brief outline of the noble scope of the otherwise highly promising elementary system now in progress, and then proceeding to the demonstration of the impossibility of the expected results being realized from the inadequate means and instruments at present employed.

In few words, then, be it remembered, that it is intended that our provincial system of primary instruction should be universal, *i.e.*, embrace the whole body of the people; that it should be practicable; that it should be founded on religion and morality; and that it should develop all the intellectual and physical powers, and should therefore provide for the efficient teaching of the following subjects, *viz.*—1st, biblical history and morality; 2nd, reading and spelling; 3rd, writing; 4th, arithmetic; 5th, grammar; 6th, geography; 7th, linear drawing; 8th, vocal music; 9th, history; 10th, natural history; 11th, natural philosophy; 12th, agriculture; 13th, human physiology; 14th, civil government; and 15th, political economy.

So vast an array of branches of mere elementary education, may perhaps startle those who have not been accustomed to look deeply into such matters, and may even be considered by some as altogether visionary; but whatever doubt may exist in this colony of the practicability of so comprehensive a course of instruction being realized, must be at once set at rest

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by the convincing reply made by the Provincial Superintendent—that the whole of these subjects are connected with the well being of the community, and should therefore be made accessible to them in the common schools; and that if the higher classes are to be provided with the means of a university education, surely the common people, the bone and sinew of the country, should be provided by the State with the means of the best common school education; and, further, that as all the branches above enumerated have been and are taught in the common schools in many other countries—in the mountains and valleys of Switzerland, in the interior and *not* fertile and wealthy countries of Germany, in many parts of France, in many of the schools of Great Britain and Ireland, and in a considerable number of the Eastern and Middle States of America—surely what has been done and is doing in so many other countries in respect to elementary education, may and ought to be done in Canada.

Taking for granted, then, that such is the true state of the case, and that such are the results that ought to be expected from a well organized provincial system, it becomes a matter of great importance to inquire how far the means and instruments at present applied are likely to prove adequate to the accomplishment of the noble end in view; and, if such be done, we hesitate not to aver that the answer of every reflecting man will be—that it will be morally impossible, so long as the common school master occupies his present degraded position—whether we regard the emoluments of his highly important office, or his general status in society;—and that, too, in spite of the institution of the best Normal and Model Schools in the world.

As very justly observed by M. Guizot, the able Prime Minister of France, on introducing the law of primary instruction in the Chamber of Deputies in 1833:

“All the provisions hitherto described *would be of none effect*, if we took no pains to procure for the public School thus consti-

tuted an able Master, and worthy of the high vocation of instructing the people. It cannot be too often repeated, that *it is the Master that makes the School*. What a well-assorted union of qualities is required to constitute a good Master! A good Master ought to be a man who knows much more than he is called upon to teach, that he may teach with intelligence and with taste; who is to live in an humble sphere, and yet have a noble and elevated spirit, that he may preserve that dignity of mind and of deportment, without which he will never obtain the respect and confidence of families: who possesses a rare mixture of gentleness and firmness; for, inferior though he be in station to many individuals in the *Communes*, he ought to be the obsequious servant of none; a man not ignorant of his rights, but thinking much more of his duties; showing to all a good example and serving to all as a counsellor; not given to change his condition, but satisfied with his situation, because it gives him the power of doing good; and who has made up his mind to live and die in the service of Primary Instruction, which to him is the service of God and his fellow creatures. To rear up masters approaching to such a model is a difficult task, and yet *we must succeed in it, or we have done nothing for elementary instruction*. A bad Schoolmaster, like a bad Priest, is a scourge to a *Commune*; and though we are often obliged to be contented with indifferent ones, *we must do our best to improve the average quality.*"

And how, let us ask, is this work of regeneration to be accomplished with us?—certainly not by the mere creation of Normal and Model Schools, unless the future emolumentary prospects held out be such as to induce men of a respectable station of life, and more than sufficient preliminary education to become candidates for the arduous and responsible office of teacher: yet, what has often hitherto been the tempting average income of the common schoolmaster, derived from the public bounty, local assessment, and school-fees, united?—no less a sum than from £20 to £30 per annum!—a pittance which the most illiterate field-labourer would spurn with contempt. The first grand step, then, towards elevating the teacher to his true position in society, is, to be very particular in the selection of well qualified persons, through the medium of either a Provincial or District Board, after having gone through a proper Normal training; but that ordeal passed, the next step is to encourage the successful candidate to regard the office of teaching with enthusiastic attachment, and as the honourable profession of

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a life, by ensuring to him a far more respectable minimum remuneration for his valuable services, and at the same time opening a door for further promotion as the reward of superior merit. Let this be liberally done,—*and that must, in a great measure, rest with the people,*—and you at once elevate the teacher to his legitimate respectable position in society, by the side of the clergyman and the gentlemen of his locality.

On this important point, a Committee of inquiry, appointed by Sir George Arthur in 1840, and to whose labours we shall have frequent occasion to refer, makes the following very just observation:—“The first step towards the amelioration of Common Schools, is to ameliorate the condition of the master. At present there is reason to believe that but too many teachers are unfit for this responsible station, from the want of literary or moral qualification. The cause of this, they believe to be, the inadequate remuneration held out to those who embrace the occupation. In this country, the wages of the working classes are so high, that few undertake the office of schoolmaster, except those who are unable to do anything else; and hence the important duties of education are often entrusted to incompetent and improper persons. The income of the schoolmaster should be at least equal to that of the common laborer! and until some provision of this nature is made, it is feared it will be in vain to expect a sufficient supply of competent teachers.”

In allusion to the same subject, Dr. Duncombe had, (four years before) very justly observed in his Report on Education, that he was much inclined to believe that “as is the master, so is the child; and that as the lame and lazy, because they would work cheap, were entrusted with the promotion of the minds of our youth they would, to a certain extent, copy their masters, and though their bodies may not limp, their minds will be both sluggish and deformed. Hence the necessity of having teachers correct, gentlemanly persons, well prepared for their arduous, responsible office, and fit models for the youth of the country to imitate.” And

further, "that a system, of educating, furnishing and liberally paying a sufficient number of competent teachers, commensurate with the wants of the people, must be adopted, and publicly and zealously supported. The situation of the schoolmaster must be rendered respectable, and reputed to be an honourable employment, that gentlemanly, competent persons may seek it as a business for life."

It is singular that the absolute *necessity* of elevating the teacher in the scale of society, does not appear to have been yet sufficiently appreciated by our American neighbours of New York, although the following excellent observations on the subject were made by the Chief Superintendent of that State so far back as 1834:— "An enlightened appreciation on the part of the inhabitants of districts generally, of the functions and responsibilities of teachers—a determination to secure the highest order of talent, and to provide an adequate compensation, and a disposition to elevate the character, and advance the social rank of the teacher, by assigning him that station in the regards of the community which is due to the dignity and utility of his profession, may be regarded as indispensable pre-requisites in the success of any system which contemplates the scientific preparation of teachers."\*

The same subject has also more or less engaged the attention of other States of the Union, and among them the young State of Michigan became at once deeply impressed with the necessity of so important a step, as evinced in the following remark by its first superintendent, so far back as 1837: † "Without competent teachers, the most perfect system of external organisation must be powerless; must utterly fail of accomplishing its object. The truth is, education is to be regarded as a science, for it has its distinct subject, and distinct object, and is governed by its own peculiar laws; and has, like other sciences, its corresponding art, the art of

\* See Randall's Common School System, p. 57.

† See Pierce's Report of Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan, for 1836.

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teaching. It may, then, be pertinently asked, on what principle of common sense is it that a man is considered good enough for a teacher, because he has satisfactorily proved himself good for no one thing else? Why is it that the utter want of health to exercise any other profession, is frequently the only reason why a man should be thrust into this, which requires more active mental labour in the discharge of its duties than any other profession whatever? Alas, it is not by teachers such as these that the intellectual power of a people is to be created." And further: "It is utterly impossible to elevate the schools, and make them what they ought to be, without elevating the character and rank of the teachers."\*

With regard to the feeling entertained on this important subject by the first statesmen on the continent of Europe, it is only necessary to add to what is adduced by our own Rev. Superintendent, that both M. Cousin and M. Guizot cordially subscribe to the policy of that part of the Prussian system by which not only is the school master raised to a functionary of the state, and, as such, has a right to a retiring pension in his old age, but there is formed in every department (or district) a fund for the benefit of the widows and orphans of schoolmasters, which the law rather recommends than enforces; and that the same feeling prevails throughout Germany, as well as Switzerland and Holland, and is rapidly gaining ground in Britain, but more particularly in Scotland, where a grand move has lately been made in the right quarter by the teachers themselves. We allude to

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\* It may be further remarked, that to ensure a proper feeling of ambition and emulation in the teachers generally, the literary acquirements of all common schoolmasters should be such as not only to qualify them for undertaking, at extra hours, the instruction of a few private pupils in the next higher branches of education (should such offer among the more wealthy families in their neighbourhood), but also to allow those of the first class to aspire to the head mastership of a district grammar school, on a vacancy occurring, and by the same rule to encourage a master in the latter to look forward to promotion as a professor in the university.

the great professional Association of school teachers in Scotland, formed in Edinburgh in the month of September last, at the auspicious organisation of which not less than between six and seven hundred teachers were present.\*

Various unreasonably economical estimates have been formed of what might be regarded as a fair medium compensation to common school masters, ranging from £40 to £70 per annum; but we unhesitatingly pronounce ever the latter as far too low, and regard nothing less than from £90 to £100 as sufficient, particularly when it is considered that though the school act empowers municipal councils to raise funds for the erection of *teachers' dwelling houses*, as well as schools, no such accommodation has yet in general been furnished; whereas the poorest parochial school in Scotland must have at least one room and a kitchen attached to the school room, for the accommodation of the teacher's family. Even in that country, however, the respectable position of the teacher has long been on the wane; the income of a parochial school master 150 years ago having been nearly on a par with the clergy, whereas the average income of the former is not now more than £55, while the minimum stipend of the latter is £150, exclusive of manse and glebe. At all events, there should be a total revisal of that clause of the school act which insists on

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\* This Association is to be called *The Educational Institute of Scotland*; and its object is to raise the status of schoolmasters throughout the country, and to improve the standard of education; to accomplish which it divides its members into three grades, junior licentiates, senior licentiates, and fellows: and grants to each diplomas, according to ascertained attainments; and in fact proceeds upon the same principle which regulates the granting of degrees in a University. The present president is Dr. L. Scumitz, Rector of the High School, Edinburgh.

The organisation of a somewhat similar association in Canada would be productive of very beneficial results. If an example be wanting among our American neighbours, a better cannot be set than that of "the Western Literary Institute, and College of Professional Teachers," established some twelve or fourteen years ago, and diffused over the four Western States of Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, an interesting volume of whose proceedings now lies before us.

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thirty children at least, attending school to entitle the teacher to a share in the government bounty; whereas, that being a matter over which he can have no control, there should be a minimum teachers' salary, whatever may be the population in each school section, which also should be limited to a certain extent of country; and wherever either the population may be so sparse, or the inhabitants so insensible to the blessing of education, as not to furnish even ten scholars,\* a school should nevertheless be established, and the master paid the regular quota of government allowance and assessment; and whatever that joint amount may fall short of the minimum salary, should be made up from the school fund. At the same time no deduction whatever should be made from any extra emolument derived from a flourishing school; these being only to be regarded as a fair equivalent for extra labour, and being sure to act as a stimulus to laudable emulation, as well as greater personal exertion on the part of the teacher, on behalf of the general spread of education, in his respective neighbourhood.

Much more might readily be added on this very important head; but we are compelled to forbear for the present, that we may pass on to the notice of the extraordinary manner in which the legislature, as well as the Rev. Superintendent, have all but lost sight of the urgent moral propriety of encouraging, wherever practicable, the establishment of schools for female children, conducted by well qualified teachers of their own sex, altogether distinct from those for boys. This is the more remarkable, considering the very great interest taken in this truly important and interesting class of

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\* The lowest number now prescribed by the Lower Canada act is fifteen. In Prussia the proportion is one teacher to every ten scholars; and it was very justly observed by Dr. Duncombe, that "if Prussia with a dense population finds that proportion needful, the sparseness of our population, in our wide spread territories, surely demands an equal supply." The fact is, it is in the thinly-settled solitary backwoods that the presence of the teacher is most wanted.

schools by our American neighbours, as well as in Dr. Duncombe's Report on Education, a document of considerable value (whatever may be the questionable moral or political character of the writer), and with which the leading features of the present system generally coincide. That our readers may judge how far this observation is well founded, we beg to refer them to the Superintendent's Report, as well as the School Act, where they will find that this highly desirable class of seminaries is almost entirely overlooked in the former, and only slightly glanced at in an appendix; and that the Legislature seem to have been equally indifferent to the subject; the only reference to it in the Upper Canada School Act being in the 42d clause, making it "*lawful*" for any District Council *to authorise* the establishment of "both a male and female school in every school section," and in the 44th clause interpreting the word teacher as including both sexes; whereas a little more stress is laid upon it in the Lower Canada act, the 30th clause of which not only *expressly authorises* school commissioners of municipalities *to establish* a girls' school in each school district, distinct from that for boys, as a separate district, but even provides that if any religious community should have already established a girls' school for elementary education, it may be placed under the management of the commissioners from year to year, and be thereby entitled to all the advantages granted to common schools. As a contrast to this seeming indifference, Dr. Duncombe not only devoted several pages of his Report to describing and enforcing the propriety of engrafting this highly interesting and morally influential branch of common schools on whatever may be our provincial system, but suggested that one out of four normal schools proposed by his act should be exclusively devoted to the training of female teachers; and it is but proper to add, that this great improvement was not lost sight of by the commission of inquiry appointed by Sir George Arthur in 1840; for in their plan for the institution of township model schools, they propose that there should be a male and

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female teacher in each; and in the estimate of the probable expense of the general system recommended by them, a provision is made for a number of female equal to that of male teachers.

We might readily extend our observations on this important head, did our already nearly exhausted space permit, but we must rest satisfied with referring our readers for other interesting matter to the annexed note, as occupying much less room than would otherwise be the case,\* and hasten to a conclusion, by here taking the

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\* Regarding this as a desideratum of great importance, in whatever improvements may take place in our common school system, and thoroughly coinciding in the opinion of a fair American writer on education, that feminine delicacy requires that girls should be educated by their own sex, from evident considerations that regard their health and convenience, the propriety of their dress and manners, and their domestic accomplishments, we are induced to subjoin the following more detailed remarks on this subject.

The Prussian system inculcates that primary instruction, though divided into two degrees, has its peculiar unity and general laws; admits of accommodation to the sex, language, religion, and future destination of the pupils; and enjoins separate establishments for girls to be formed wherever possible, corresponding to the elementary and larger schools for boys; at the same time that it delicately prescribes, that though, as a national establishment, boys' schools should covet the greatest publicity in their periodical examinations, those for females should be less so, and therefore take place in the presence of the parents and masters only, without any general invitation. Add to which private seminaries where girls are educated are permitted to undertake the office of model or normal schools for private teachers; their competency to instruct being finally tested through a regular examination by the provincial consistories.

In Britain, also, this interesting subject has attracted a due degree of attention; particularly under the auspices of the British and Foreign School Society, in whose normal model schools the preparation of teachers for girls' schools is devolved upon a Ladies' Committee, to whose unremitting attention that department is much indebted; the general committee very justly observing, that they feel it impossible to attach too high a degree of importance to the improvement and extension of female education. It may be added, that fifteen years ago the proportion of female to male candidates in training was as forty to fifty-eight.

In most of the American States, this great desideratum has attracted the same degree of attention, but more particularly in

liberty of expressing our decided opinion, sanctioned by upwards of twelve years' attentive personal observation and anxious reflection on the subject, during visits

Massachusetts; the superintendent of which was, so far back as 1840, led to remark as follows: "A change is rapidly taking place both in the public sentiment and action, in regard to the employment of female teachers. The number of male teachers in all the summer and winter schools for the past year was thirty-three less than for the preceding year; while the number of females was 103 more. That females are incomparably better teachers for young children than males, cannot admit of a doubt. Their manners are more mild and gentle, and hence more in consonance with the tenderness of childhood." "A statement," observes an able British writer, "worthy of serious consideration in this country, (*i. e.*, Britain), where employments suited to women of cultivated minds and polished manners, are greatly wanted." See *Edinburgh Review*, volume 73.

In the state of New York, also, the committee on education made the following apposite remarks on the same subject more than twenty years ago: "The committee have not been able to discover why, upon every principle of justice and public policy, seminaries for the education of females in the higher branches of knowledge should not participate in the public bounty equally with those for the instruction of males." See Randall on Common Schools, page 40.

Although we have already alluded in general terms to Dr. Duncombe's observations on this subject, we are induced to add the following, as a *finale* to this protracted note: "While upon the subject of normal schools, I cannot comprehend why schools for the education of female teachers may not prove equally advantageous to the cause of education, and the happiness and ornament of society." And he elsewhere adds: "When we consider the claims of the learned professions, the excitement and profits of commerce, manufactures, agriculture, and the arts, the aversion of most men to the sedentary, toilsome duties of teaching and governing young children, the scanty pittance that is allowed to the majority of teachers, and that few men will enter a business that will not support a family, when there are multitudes of other employments that will afford a competence and lead to wealth, it is chimerical to hope that the supply of teachers is to come chiefly from that sex. It is woman, fitted by disposition, and habits, and circumstances for such duties, who, to a very wide extent, must aid in educating the childhood and youth of this province; and therefore it is that females must be trained and educated for this employment. And most happily, it is true, that the education necessary to fit a woman to be a teacher, is exactly the one that best fits her for that domestic relation which she is primarily assigned to fill."

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to various parts of the Province,—from Goderich to Quebec,—that the palpable oversight in regard to female teachers should immediately be remedied, and that, wherever it can possibly be done, married teachers should at all times be preferred for even boys' schools, especially should the wife be qualified for undertaking the charge of a girls' school, combined with the very *youngest* boys, on however limited a scale, in a room distinct from that under her husband.

We now arrive at the last branch of our observations, as regards Upper Canada, namely, the remarkable fact that the establishment, on a suitable liberal foundation of district *grammar schools*, as the higher of the two branches of primary instruction, and the great connecting link between an elementary or common school and a university education, though the first proposed to be provided for, should have been shuffled off for half a century, and still remain in an embryotic state,—for it cannot be intended that the late miserable districts schools, or the present contracted grammar schools, into which these have been metamorphosed, should supply their places;—while the less urgent claims of a university, destined for the exclusive benefit of the higher and richer portion of society, who can best afford any extra expense, should have been unceasingly agitated and forced on to precocious maturity, until becoming the bone of contention among rival political and sectarian parties, it has more than once convulsed the province, and threatened to shake the very government to its centre.

In repeating this strong allusion to the still unsettled state of the university question, it is neither our wish nor intention to enter into any discussion of its disputed merits, whether moral or political. It is sufficient to have avowed our decided conviction that the paramount *prior claims* of *grammar schools*, as of far greater importance to the people at large, have been entirely lost sight of, and sacrificed to the over-zealous promotion of that *one* laudable object, for the benefit of a particular class; and we even indulge a hope that we shall not

raise our humble voice in vain in favour of the speedy correction of so unjustifiable a procedure.\*

That our readers may be aware that we are not arguing upon false or untenable premises, we beg to remind them that His late Majesty, George III., was graciously pleased, so far back as 1798, to allot funds—"first, for the establishment of free grammar schools in those districts in which they were called for; and, *in due process of time*, the establishing of seminaries of a larger and more comprehensive nature, for the promotion of religion and moral learning, and the study of the arts

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\* In further support of our humble opinion on this subject, we beg to remark, that the grammar schools of Upper Canada occupy, with regard to the interests of the people, even a higher position in the scale of education, than the *mittel schules*, and lower burgher schools of Germany, and the *ecoles moyennes*, or middle schools of France, as adverted to by a learned and powerful British writer, who, in speaking of the *projet du loi*, for primary instruction introduced by M. Guizot in 1833, and borrowing his materials from the speech of that celebrated minister on the occasion, observes:—The fundamental questions with reference to the instruction of the people, are: 1st, the subjects or branches which it ought to embrace; 2nd, the nature or description of schools in which it ought to be carried on; and 3rd, the authorities which are to superintend, control, and direct them. With regard to the first head, primary instruction (as distinguished from classical and scientific) is divided into two degrees or stages; the first, or lower degree, being the minimum, must be provided, universally, for the humblest village, as for the largest city. . . . . Between this and the classical and scientific education which is given in public schools and colleges, as well as in many private academies, there is a wide interval in France, which has hitherto been an entire blank, leaving a large and important middle class without the power of choosing between pure elementary instruction and that higher branch called secondary, which, besides being very costly, imparts a kind and extent of knowledge not appropriate to their condition in life. To fill up this gap, the new law establishes a higher degree of primary instruction in schools, which, from the middle place they occupy, the French, translating the German *mittel schule*, have already named *ecoles moyennes*. (See Edm. Review, vol. 76.) Need we add, that it is the much wider gap existing between the mere common school and university education in Canada, which we wish to see filled by truly respectable grammar schools, holding the rank of efficient classical academies, in every district of the province.

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and sciences;" and that it was consequently arranged by a Provincial Board, that one-half of this fund should be devoted to the former, and applied—1st, *to the erection of the necessary buildings*; 2nd, *to the payment of the salaries of the masters*; and 3rd, *to the keeping of the buildings in repair, and the purchase of books and philosophical apparatus.*" Instead, however, of measures being taken to carry this arrangement into immediate effect, so much was it gradually lost sight of, that in 1609 an act was passed by the Provincial Legislature, making a special grant of £800 per annum for four years, for the establishment of one public school in each district, *upon an entirely different foundation*, as simply allotting a salary of £100 to the masters of each, without making any provision for buildings, &c. And hence the origin of our late district schools;—a kind of seminary altogether distinct from the intended royal grammar schools, as was in fact expressly admitted to be the case by a committee of the Executive Council in 1819, when, on the endowment of a university becoming the more favoured grand object, they declared that a provision for district schools was no longer required from the same fund, being made by the Legislature; at the same time that they considered more than double the original grant for a university required for the mere erection of a suitable building, and providing a library, philosophical apparatus, and botanic garden; besides an annual outlay of £4000, to defray the expense of professors' salaries! &c. &c.

No wonder, then, that, on the claims of the royal grammar schools continuing disregarded for twelve years longer, a select committee of the House of Assembly, in reporting on the school lands, could not then refrain from being struck with the singular fact, that "no apparent benefit had resulted to the inhabitants of the country from the school reservation for upwards of thirty years, and suggesting the immediate institution of no less than eleven district grammar schools, at £400 per annum to each, and twelve subordinate, or township schools, with £50 to each; at the same time that *they expressed*

*their aversion to an expensive endowment for a university, until the original intention of founding a free grammar school in each district had first been carried into effect.\**

From that period up to the present time, if our memory is correct, the only successful Legislative attempt made in favour of the great deesideratum advocated by us, was in 1841, when an Act was passed authorizing *District Schools* to be henceforward considered as Gram-

\* The following are the Resolutions passed on the occasion :—

“ Resolved, That His Majesty, in the year 1797, was graciously pleased to communicate to the Government of this province, by a Despatch from His Grace the Duke of Portland to Mr. President Russell, in answer to a joint address of the Legislature, His Majesty’s intention to set apart a certain portion of the waste lands of the Crown, as a fund for the establishment and support of a free grammar school in those districts in which they are called for, and in due process of time to establish other seminaries of a more comprehensive nature.”

“ Resolved, That although more than thirty years have elapsed since His Majesty made this most gratifying communication, it does not come within the knowledge of this House, that even one free grammar school has been endowed from these lands, or any other seminary established out of that reservation.”

“ Resolved, That the establishment by the Legislature of a public school in each district, with a salary of one hundred pounds currency paid out of the Provincial Treasury to the master, does not afford sufficient means to instruct the youth of the province in the several branches of classical and scientific learning, and ought not therefore to be considered as a reason for withholding the support which His Majesty intended for the District Grammar Schools.”

“ Resolved, That it is most important to the contentment and welfare of the people of this province, that the school lands be appropriated to the purposes for which they were originally intended, and immediate steps taken to represent to His Majesty’s Government, that the several Districts, from their extensive and rapidly increasing population, are now in a state to require the establishment of free grammar schools with a suitable endowment, which schools, if incorporated with the present district schools, would afford the means of respectable support to a master and two assistants in each, and thereby enable the inhabitants generally to confer the blessings of a liberal education on their children, and find employment as masters for such of them as may be found to have made the necessary proficiency in the acquirement of classical and scientific knowledge.”

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mar Schools, as contemplated by His late Majesty George III., and allotting £100 for furnishing an additional master, and other means of instruction, and £200 for the erection of a school-house, provided an equal sum should be raised by the inhabitants; and also £100 more per annum for the establishment of two other subordinate Schools in any part of each District, on the inhabitants providing a suitable school-house, with at least 50 (now reduced to 30) scholars; and further offering to extend a similar bounty to even four such schools in each District: but not one word referring to the original far more suitable and liberal provision made by the Royal donor, in favour of *Grammar Schools*—in precedence of all other Educational Institutions. And thus, in fact, stands the question at present.

Having proceeded thus far, we now consider it advisable to take a more distinct, though cursory retrospect of the various plans proposed for carrying the establishment of Grammar Schools into effect. The first was matured in 1798, by a Special Provincial Board, consisting of the Executive Council, and the Judges and Law Officers of the Crown, who came to the following conclusion:—

“When the subject was first opened, it seemed to be the unanimous opinion, that the intention of the Royal Founder of the free Grammar Schools and University of Upper Canada, could not be effectuated but by a liberal provision for their establishment and maintenance; and each member of the board seemed deeply impressed with a conviction, that in making his estimate of the extent of that provision, it would be much safer to allow too much than too little; for as the application of the funds will always be directed by the beneficent wisdom which has created it, the excess may at any time be applied to other purposes, equally worthy of the original intention, and equally conducive to the happiness of the Province; but it will be difficult and perhaps impossible, if the present moment be neglected, to find at a future period the means of effecting the object before us, without much expense and a delay almost subversive of the purpose.

Under this impression, the Board proceeded to consider in detail the purposes to which the proposed fund should, when raised, be applied, and seemed to be unanimous in thinking that they may be reduced to three.

- 1st. The erection of the necessary buildings;
- 2d. The payment of the salaries of the masters;
- 3d. The keeping of the buildings in repair, the purchase of

books and philosophical apparatus, and other purposes essential to places of education, but in general too costly to be provided by individuals.

1st. With respect to the sum to be expended on the erection of the necessary buildings, the Board conceived, that taking the average price of labour in the four Districts of the Province, the sum of £3000, provincial currency, will be sufficient to erect a plain but solid and substantial building, containing a School-room sufficient to hold an hundred boys, without danger to their health from too many being crowded together; and also a set of apartments for the master, large enough not only for the accommodation of his family, but also for the very desirable purpose of enabling him to take a few of his pupils as boarders. Some few outbuildings may also be necessary, for the use of the master, which, if they will not come within this estimate, will not much exceed it, and may easily be provided for hereafter.

2d. As the extent of the salaries of the masters is expressly reserved for the Royal consideration, we do not presume to mention any particular sum as sufficient for that purpose; but as it is necessary for us in making our estimate, to calculate upon some given sum, and as His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor thought the sum of £100 provincial currency, a sufficient allowance for the master of the school erected under his auspices at Kingston,—we beg leave to take that sum as the average for the salary of the masters of each school, and half of it for the salary of an under-master, in case it should be thought expedient to have one.

3d. The sum of £30 per annum seems to be a sufficient sum for keeping the building in repair; the provision for the purchase of books, philosophical apparatus, &c., relates to the endowment of the University rather than to that of the Grammar School, and is only mentioned that it may not appear to have been forgotten in our calculation.

It appeared, therefore, to be the general opinion of the Board, that a sum not exceeding £3000 provincial currency, and an annual income of £180 will be amply sufficient for the establishment and support of a free Grammar School in each District."

The next explicit view taken of the subject, was in 1831, and has already been referred to in a previous page of this article in connexion with the note thereto appended; but we cannot resist adding beneath a more extended extract from the justly strong observations made in the Report of the select Committee of that period, already alluded to:—

"From this condensed view of the proceedings of the Executive Council on the munificent provision for the diffusion of

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Education in this Province, the Committee are struck with the singular fact, that no apparent benefit has resulted to the inhabitants of the country from the school reservation, for a period of 30 years; and that the original intention of the Legislature, expressed in the joint Address to His Majesty, as well as His Majesty's most gracious desire to meet their wishes by the establishment of Free Grammar Schools in those Districts in which they are called for, and in due process of time to establish other seminaries of a more extensive nature, have hitherto, as far as your Committee can judge, been lost sight of; and for no other reason that your Committee can discover, than that a School has, by an act of the Legislature, been already established in each District, with a salary of £100 to the master. But this very limited provision, your Committee respectfully submit, ought not to deprive the people of their just claim to a participation in the benefits of the School Lands; and to that end the Committee suggest, that the House ought now to address His Majesty, setting forth the great value of these lands, and the ample means which they afford to carry into effect the benevolent intentions of His late Royal Father, by an endowment from their proceeds for each District of at least £400, which added to the present appropriation would support eleven respectable seminaries, where the youth of the Province generally might receive a liberal education *without being removed many hundred miles from the tender care and watchful authority of their parents*, as must be the case if those lands are exclusively applied to establish and support King's College, or any other extensive University, which can only be viewed as of benefit to those whose wealth enables them to bear the great expense of sending their children to the capital of the Province."

With such strong and authoritative opinions on record as the above, it might have been reasonably expected that some decisive action, on so important a subject, would have ere long been taken; but, alas! such was the fatality attending every movement in its favour, that nothing farther was done till 1840, when the Commissioners appointed by Sir George Arthur to inquire and report on Education, as a branch of the Public Departments, felt constrained to take some notice of Grammar Schools, but in terms that seemed rather to imply, that they regarded them as actually in existence, and the system requiring amendment, than as being in reality still in embryo—unless, indeed, the District Schools were already considered to have usurped their place. In a subsequent part of their Report, however, the same Committee expressed a more tangible opinion with regard to

the erection of Grammar school-houses, when they recommended a fund of £5000 each for that purpose, to be raised jointly from the school lands, taxes, and shares. But there the matter ended.

The last abortive Legislative attempt in favour of the U. C. Grammar Schools, took place during the late Session of Parliament, on the unsuccessful introduction of the awfully perplexing University Question; when, among other things, it was proposed that a sum yielding £350 per annum should be set apart from the Education Fund, or University spoils, for the establishment of a respectable Grammar School in each District.\* As far as the amount of that allotment, and the purposes contemplated are concerned, we readily concur in the arrangement; but *not* as in any respect connected with the settlement of the University Question, with which we conceive the provision for Royal Grammar Schools has nothing to do—these institutions having an entirely distinct, as well as undeniably *prior* claim upon the Legislature, entitling them to be taken into altogether separate consideration, as the first great educational boon bestowed by the Sovereign on the people of Upper Canada.

We have so very far exceeded the limits which we had prescribed to ourselves, that we are reluctantly compelled to postpone the conclusion of our remarks to a future occasion, and we find it the more convenient to do so at this stage of our observations, as we propose that the sequel should bear principally on the state of things in Lower Canada, or at all events, be equally applicable to both Provinces. All, then, that remains to be added in concluding the present article is, that we have been led to lay so much stress on the persevering Legislative ne-

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\* It was proposed that a fund should be set aside, yielding to each school £350 per annum, to which it was supposed £150 more would be added from tuition fees—making in all £500, which would allow of £200 to a principal, and £150 each to two, or £100 each to three under masters; and also, that the sum of £500 should be granted to each District that should raise one-half that amount for the erection of a school-house; and further, that a Model Agricultural School and Farm should be attached to each Grammar School, with a practical Farmer at its head.

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glect of the Upper Canada District Grammar Schools, from viewing them as the legitimate higher branch of general primary instruction, to the advantages of which every citizen's child may justly aspire, without aiming at a superior and more expensive Professional or University Education, and, therefore, intended to be placed within the reach of every respectable settler in every District of the Province; and, consequently, regarding it as of great importance to the people, that the long-continued injustice and neglect which have been shown towards this solid, yet ornamental branch of popular instruction, should be brought conspicuously before the public at this particular crisis; so that our new Representatives may have no excuse for either again overlooking or postponing a definite arrangement on the subject, at the approaching meeting of Parliament. Should our efforts be crowned with the success which so great and excellent an object deserves, we shall ever look back with satisfaction at having humbly led the way in so good a cause. Should we, after all, be destined to fail, we shall still indulge the hope that we have not struggled altogether in vain; and even at the very worst, we may be allowed to assume as our motto—that we have failed in a laudable effort; or, in more classical phrase—

*Magnis tamen excidit ausis.*

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## PART II.

In resuming the thread of our desultory observations on the vitally important subject embraced by the above public documents, we owe an apology to our readers for the heavy tax already imposed upon their patient indulgence in our last article; but it so happened that while we felt the necessity of immediate action, our state of health incapacitated us from taking a more clear and elaborate, as well as more concise view of our subject; and we fear that the same excuse will have to be urged in behalf of our present remarks; which, on that ac-

count, but for the necessity of the timely redemption of our promise, we should have preferred postponing till a later occasion. We shall endeavour, however, to be as brief as possible; and, should we prove unsuccessful, we trust it will be charitably ascribed, more to the fear of omitting what we may deem important to our purpose, than to any fancied superior ability for discussing the merits of a most momentous, yet ill-appreciated subject, to the support of which a simple, straight-forward statement of facts, will ever prove far more conducive, than the display of even the most brilliant talents; and to the former of which alone we presume to lay any claim.

It will be in the recollection of our readers, that we stated in the outset of our last article, as a remarkable fact, that the first really decisive step in behalf of *the education of the People* of Upper Canada, through the medium of *Common schools*, was taken by the first reunited Parliament, in 1841. It is equally remarkable that the same may be said to have been the case with regard to the Lower province also; for though an apparently most auspicious movement towards what might be considered the counterpart of the ill-fated *Royal Grammar Schools* of Upper Canada, took place so far back as 1801, in the passing of an act for "the establishment of free schools, and the advancement of learning, on a *Royal foundation*," under the imposing name of "*The Royal Institution*;" no effort in behalf of far more necessary *Common schools* was made till so late as 1824, when an act was at last passed, "to *facilitate* the establishment and endowment of *elementary schools* in the different parishes of the province." But instead of these two enactments being harmonizing branches of one well organised educational system, they were altogether independent of each other, and were, therefore, never productive of the hoped for beneficial results; and such, it may be stated, was also the fate of the apparently promising Normal school bill of 1832; and all arising, it might be inferred, from the same latent cause as the failure in Upper Canada, namely, in the beginning having been made at the wrong end.

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In proof of this uncomplimentary remark being but too well founded, it is sufficient to remind our readers that though the *intentions* of "the Royal Institution" might have been excellent, no suitable *royal* donation (such as in Upper Canada) or any other special fund, having been allotted by law for carrying its provisions into effect, it would have proved altogether a nullity, but for the subsequent successive laudable exertions of the *local* legislature, in behalf of education generally. In fact, as far as *royal* aid in support of the act alluded to, is concerned, until the appropriation of the revenues of the late Jesuits' estates "to the purposes of education alone," little more appears to have been accomplished by the law which created the Royal Institution than the empowering of the governor to appoint and incorporate trustees, by that title, "for the establishment and management of one or more free schools in each parish or township, and of other institutions of *royal* foundation, for the advancement of learning," with power to acquire, hold, and devise property in favour of the same, and to form rules and regulations for the guidance of all such schools as should be erected; these schools, however, being left to be provided at the expense of the inhabitants of townships and parishes, in the same way as the erection of churches and parsonages; but the nomination of the masters, and the fixing of the amount of the salaries, to rest with the governor.

The same fate might also have attended the similarly inexplicit first Common School Act, passed in 1824, but for the subsequent laudable action taken by the local Legislature in behalf of general education, already alluded to, no special fund being set apart by it for carrying so excellent a measure into effect; the bill, in fact, only aiming at "the *facilitating* of the establishment and endowment of elementary schools, as diffusive of the principles of a good moral education, and contributive to the promotion of industry and agriculture; and in that character simply enabling *Fabriques*, or parish authorities, to acquire property for the benefit of elementary education, and to establish schools in each parish

under their management, in the proportion of one to every hundred resident families; and to apply a certain portion of their funds to the maintenance of such institutions." Fortunately for the country, however, full amend was made for any omission in this particular bill, by the rapidly growing interest which about that time began to be taken by the Provincial Legislature in the furtherance of education generally, evinced in continued yearly liberal appropriations of various sums for the encouragement and support of educational institutions of every kind, in all parts of the country—from mere elementary schools and classical academies, up to colleges of a more enlarged character, including even schools on "the Royal Institution" foundation. To enumerate the particular appropriations alluded to, would fill pages; suffice it, then, to state, that in this good work the Legislature of Lower Canada far outstript the doings of the sister Province—the yearly and other grants in favour of education continuing rapidly to increase, until in 1832 they amounted to upwards of £32,000, and in 1836, in spite of the unfortunate discordant spirit then prevalent, had advanced beyond £36,000; and it is believed that the same liberal provision for the dissemination of education continued to be temporarily made by Ordinance, during the subsequent disturbed times, until the dawn of that eventful era, for weal or woe, the reunion of the two Provinces.

Having arrived at a critical period of our public affairs,—when so much was to be expected from cautious and judicious legislation, by a *united Parliament*, and so much was to be hoped for, from giving a right direction to the public mind, in the furtherance of so vitally important a popular object,—it may not be out of place to revert, a little more in detail, to what had been previously accomplished in the Lower Province; and in this we shall have little difficulty, with the indefatigable Dr. Meilleur for our guide; for that gentleman states, in his very creditable Report for 1842, that "under the influence of the Education Act which expired in 1836, there were 1530 schools in operation, at the rate of £20

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a year for each, and that £36,406 were paid for the last year; but that portions of this sum were devoted to half the cost of the school-houses at the rate of £50 each, to paying for the teaching of any other language than that of the majority of the scholars at the rate of £4 to each master, and to paying 10s. for each poor child, and also 10s. per school in rewarding children who had made most progress. And, further, that under the influence of this expired Education Act, it appears that the following sums were annually paid by Government for this object, viz. :—

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|--------------|---------|
| In 1832..... | £32,470 |
| 1833.....    | 22,154  |
| 1834.....    | 24,543  |
| 1835.....    | 25,816  |
| 1836.....    | 36,406  |

Giving an average, exclusive of fractions, of £28,277 for each year.

Such, then, was the encouraging prospect at the period of the Union. Let us now inquire, how far the Legislative measures, which have been since adopted, have tended to advance that promising state of things or otherwise.

We have more than once attached great importance to a beginning at the right end; and it was, therefore, with lively satisfaction, that we contemplated the auspicious move in that direction made by the framers of the Union Education Bill of 1841, in the disposition avowedly manifested to produce a gradual amalgamation of feeling between the inhabitants of the two rival Provinces, by the introduction of a great educational system that would be likely to prove acceptable and practicable in both.\* Short, however, was the gleam of hope thereby inspired; for, unfortunately, the working of a vital part of the details of this important measure was made dependant on the successful introduction of that grand step towards self-government—*District Municipal Councils*; and so impatient was the nobleman then at the head of the government to carry through the

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\* The reader will bear in mind that this auspicious move was made by the Attorney General of *Lower Canada*.

latter favourite object, without reflecting how far it would prove acceptable to the people of both Provinces, or otherwise, that the Education Bill was unreflectingly pushed through Parliament in connexion with it, without giving time for considering the latter so maturely and deliberately, *per se*, as to afford a fair chance of producing a systematic arrangement of so well digested a character as to be likely to require little or no amendment for at least a few years to come. The unfortunate consequence was, that the Education Bill, instead of undergoing that patient and dispassionate consideration in all its details, by both houses, which a matter of such vast, such paramount, importance to the welfare and interests of the People demanded, was no sooner carried through the House of Assembly, than it was thrust upon the Legislative Council on the eve of a prorogation, to be either unhesitatingly acquiesced in by them, "with all its imperfections on its head," or to have the country left without any provision for education at all. In this embarrassing dilemma, the latter course was deemed the most advisable; and the bill was accordingly passed, although some members had never seen or read it, and who, therefore, in giving their reluctant assent to the measure, *in the sole hope of its proving at least better than none*, protested against such breathless haste in legislating upon a question pregnant with such eventful results to the people of both Provinces.

That our readers may be aware how far the foregoing remarks are borne out by facts, we beg to bring to their recollection a portion of the very appropriate observations made by the Hon. Mr. Day, the minister who introduced the Bill in the Lower House, as well as the prophetic feelings expressed by the Hon. Mr. Morris, in deprecating the uncalled for premature adoption of it by the Legislative Council. The former of these gentlemen stated, that "the object of the present motion was the repeal of the existing laws on this subject *in the two divisions* of the Province, and the substitution, in their place, of a *general system which should extend to the whole Province, and embrace the*

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*entire population.* The subject was one of the greatest importance, and which threw a great moral duty on every man to lend his aid towards supporting it. Those acquainted with the subject well knew that the present measure was but a part of the great general system of national education, which would take place, in not merely the establishment of Common Schools, but also of Model, and more especially of Normal Schools, which would train up young men to act as teachers and instructors. Of this system, the establishment of Common Schools would be the foundation upon which all the rest would lie; and if prudence was only observed in proceeding, there was no reason why every thing should not be done on this basis which the importance of the subject required. In order, however, to secure success, it was necessary that the system introduced should be ample, effective, and popular, and that it should not interfere with the prejudices of those for whose benefit it was intended." \* \* \*

After adverting to the various acts in favour of Government, which had been passed in Upper Canada, and stating that there was but one opinion on the effects of these measures—that they had failed to effect the important object in view—the learned gentleman proceeded to observe, that, “If these means for the encouragement of education were so much required in *Upper Canada*, *how much more were they required in Lower Canada!* There, no legal establishment existed—no provision of the law—by which the people could obtain access to education. With the exception of a few institutions—supported by private benevolence, and maintained by the exertions of a class of men to whom he could not pay too high a tribute of praise—he alluded to the Roman Catholic clergy—no means for public instruction existed. The total population of that Province was estimated at 600,000, out of which one-fifth were without the means of education; and this young population was growing up to the exercise of important duties, totally ignorant of the nature of those duties. He would not join in the censure which had been so

abundantly dealt on the Legislature. The truth was, that there had been a great deal of legislating on the subject, extending back to the 41st of George III., which attempted the foundation of a *Royal Institution*, but was productive of no effect. Since then, several acts had been passed, in 1814, 1818, and lastly, in 1823, which last was of great importance, and must have produced the most beneficial results. Its effect was to divide the country into (school) districts; and so important was it considered, that it had been extended by subsequent statutes down to the 2d of William IV., C. 26, which existed up to the time of the suspension of the constitution: since when no provision for the maintenance of schools had been made."

On the matter being formally taken up in the Upper House, the Hon. Mr. Morris took an opportunity of deprecating in strong terms any thing like hasty legislation on so very important a subject, followed up by submitting a series of resolutions, proposing that, instead of hurrying the Bill through that Session, at the risk of the adoption of a defective exceptionable measure, a Parliamentary commission should be appointed, to remain after the adjournment, composed of members of both Houses, with a clergyman and layman of the leading denominations of Christians, for the purpose of maturing and preparing a well digested system for the better education of the youth of the Province in endowed Common and Grammar Schools—as Seminaries preparatory of pupils for any University that might hereafter be established. And on the Bill being at length suddenly laid before the House by the Select Committee appointed to report upon it, he again spoke strongly on the subject, and was heartily joined by the Hon. Mr. De Blaquiére, in earnest protestations against the inconsiderate manner in which so important, yet imperfect a measure, was hurried through Parliament, on the very eve of a prorogation; though they both declined opposing the passing of the Bill, lest the country should thereby be altogether deprived of the

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benefits expected to be derived from it.\* The consequence was, that the Bill was passed in that defective, and, as regards the feelings of the People, otherwise objectionable state which, in spite of the generally excellent materials of which it was composed, and the various subsequent attempts at amendment, has not only still left an otherwise invaluable boon more or less unacceptable to the inhabitants of both Provinces, and more particularly of Lower Canada, but led the way to the introduction of a most impolitic and uncalled for practice of legislating for the two Provinces separately, connected with subjects on which there ought to be but one common *amalgamative* opinion and law, and in the promotion of which the most cordial reciprocity of good feeling and generous emulation among all races and sects should be encouraged and promoted.

It is true, that the generally successful introduction of those deservedly *popular* institutions—District Councils—in Upper Canada, has, there, in a great measure removed the chief difficulties in the way of the amended education bill; and it may therefore be reasonably hoped, that, as far as that part of the province is concerned, time alone is wanting to allow the beneficial working of the present school system to be better understood, and enable its inhabitants to form a just appreciation of the inestimable blessing thus placed within their reach. But such, alas! as might have been reasonably anticipated, has been far from the case in *Lower Canada*; and it ought, therefore, to have been provided, from the first, that until such should take place, the successful operation of whatever educational system might be intended to be adopted there, should be entirely independent of any other measure whatever.

Having now reached a very critical stage of our remarks, as regards the Lower province, it is but justice to the government and the legislature, as well as to

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\* The Bill was hastily reported on by the Select Committee, (the chairman of which dissented from the measure) the very day before Parliament was to have been prorogued.

the friends of intellectual improvement at large, to endeavour to inquire more distinctly wherein lies the *still* insuperable obstacle to the attainment of so truly desirable and invaluable an object as the general instruction of a people: and this we hope to be enabled to discuss in a spirit of candour and good temper, worthy of so sacred a cause; and therefore, if, in giving expression to what we conscientiously believe to be the truth, our observations should perchance prove rather unpalatable to a portion of our readers, we have to beg that they may, at least, be received in good part, and reflected on dispassionately, before they are pronounced either unjustifiable or erroneous.

In the first place, then, it appears to us, altogether independent of those two great fundamental errors, as regards Lower Canada—the unfortunate linking of the Education Bill with that for the institution of Municipal Councils, and the unwise and even unequitable attempt to render the people's share of the school fund at all dependent on uncertain voluntary subscriptions, instead of a uniform general assessment,—that however meritorious the previous exertions of the Legislature in behalf of popular instruction may have been, it may become a question whether they had not gone beyond the proper limits, in making the Government do too much, and leaving the people to do too little for themselves, and thereby leading the latter to infer that, far from being taxed for such a purpose, education was to be bestowed upon them almost gratuitously—nay, in a great proportion, altogether so; for what else could be inferred, when in a young and thinly peopled agricultural country like Canada,—where such an unfortunate being as a *pauper* should be almost unknown,—so large a portion of the population were thereby placed on a degrading eleemosynary footing, in providing for the education of their children, while the remainder were induced to regard the paltry annual outlay of from one to two dollars, as more than an equivalent for so inestimable a blessing.\* Yet such would appear to have

\* It would appear from the manner in which one Hon. member of the Legislative Council alluded to the necessity of forcing the

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been, in a great degree, the humiliating case up to the period of the union; and the natural consequence was, that any subsequent attempt to provide a supply of respectable, well qualified teachers, by imposing even the most trifling general tax, in addition to the liberal Parliamentary bounty, either by the Government direct, or through the supposed more popular medium of Municipal Councils, or to exact an equally trifling additional payment from the parents of children attending school, was, and still is, regarded in some parts of the country, as an act of the most oppressive and tyrannical character. Of this, however, more hereafter.

In the second place, we are disposed to believe that, notwithstanding the unceasing laudable exertions of the clergy, instead of due pains having been generally taken to overcome the people's unreasonable prejudices against the new Education Law, on account of the novel trifling *self-taxation* thereby imposed, it was either taken very little interest in, in the most influential quarters, or left altogether at the mercy of whatever restless or designing political demagogues chose to make use of its easily misrepresented principles and objects for the very worst of purposes; and hence the popular dislike to the measure has continued to be strengthened rather than otherwise. Nay, one might almost infer from what fell from some of our Legislators during the debate on the Bill of 1846, that, instead of an anxiety to promote "the onward march of mind" and independent feeling, there was an indifference, if

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people to pay half a dollar, or a dollar, a year towards the education of their children, and another insisted on even a higher rate, of from one to two dollars, that a general tax alone was referred to, and that it was considered that that paid, education would cost parents nothing;—an arrangement that, however plausible and liberal it may appear, is not based on equitable principles, and must strike at the root of independent feeling; for even the poorest man should, if possible, be encouraged to put himself under no obligation to others for the education of his child! Besides which, it has ever been found, that what is got for nothing is little valued, whereas what is paid for, be the price ever so trifling, is sure to set more store by.

not an objection, to the general education of the people, lest they should become capable of judging for themselves; in place of, as in their present unhappy state of ignorance, being obliged to pin their faith on the *dictum* of any discontented or designing demagogue, among the few who have benefitted by education, and, having thereby gained an ascendancy over their illiterate neighbours, are willing to monopolize to themselves all the local influence and other advantages thereby acquired. In fact, it must be generally conceded that, notwithstanding the great outcry made by a certain class of popular declaimers about the blessings of "responsible Government," and more especially the *people's right to self Government*, as at once the grand *primum mobile* and ultimate test of true "*responsibility to the people*," there are few countries in the world where the inhabitants, as yet, less understand, less feel the want of, or are less prepared to enjoy, the exercise of that noble right, than the worthy "*habitans*" of Lower Canada; and that such is the melancholy truth, those who are loudest in the premature demand, are but too conscious;—and all arising from the existence of that *one bar* to proper self-respect and self-dependence, as well as self-government, which the Government are labouring to remove, but which *they* would perpetuate, namely, the low standard of education still prevalent throughout the country. Whereas, in proportion as that debasing impediment is overcome, the people will be found prepared to think, judge, and act for themselves; and the reign of the demagogue will then be at an end. A state of things nearly approaching to that deplored by us is so aptly illustrated in M. Cousin's admirable observations on the necessity of a more general diffusion of superior elementary instruction, *in France*, independent of a higher classical or college education, that, limited though our space be, we are tempted to adduce the latter in support of our own humble arguments, for the benefit of our worthy fellow-colonists of the same national origin. "In France," observes that eminent man, "primary education is but

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a scantling ; and between that education and that of our colleges, *there is a blank* ; hence it follows that every father of a family, even in the lower part of the *Bourgeoisie*, who has the honourable desire of bestowing a suitable education on his sons, can only do so by sending them to college. Serious inconveniences are the result. In general, these young men, who are not conscious of a lofty destination, prosecute their studies with little assiduity ; and when they return to the profession and habits of their family, as nothing in the routine of their ordinary life occurs to recall and keep up their college studies, a few years are sure to obliterate the smattering of classical knowledge they possessed. They also frequently contract at college acquaintances and tastes which make it almost impossible to accommodate themselves again to the humble condition of their parents ; *hence a race of restless men, discontented with their lot, with others, and with themselves,—enemies of a social order, in which they do not feel themselves in their place, and ready, with some acquirements, a talent more or less solid, and an unbridled ambition, to throw themselves into all the paths either of servility or revolt !*"

To these highly apposite remarks we may be permitted to add, that instead of the bulk of our Canadian brethren being as yet sensible of a more general extension of education among all ranks being either necessary or desirable, in the ordinary intercourse of social life, it is not unusual—as candidly admitted by one of our legislators—for the French Canadian farmer to be so utterly unconscious of the value of any education whatever, as to be found saying, "I have had no education myself, and yet I have cultivated my land ; and why should not my children do the same ?" And even at best, a preposterous idea seems to prevail, that if a person in any station of life happens to become at all tolerably educated, he must, as a matter of course, aspire to become a member of one of the *learned* professions, instead of being content to turn the little extra knowledge acquired by him to far

better account, in the more creditable discharge of his moral and social duties in the natural sphere of himself and family.

Having dwelt so long on the gloomy side of the prospect, we gladly turn to the more cheering contemplation of the laudable efforts which have, from time to time, been made in behalf of a more satisfactory state of things, preparatory to exhibiting a condensed view of the existing general results in both provinces.

In the first place, then, it becomes a pleasing duty to express our sense of the continued untiring exertions of the clergy of all denominations, but more particularly of those of the Catholic church, and of the benevolent Religious Ladies of the various charitable Orders, in behalf of the extension of general education, in all its branches, as evidenced in the many philanthropic asylums, and elementary schools, as well as in the higher seminaries and colleges founded and conducted under their immediate auspices; and, did our space permit, we could not do them justice more appropriately than in the language of the worthy superintendent of education; but we are compelled to forego that pleasure, that we may be able to devote more attention to Dr. Meilleur himself, as an energetic labourer in behalf of popular instruction for more than twelve years, either as a private gentleman, or a member of the legislature, or latterly as the Government Superintendent of Education in the Province.

It is a remarkable fact, as respects Lower Canada, that it is not for want of public advocates of the good cause, that education is not there in a more advanced state, compared with the Upper Province; for various patriotic individuals, besides the clergy of all denominations, appear to have, from time to time, devoted themselves to the duty of zealous pioneers in the noble work; and among these, Dr. Meilleur, as already alluded to, published a series of letters on education about twelve years ago, of which it is sufficient commendation to say, that they attracted the attention of Lord Durham, and that they advocated the greater

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part of the system which has been since introduced. In 1841, also appeared another able advocate of popular instruction, in Charles Mondelet, Esq., who published, on the eve of the meeting of the first united parliament, a series of short letters on elementary and practical education, noticed at the head of this article, containing many valuable and appropriate suggestions, with reference to that particular period, combined with the highly laudable and amiable main object of, *if possible*, doing away with all odious national distinctions, inducing a better state of social feeling, and founding an improved system of general education, on a basis securing the rights and privileges of all classes, whatever may be their origin, religion, or politics; and which, therefore, well merited being in the hands of every friend of education, as well as every well-wisher to the prosperity of United Canada.\*

For our readers to be aware of the general scope and merits of this well-timed little work, it might be sufficient to observe, that with some features peculiar to itself, it advocated in a great degree the outline of the Bill of 1841—the learned framer of which cordially acknowledged his obligations to its author for considerable assistance; and that, as already observed, it earnestly advocated the adoption of an educational system that would be acceptable to all races and sects; But common justice to the highly intelligent and patriotic writer, demands something more at our hands. We therefore gladly add, that after premising that education, elementary and practical, in Canada, is necessary to the young, and through them most in-

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\* We cannot resist adding that a fresh instance has occurred while this article was in the hands of the printer. Mr. Assistant-Secretary Parent having, on the 18th of February, delivered, at the French Institute, an excellent lecture on the existing state of Education and the Educational Law in Canada, in presence of a highly respectable and crowded audience. We understand that this discourse is to appear at length in the *French* journals; but we trust that it will not be allowed to remain confined to that language alone, at a peculiar juncture like the present, collision and comparison of opinions being the alembic of all improvement.

fluent on those of mature age, and that the results of a proper course in that respect are of vital importance to all classes in this distracted country, he very justly proceeds to observe: "Common or primary schools are one of the most interesting institutions in any well organized society; they are regarded as the great sources of elementary instruction; no community is safe without them; no Government is secure if it neglects or proscribes them. An enlightened people will, in most cases, guard against the corrupting influence of bad rulers. It will be equally free from the snares of ignorant or of intriguing and unprincipled demagogues. In either case the governed will escape the tyranny of one, or of the many. The cause of education is, therefore, the cause of liberty. Independent of these most important results, the moral character of the people, taken collectively,—the individual character of each member of the community,—is elevated by education—man is bettered; and of course the state of society improved. The duties of man towards his Creator, those he owes to his Government, and the rules he has to be guided by in his intercourse with his fellow men, will be sacredly or lightly attended to in proportion to the improved or neglected moral sense. The prosperity of a country will of course be greater in proportion to the individual, or to the collective industry of those who inhabit it. The success of the husbandman, the merchant, the trader, the mechanic, the seaman, in fact, the success of all, must depend on their knowledge of the art, calling, or trade they are engaged in, and consequently the general and individual prosperity and happiness are essentially dependent on the degree of intelligence and practical knowledge prevailing in a community. Common or primary schools, in which the elements of a sound and useful popular education are taught, are, therefore, of the highest importance to the country, and should excite the most lively interest."

Impressed with this noble feeling, the same patriotic author in subsequent letters thus expresses himself:—

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“ The united Legislature cannot, ought not, and will not, allow the first session to pass by without duly maturing and adopting a system of elementary and practical education. Our Legislature will not, I trust, content themselves with a servile imitation of the governments of the feudal ages, always bent upon patronising academies, colleges, and universities, for the education of the few; and, in their selfish and inhuman career, leaving the bulk of the people in ignorance and degradation. \* \* \* Let us, therefore, whatever may be our origin, our religion, our politics, join heart and hand in the noble cause of education: on the success of our efforts depends our happiness; but the failure of our endeavours must be followed by worse consequences than the most timid are likely to apprehend.”

He then proceeds to observe, that “ as the want of a general and uniform system of elementary and practical education is extreme in Lower Canada, no time should be lost in adopting such means as are calculated to remedy so great an evil; and that as national distinctions and prejudices are most formidable obstacles to the carrying into operation of a uniform system, means should at once be adopted to surmount them. And, further, that there being a mutual distrust prevailing in a very high degree in respect to language—the English population being impressed with the belief that the French Canadians are averse to the spreading of the English language, and the French Canadians, on the other hand, being apprehensive that efforts have been and are being made to wrest from them their vernacular, and force them to speak the English language—let there be established in each locality, as far as practicable, a French and English school, either in one and the same building, or in two distinct houses. The result is inevitable. The English parent seeing, in the midst of the French settlements, English schools, will very naturally say to himself: ‘ Surely the French Canadians are not hostile to the spread of the English language; it is better that I should send my children to the French school; they will learn both languages, and get on much better in this

world! The French Canadian parent also will at once find out that he is not forcibly to be robbed of his language; he will see the propriety of having his children taught the English language; which will enable them to clear their way to usefulness; and he will therefore send his children to the English school. Thus, the mutual distrust, now prevailing, will vanish, to make way for mutual confidence. Both populations will cease to fear, what they now dread so much; their anticipations and their hopes will not be visionary, there being nothing to oppose to facts; English and French schools working simultaneously will be unanswerable arguments. \* \* Peace and happiness being restored, the working of a sound system of education becomes easier. In the first instance, it has been the effect; it must now become the cause of a state of things bettering every day."

The same generous amalgamative spirit pervading the whole of this patriotic writer's observations, we are content to remark, for the present, that we cordially acquiesce in most of them, and in none more than in the moral necessity as well as undeniable justice of a light general tax for such a purpose—*if* in addition to a trifling sum to be paid by parents who send children to school; but we are inclined to think that the extra imposition of a *fine* upon those who do not choose to avail themselves of the schools, be the purpose to which that fund will be devoted what it may, would savour too much of the despotic, though otherwise excellent, Prussian system, to be acceptable, the very praise-worthy examples of our neighbours of Massachusetts and Connecticut to the contrary notwithstanding; and we are rather inclined to believe that it would prove more beneficial, as well as more popular, for the burthen on those of small means but large families to be alleviated, by a progressive diminution in the monthly school dues in proportion to the number of children; thus, for the first, say 1s. 3d., for the second 1s., for the third 6d., and the fourth to be gratis. We also gladly subscribe to the propriety of encouraging a cordial feeling among the youth of both races, by French and English schools

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being, wherever practicable, placed in kindly juxtaposition, as pregnant with the most desirable results in the intercourse of after life; and we mark with equal satisfaction the importance which the writer attaches to the due promotion of *female* education.\* All, therefore, that remains to be added is our hearty commendation of his patriotic suggestions, mingled with our deep regret that they were not attended with better success.

Having so far discussed the merits of M. Mondelet's laudable little work, it is full time to return to the labours of Dr. Meilleur.

In that gentleman's Report for 1842, while deploring the existence of that unfortunate stumbling-block in the way of the first Education Bill—the popular aversion to the introduction of District Municipal Councils—full justice was done to the zealous exertions of the clergy to give impetus to the Act, as having been so much the greater, in proportion as the obstacles became more invincible, from the want of the effective co-operation of the Municipal Councils; but it was at the same time candidly admitted, that popular institutions, although they had been asked and expected for a number of years, were, *for the people of Lower Canada*, things yet new; and that it was, therefore, not surprising that where such institutions were yet in their infancy, the people should not at once be able to perceive distinctly in the combined and complicated machinery of these two laws, all the advantages which may result from their respective operations, though they might be found to work well separately; and he, therefore, very properly begged that till that should be the case, the Lower Canadian Bill should be altogether independent of the municipal ordinance, and entrusted to the entire and exclusive direction of educated local School Commissioners, under the guidance of the

\* We have already observed, that we do not think the employment of female teachers, and the formation of separate girls' schools, sufficiently encouraged in Canada, and mentioned instances of this being more carefully attended to elsewhere. We may here add, that in the State of Ohio, the number of male and female teachers, as well as of boys and girls' schools, is nearly equal.

Provincial Superintendent, "the fact being that the granting of municipalities to the inhabitants of Lower Canada was premature," and for this simple reason, that "*the people are not yet, in general, sufficiently instructed to be able to take, with advantage, the effective part assigned them*; and, in consequence, it is impossible to obtain from the Municipal Councils a prompt, regular, and effective co-operation."

Such continued to be the unsatisfactory state of matters up to 1845, the year in which the first separate amended Bill for Lower Canada was passed, granting the impolitic option of voluntary subscriptions, instead of a uniform direct general assessment; and, accordingly, in forwarding his Report for that year, in 1846, Dr. Meilleur was compelled to avow, in the strongest terms, the melancholy fact, that up to that period the School Bill had either not worked at all, or had in most cases worked very badly—notwithstanding the constant courageous efforts made everywhere by the friends of education, and especially by the members of the clergy of every creed and origin, to further its operation: "and this, for two reasons; the one, the continued existence of the old obstacle, its connection with the Municipal Councils;\* the other, that the law required a small contribution, either by voluntary subscription, or by assessment on their real property, equal to the sum allowed yearly by the Legislature; but that the word 'TAX' had unfortunately slipped into the law, and taken the place of that of contribution; and that those who had reasons—sometimes inexplicable enough—for opposing the measure, had seized upon that word as the signal of a general and irreparable ruin! and that suddenly, at their voice, the people were seen to rise in a body in certain countries where the leaders of the opposition were more influential and active, and, guided by their perfidious coun-

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\* It would appear that, independent of the want of education making these popular institutions inappreciable by the people of Lower Canada, a strong popular antipathy prevails against them, from the first attempt to introduce them having been made by "*Ordinance*" during the suspension of the constitution.

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sel, had allowed themselves for a moment to be dragged into opposition ;"—to what ?—a purely philanthropic law, made for the sole benefit of themselves and children. But, " that the inhabitants were at length beginning to comprehend better the true ends of the law, its utility, its importance, and the means of attaining its objects ; and it might now be said, that notwithstanding the efforts of the opposition, and the defects of the law, wherever the inhabitants had been well advised, and the local authorities well disposed, and so acted with good faith, concord, harmony, and perseverance, in their proceedings, the execution of the law had been easy, and followed by results most satisfactory to all : from which it might be reasonably concluded, that if the opposition had every where left the people to their natural good sense, free to follow without constraint and hinderance their own inclination for the instruction of their children—free, at least, to follow the well-meant advice of their true friends, and, in particular, of their pastors,—at all times so zealous for the public welfare,—the working of the law would have every where been immediate, uniform, and most advantageous to the rising generation." But then, again, he was forced to confess, that " this gratifying success is still far from being what it would have been, without the efforts of the opposition ; there are localities where it is partial only, others where it is yet a nullity. In these latter, the inhabitants, bowed beneath the weight of an undue influence, incline, as formerly, towards the poisoned source of prejudice, and abandon themselves to the most deceitful illusions, in spite of all the good counsels and good examples given them by their fellow-citizens and friends ; all have yet failed to make them sensible of the false position in which they are placed, by certain individuals more desirous of a momentary command over men *whose misfortune it is to be too confiding*, and more ambitious of acquiring the ephemeral reputation of a day, than of contributing, with a good grace, to the permanent happiness and welfare of nearly 200,000 children eager to divide the intellectual food ! There are also localities,

where the inhabitants, indifferent or apathetic, do nothing either to conform to the law, or directly to oppose it, flattering themselves that it will be repealed or modified, *so as to require nothing at their hands*; and thus sacrifice to doubtful hopes, to improbable results, the certain and durable advantages which might be unfailingly secured to their children, by the faithful execution of the existing school law."

In this conflicting and discouraging state of things, Dr. Meilleur was led to recommend, for consideration, various amendments in the law, the principal of which were, the entire separation of the School Act from that regulating the rural municipalities, and the making of it permanent; the placing of the carrying out of its provisions solely in the hands of local Commissioners, either elected by the inhabitants, or appointed by Government in default of none being elected; the repeal of that part of the law which exacts 1s. 3d. per month for each child actually attending school, and the exacting of it for every child of an age to attend school, *i. e.*, from 5 to 16; making the contribution by *assessment* on real property obligatory in all cases, except extreme poverty—in which case the Commissioners to have the power of exempting the inhabitants of indigent localities from paying the full amount; and the establishing of a Board of *Examiners* for the admission of teachers. In addition to which he adverted to several other objects, having a reference to public instruction, as, though of a less pressing nature, not the less important, or requiring the intervention of the Legislature, such as the establishment of county academies, the institution of normal and model schools, the necessity of uniformity in school books; the foundation of school libraries; the teaching of the elementary principles of agriculture in the principal school in each county; and the promotion of a periodical Journal of education.

Leaving our readers at liberty to refer to Dr. Meilleur's Report for the explanatory details connected with these amendments, we deem it sufficient to observe, for the present, that though we may differ from Dr. Meilleur

in some respects, as either stated in the immediately foregoing pages or in the former portion of our remarks, we cordially concur in most of them; and in none more than in the absolute necessity for the immediate establishment of efficient normal and model schools, such as have been lately set on foot in the Upper Province; and we regard as no less indispensable, and, in fact, as a natural sequence, the appointment of one or more Boards of Education, or Examiners, such as that instituted in the sister Province. To which might have been added, the appointment of well-qualified Superintendents to each county. But what will all these improvements amount to, if that all-important and invaluable instrument, the teacher, is destined to be left in that utterly degraded position which he at present occupies, instead of being raised to the legitimate respectable status in society insisted upon in our former article? but which can only be accomplished by the unanimous applauding voice and liberal helping hand of a grateful people. And of this, unfortunately, the prospect in Lower Canada is still gloomy in the extreme; for on the re-amended Bill being brought before Parliament in 1846, such was the discordant feeling on this vitally important and philanthropic subject, in spite of all the efforts of the liberal friends of education, civilization, and humanity, on both sides of the House, that comparatively little good was effected, except making the working of the bill independent of Municipal Councils, and the omission of the objectionable voluntary contributions; and the consequence was, that a third conflicting effort at amendment was proposed to be attempted during the last session of Parliament, reviving the optional voluntary contribution; but, so far fortunately, that was destined to fall to the ground abortive in the House of Assembly. And thus, as far as the Legislature is concerned, to the disgrace of the country, stands the matter at present. In the meantime, however, it is somewhat consolatory to learn, from different quarters, as well as to perceive from the Superintendent's Report for 1846, that a better feeling is gradually gaining ground among the mis-

guided "*habitans*," in spite of all the insane efforts of certain worthy "extinguishers" in some remote parts of the country; and we are, therefore, led to indulge a confident hope that such will, after all, continue to be the case.\* That our readers, however, may be enabled to judge for themselves of the plain unvarnished state of things at present, we beg to refer them to the following somewhat imperfect abstract view of the truly humiliating scale of education at present existing in both divisions of the Province, compared with what ought to be expected, when contrasted with what is witnessed in many other countries:—

Abstract Statistical View of the State of the Common Schools in the Province of Canada for the years 1844, 5, and 6.

| DIVISIONS.    | Year. | Estimated Population. | No. of Children of School Age. | No. of Schools. | No. of Children Attend. School. |
|---------------|-------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Upper Canada, | 1844  | 506,052               | 184,062                        | 2,945           | 96,756                          |
|               | 1845  | 632,070               | 198,434                        | ...             | 110,002                         |
|               | 1846* | Unascertained.        | 204,580                        | 2,925†          | 110,318                         |
| Lower Canada, | 1844  | 690,782               | 186,349                        | 1,832           | 61,030                          |
|               | 1845  | Unascertained.        | ...                            | 1,737           | 59,389                          |
|               | 1846  | Do.                   | ...                            | 1,830           | 69,887                          |

† This includes 336 schools unreported, at an average of 25 scholars to each.

\* It is truly gratifying to find the conduct of these unprincipled men repudiated and stigmatised by every true friend of the country on both sides of the floor of the House of Assembly, as well as, with few exceptions, by the whole of the public press, of all shades of politics. As one late instance of which it may be mentioned, that the *Minerve*, of the 31st December, characterised the opposition shown to that part of the Common School Act, enforcing taxation for the benefit of education, as a *DIABOLICAL doctrine*, not to be entertained by enlightened men; and declared that to advocate its repeal was *impossible* for any *respectable Canadian*!

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Now, from the above well ascertained data, it would appear that in Upper Canada little more than half of the children between five and sixteen are now attending school; and that the proportion in Lower Canada is miserably less, being little more than one-fourth; whereas in several of the neighbouring American States—from whom, and not from Prussia, the greater part of our school system is derived\*—almost every child is being

\* We should be doing an injustice to a very influential portion of the British Empire, were we not to remind our readers, that if they want an authority nearer home for a *tax* on property for the purposes of general education, they have only to look to the constitution of the Parochial Schools of *Scotland*; and if they wish to have the subject brought altogether home to Canada, let them reflect on the following excellent observations of the shrewd and talented member for Huron, during the debate on the Education Bill of 1846. Dr. Dunlop said that he did not expect to have it argued in the 19th century, whether or no the people should be taxed for the purpose of education. He thought that the advancement of the age had established that point. It was a duty incumbent upon that House to furnish the people with moral and religious education. Without this being done, it was of no use making canals and railroads. The country would not prosper if the people were not better than the oxen that worked in their fields. It had been said, "keep people in ignorance, and you can govern them; instruct them, and they will govern themselves." Now, he wanted to see them govern themselves. The less education the people possessed, the less they felt the want of it; and it was, therefore, the duty of that House to feel for them, and to tax them for their own benefit, in this particular. He was guilty of frequently referring to his own country, and was about to do so again: the people of Scotland might be found in every part of the world, but no where were they mere hewers of wood and drawers of water; and the reason was, *because the people were taxed* for the maintenance of good schools in every parish, and the means of education were given to the poorest. Scotland occupied but a small space in the *physical* world; but how great was the space it filled in the moral world. The larger countries, France, England, and Germany, might be equal to them in that respect, as they ought to be, considering the greater number of inhabitants. In a moral point of view, the literature of Scotland stood conspicuously forth to the world's eye. The educational system of Scotland had broken down the ancient monopoly of greatness, (rank), and opened the door of fame to every competitor. The small start which the *wealthy* farmer was able to give his son, was lost and of no account, when the son of the peasant

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This is truly a melancholy comparison, which every Canadian, whether of British or French origin, may well blush to see recorded ; but it exhibits, nevertheless, the stern truth ! Let us, however, not altogether despair, but look hopefully forward to better times, when in spite of all the heartless unchristian efforts of a few ignorant or designing political demagogues, the mists of prejudice shall gradually disperse, and the beneficial workings of our educational system shall become better understood and appreciated ; for it was a number of years before even our neighbours of New York, after much vexatious opposition and evasion, began to comprehend the true merits and value of, and become thoroughly reconciled to direct school taxation, with the ample special fund for educational purposes provided by the State, as may be seen from the following :—

*Abstract table of the progress of Common Schools in the State of New York.*

| Year.  | No. of Schools. | No. of Children between 5 & 16. | No. of Children taught. |
|--------|-----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1815   | 2755            | 176,449                         | 140,106                 |
| 1820   | 6332            | 317,633                         | 304,559                 |
| 1830   | 9063            | 497,503                         | 499,424                 |
| 1843-4 | 10875           | 670,995                         | 657,732†                |

† This is exclusive of the schools in the great city of New York.

was equally well educated with the son of the peer. He hoped to see a similar system introduced into this colony : *and it would be the greatest blessing ever conferred upon it.*

\* Though it is the fashion to run down the enlightened, though arbitrary, Prussian system, we cannot resist adding, that so far back as 1831, out of a population in that country of 12,726,822 there was a proportion of 2,043,030 children between the ages of seven and fourteen ; and that of these, 2,021,421 actually attended the public schools, leaving only 21,609 without education, if such were the case ; but these, in fact, were supposed to be attending *private* schools ;—so that it would appear that *every human being* in that kingdom actually enjoys the benefits of education ! What a contrast this to the mortifying scene exhibited at the late Quarter Session for the city and district of *Montreal*, the proud

To which may be added, that the amount of public money received and expended in the several school districts in 1844, was \$660,727.41, of which was applied to the payment of teachers' wages, \$565,793.76; and to the purchase of books and for school libraries, \$94,933.97; and the amount paid by the inhabitants on rate or assessment bills for teachers' wages, was \$509,376.97; making an aggregate amount of upwards of 1,000,000 of dollars applied to the payment of teachers' wages!

Having at length, in a great measure, redeemed the pledge given by us at the outset of our desultory observations, we would now gladly come to a conclusion of this already too protracted article; but we trust that our readers will kindly bear with us a little longer on so vitally important a subject, at a peculiar crisis like the present, while we once more earnestly warn our fellow countrymen of both races against the baneful consequences that must result from the reckless, unreflecting desire of constant change, which has of late become so rife, and appears to be gaining ground in some parts of the Upper Province, and entreat that a fair and patient trial may be given to the existing educational system in all its parts, imperfect though it may be, before any attempt at material alteration is forced upon the Legislature; and we beg it to be recollected that such cannot possibly be the case until the influence of that powerful lever, the lately established Normal Schools, shall be brought into effective operation, and that that cannot be expected in less than three years. And we would in particular most earnestly deprecate all attempt to narrow the sphere of, and far less dispense with, the services of so invaluable a main-spring as an efficient Chief Superintendent for each province, without which the whole machinery must infallibly crumble to pieces. In fact, it may be recollected that our individual convic-

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metropolis of *British Canada*, where ten out of eighteen grand jurors could only *make their mark!* and of these, nine were of French origin! If this does not show the necessity of providing instruction, we know not what will.

tion goes to the very antipodes of such a feeling, it being our long and well weighed opinion that the head of the educational department should even be a member of the Executive Government, with no other duties to attend to.\* We would also invite the particular attention of the Municipal Councils of Upper Canada, as well as of Government, to the propriety of great discrimination in the selection of those important local officers,—well qualified *District Inspectors*, or *Superintendents*,—against whom also there existed at one time a considerable degree of prejudice† ; but that, once appointed, they

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\* It may be added, in proof of the conviction generally entertained in other countries, of the great utility of a general superintendent, that the most of the American States have such an officer ; and that even at the late installation of the corporation of the city of Boston, the Mayor, in delivering the annual address, recommended an application to the Legislature for the appointment of a superintendent of schools, and also for aid in the establishment of school libraries, and even for a compulsory enactment for sending children to school. And it has been forcibly remarked by an able British writer, that “ the first and most striking feature in the French and Prussian organization is the existence of a minister of public instruction, distinct from the other parts of the administration. The duties of this office belonged formerly, in both countries, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department : but a separation was made in Prussia by the law of 1819, and in France some time later ; and the result has proved the wisdom of the arrangement. The entire machinery is thus worked from a common centre, which contributing the first impulse, controls all the movements, and gives unity of action and character. The prime mover of the whole is the *responsible minister of the Crown* ; and in France he is one of the Cabinet ministers, and acts with the advice and assistance of a council of twelve.”

† This unreasonable prejudice has not been altogether confined to Canada, for in 1843 the Hon. S. Young, *Secretary of State*, and Superintendent of Schools of the State of New York, candidly admitted that he had come into office with a decided prepossession *against* county superintendents, and determined to abolish them ; but that after attending the Convention of County Superintendents, and possessing himself of a thorough acquaintance with the previous defects and present advantages of that system, he had arrived at the conclusion, that deputy superintendents, properly qualified for the discharge of their functions, and earnestly intent on elevating the condition of the Common Schools, can do much more to accomplish the desirable results than *all the other officers connected with the system.*

should be as little liable to removal as possible. And we would further suggest, that every District Superintendent should, after appointment, be required to pay a leisure visit to the Normal School, so that, by being a personal witness of the progress of the whole system, he may acquire a thorough insight into the proper mode of conducting the Model and Common Schools within his own jurisdiction. Add to which, we would suggest that he should be, ex-officio, a member of the District Grammar School Commission.

Thus much with regard to the Upper Province. With respect to Lower Canada *much* more might very readily be added; but we content ourselves with earnestly imploring the Government to persevere in the laudable endeavour to awaken our misguided French Canadian brethren to the value of education—as a jewel beyond price—by every legitimate legislative means; and we would more particularly impress upon the *Representatives* of the *people*, that education is a sacred cause, apart from all mere party or political feeling whatever; and that a law once passed in its behalf, however imperfect it may be, it is the duty of all, without exception, to give their best aid towards its successful operation, till a better can be devised; and we have every confidence that, if the powerful influence of the Members among their respective constituents be zealously added to the solemn persuasive voice of the ministers of religion, a reaction of the most cheering character must ere long be produced, not only in behalf of that first of blessings, education, but, as a natural consequence, in favour of municipal institutions also. In the meantime, till the worthy “*habitans*” shall become gradually reconciled to the latter, let the schoolmaster, at all events, be encouraged to come abroad among them, altogether unfettered by, and unconnected with, any other enactment; and to accomplish this, all that is at present necessary, is to leave the whole of the management of the local *elementary schools* in the hands of intelligent educated Commissioners, assisted by respectable school section trustees, &c.; and to appoint well-selected District Superinten-

dents, to complete the chain of connexion between the different branches of the system ; to realise the full intention of the theory of "the Royal Institution," by founding, wherever wanting, respectable *County Grammar Schools*, or *Classical Academies*, such as were intended and ought now to be in operation in the Upper Province ; and to organize efficient Normal Schools, such as has been lately instituted at Toronto, to give a well-regulated uniform impetus to the whole ! For what will all the schools in the world do without a body of truly respectable, well qualified teachers, to direct them ?

Would that our humble, but fervently patriotic appeal, to our *united* Legislature could prevail on them to advance one great step farther, in behalf of "a consummation devoutly to be wished," in at once abandoning, wherever possible, the narrow-minded growing Parliamentary practice of legislating for the two divisions of the same great British Province separately, instead of as a harmonious unity—as if they were inhabited by races of utterly irreconcilable habits, feelings, and principles—to the undesirable and impolitic perpetuation of uncalled-for jealous, if not unfriendly, national feelings and prejudices ; and no better beginning can be made than with municipal and educational arrangements, for the benefit of the whole. In the event, therefore, of any revision of the School Acts of either Province becoming ere long necessary, let our Legislature calmly retrace its steps, and frame whatever law may be brought forward, on an extended basis, similar to that of 1841, as applicable to the inhabitants of *both divisions*. But for such a movement to be productive of the noble results to be desired, let the course adopted be slow and sure, and, therefore, the very reverse of the annual tinkering practice which has hitherto prevailed ; and none can possibly yield a greater prospect of success than the wary procedure recommended by the Hon. Mr. Morris in 1841, in the emphatic words of the following resolutions, then submitted by him to, and unavailingly adopted by, the Upper House :—

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*Resolved*—That it is most important to the peace and welfare of the people of this Province, that an efficient and well organized system of general education be, without further loss of time, established upon just and liberal principles; by which all classes of Her Majesty's subjects shall enjoy equal advantages, and that the inhabitants of that part of the Province formerly called Upper Canada, be forthwith permitted to reap the benefits of that ample provision which was made by His Majesty King George the Third, for the education of his subjects in that part of the Province.

*Resolved*—That in order to secure the assistance of those best qualified to devise a wise, efficient, and comprehensive plan for the education of the people, it is important to appoint a Commission which shall fully represent the general interest of the community, with power to sit during the recess, and report through the Governor at the next Session of the Legislature, the result of their labours, and the draft of a law to establish and endow Common Schools and District Grammar Schools, as Seminaries preparatory to the education of pupils intended for Upper Canada Colleges, or for any University hereafter established.

*Resolved*—That a message be sent to the Legislative Assembly communicating the Resolutions of this House on the subject of the appointment of a Commissioner to prepare and report a system of general education, with a request that they will unite with this House in the necessary measures for that object.

Much more might still readily be added on so inexhaustible and important a subject as the spread of education among a whole people; but we have already trespassed so far beyond our limits, that we are constrained to bid our readers an abrupt farewell, in the humble hope that, as we have been unconscious of having either "ought extenuated, or set down ought in malice," throughout the whole of our desultory observations, they may not prove altogether in vain; and thereby somewhat conduce "to hasten the great and good *Reform*, when *mind* shall reign." For, to borrow further the inspiring language of the great Lord Brougham, we feel that "the schoolmaster *is* abroad in the land; mind begins to assume his place; and ignorance, with her handmaid vice, must recede before her, like darkness before the morning sun, or clouds before the wind!" Or, if more suited to the immediate scene of our theme, let us, in parting, bear in mind the emphatic patriotic words of a son of our own Canadian soil, the respected M. Mondelet, to whose Letters we have more than once

had the pleasure of referring :—“ The prosperity of our common country—the moral elevation of its people—the happiness of generations to come—will essentially be dependant on the degree of instruction which is diffused. Let, then, no consideration whatever prevent any man from openly advocating, supporting, and furthering the cause of education ; it is a duty we owe to ourselves, our children, our posterity. Liberal institutions we need never expect to be able to appreciate and maintain unimpaired, if the people are not instructed. Temporary and unsettled educational establishments have been productive of such distressing evils in this Province, that there can scarcely be any difference of opinion as to the necessity of a permanent and fixed system being adopted, —a system such, that neither political strife nor accidents may obstruct its operation, and thereby deprive the rising generation of the benefits of education.”

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