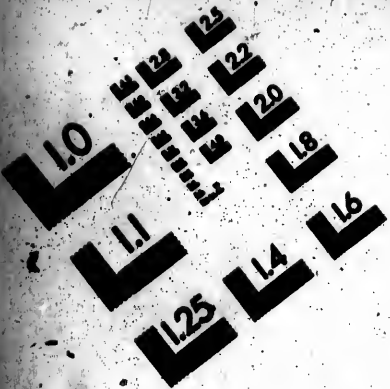


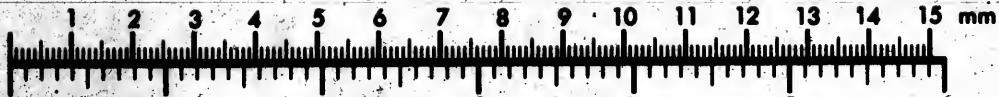


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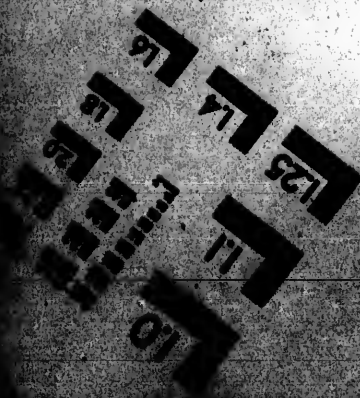
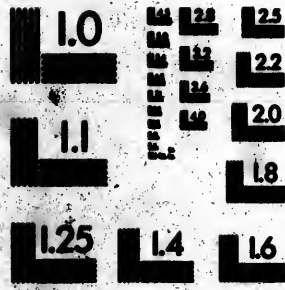
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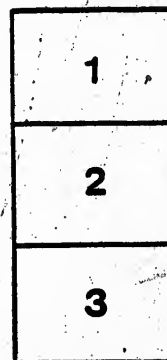
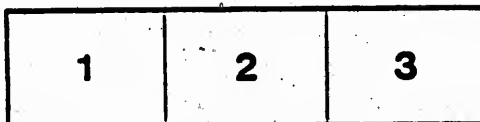
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1859

REVIEW

OF

THE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1858,

ON THE

PARISH SCHOOLS OF NEW-BRUNSWICK.

BY

J. GREGORY,

Late Secretary of the Provincial Board of Education, under the repealed Act 10 Victoria Chapter 56.

To the Editors of the Periodical Press of New-Brunswick.

GENTLEMEN,—

It was no common impulse that caused me to trouble you to-day, for a few days, the expression of any opinion on the merits of the recent Report on our Parish Schools by the Chief Superintendent, until you could find time to give the Government a careful examination.

Improvement in education is an indispensable preliminary to all desirable progress, and it depends very much upon you, whose course shall be straight and comparatively short, or indefinitely prolonged by all kinds of deviations. You never fall in courtesy to strangers, and that is commendable; but it unfortunately happens that you frequently confer on them such a praise and reward them with such a halo of imaginary excellence, that private individuals are compelled to be silent.

This has been pre-eminently the case in educational matters since the darkening of the brilliant prospect which were then opened up, has been so visible and palpable, men are still silent to speak out; and I too would remain silent, had I not reason to fear personal loss to arise from a sense of moral cowardice.

The duty of publishing an Annual Report on the Provincial Parish Schools, imposed on the Superintendent by the present Parish School Act, is a wise and excellent provision. Its ful-
fillment must necessarily expose the Superintendent to some, and leave little ground for doubting that he is likely to promote or retard popular education. In publication also, early in each session of the Legislature, is advantage taken. It affords time for a thorough examination, and admits of a speedy remedy for

The subject to be treated in these reports is one of vast importance, and has so many closely connected branches, and admits of so much being said that is perfectly consistent with good sense and good faith, but nevertheless destitute of proper connexion, vitality and progress, that nothing short of a very careful examination and review can fully disclose their true value. A Review of some kind you will, therefore, admit to be necessary, for if the Superintendent be a sensible man, it is due to him. If it can be justly laudatory, the praise will be an encouragement to perseverance in well doing; if justly condemnatory, it will at once be a caution to him and a protection to the public.

Circumstances lately draw from me a hasty and partial review of last year's Report; and an imperious necessity impels me to speak determinately in regard to the present one, for nature does not appear willing to permit me to silently witness any dishonesty in the education of youth.

My course shall be to examine first the statistical statements of our present Superintendent, and, after assigning them their true value, then to take up some other prominent points and conclusions to which he has directed and invited attention.

Ephemeral writers know that the number of attentive readers is very small; and many of them in their statements take corresponding liberties. Our Superintendent appears to be one of them. Beyond a doubt he possesses his statistical information to be understood as follows:

"The increase in the number of scholars is no less than 15,536 during the past year. This purely elementary branches are doubtless the most important, and for this we have the gratifying evidence that in 1858, 16,507 more children were learning than in 1857. The time during which the Schools have been kept open has been more than doubled, for in the most important point we have an increase of 14,511 weeks, allowing an increase in the

each School has been open of no less than 14 weeks, or upwards of three months in a year! The Teachers also have participated in the general improvement and delightful educational prosperity, for the males who heard themselves have severally received the handsome semi-annual increase of £15 2s., and the females £4 10s. 5d. in their salaries; and it shall be my fault if I do not make it more in succeeding years. Neither have the people been neglectful of the physical comfort of the instructors of their children, for if you critically compare my statistics with those of my able predecessor you will find there are now no less than 214 framed School Houses more than there were in 1852.

In every point within my control or that of my Inspectors, a great improvement has taken place, notwithstanding the characteristic apathy and indifference of parents, and the forgetfulness of duty on the part of the Teachers. I still complain of irregular attendance on the part of the children; nevertheless there has been in this branch a most decided improvement. The average attendance for both sexes in 1853 was only 13, while for 1852 it is no less than 16½ for males, and 13 for females, in each School. And the gratifying increase would have been even greater had it not been for the good fortune of my predecessor, who in his calculations had only 12 for a divisor, while I have had 14, which, of course, made my result much less than it would otherwise have been!

Such perfunctory statements, gentlemen, might be extended over many pages, without doing the slightest violence to our Superintendent's figurative facts; but it is time to treat the subject in sincerity, and as in the presence of the Searcher of Hearts.

One grand error of which our Superintendent has not taken the slightest notice, vitiates the greater part of his statistics. The Report for 1853 embraced only six months, or one set of Semi-Annual Returns, that for 1852 twelve months, or two sets of Returns. It is difficult to conceive the description and state of mind which would permit such an error to escape notice in the midst of calculations and comparisons which must have occupied several days. But it is not sufficient for my present purpose to point out such an error, or the existence of some mental defect; other errors of an equally serious nature, and certainly more injurious to the Parish School service become manifest on a careful examination of the Report.

I shall now point out special matters, and shall take as my text corresponding portions of the Report itself, which I shall quote, at present beginning at the top of page 53.

"The preceding tables, which have been drawn up with great pains, and with as much accuracy as the wants of the returns furnished to the Superintendent would permit, are valuable because they show, and will I trust continue every succeeding year to show, the gradual but certain improvement which is taking place in the educational affairs of this Province."

Statistics, to be valuable for the promotion of honest education, must be correct. Those which our Superintendent has produced are exceedingly incorrect, and even absurd, as I shall presently show; but admitting them for argument's sake to be as he would represent them, it is impossible that his trust as above expressed can have any solid foundation. Experience, moreover, has shown that statistics got up by individuals whose interests are connected with enlarged or diminished results, must be narrowly scanned, for in very many cases coldness resolves every doubt. The circumstances must be very extraordinary in which any great and sudden increase or diminution can take place in the Educational statistics in any one year, and consequently those given in the Report before us are positively unimportant, except as they demonstrate the fact that we must be on our guard against excessive carelessness or deep design.

"In the Superintendent's Report for 1852, Table A gives the following Statistics, (Column 1,) so which I have appended the corresponding ones for 1853, (Column 2,) and the increase in each, (Column 3.)"

| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|-----------|
| | 1852 | 1853 | Increase. |
| "Number of Parishes reported by Inspectors as provided with one or more Schools, - | 98 | 101 | 3 |
| "Number of Districts so provided, - | 318 | 330 | 12 |
| "Number of Schools, - | 606 | 744 | 138 |
| "Number of Pupils attending them, - | 19,391 | 24,137 | 4,746 |
| "Time Schools have been kept in weeks, - | 12,656 | 27,166 | 14,511 |
| "Average time Schools have been so kept in weeks, - | 19 | 33 | 14 |

There are some errors in these figures. In column 2, according to the tables, 744 ought to be 774. In column 3, 56 ought to be 36; and 15,536 ought to be 5,536.

The last error, after affecting the calculations on page 54, has been noticed by the Superintendent.

There is a perplexing ambiguity in the present and last year's Report, as to what is meant by a

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School and a School House; and a difficulty of reconciling these with the reported number of Teachers.

Taking our Superintendent's interpretation as given in the extract, there were in 1852, 618 districts provided with one or more Schools; 690 Schools; and 657 Teachers, and 760 School Houses.

In 1853, the returns show 830 districts said to be provided with one or more Schools; 774 Schools; 714 Teachers; and 831 School Houses.

Now as to the Statistics for 1853, 700 School Houses would not allow one to each district, much less would 690 Schools; nor would 657 Teachers allow one to each School.

Again, as to the Statistics for 1853, 831 School Houses would supply 830 districts with one School House each; but this is irreconcilable with Inspector Clinch's statement, (p. 46,) from which we must infer that some districts have got several Schools, and, consequently, several School Houses. I must suppose that the difference (80) is owing to the fact that some Teachers, after completing their engagements in one district, were employed immediately afterwards in other districts. Thus, in Albert we have 33 Schools and 18 Teachers; in Charlotte, 122 Schools and 87 Teachers; in St. John, 64 Schools and 52 Teachers, and in Kent the marvellous fact of thirty-six Schools and forty-six Teachers, as to which there must be some mistake, for the law sanctions only one Teacher to each School.

It is surprising that our Superintendent was not ashamed to put down 14,511 as the increased number of weeks during which the Schools had been kept open, for he knew perfectly well that the returns for 1852 were for only a part of the year. It is equally so, that he should have stated the average increase of the duration of the Schools to be 14 weeks. His predecessor distinctly stated that the 19 weeks average calculated by him referred to a period of six months only. Yet Mr. d'Avray and Mr. Duval also (p. 40) choose to ignore the fact—the former to get up an improved appearance in educational affairs under a system in the continuance of which he feels a pecuniary interest; and the latter to bolster up a defective argument used by the late Superintendent, which I elsewhere exposed. I cannot but think it would be much better if Mr. Duval would give the public some of the information to which they are entitled, respecting his own department, before volunteering calculations and statements in aid of which he does not bring the necessary amount of good faith.

As to all the averages specified by our Superintendent, it is as well to announce once for all, that he does not appear to understand how to calculate them, and consequently I have detect-

ed a mass of absurdities in attempting to prove his work.

In calculating the average time, in weeks, the Schools have been kept open, he has in eleven instances divided the total of the time for the County, by the number of Schools, once, as in Kent, by the number of Teachers, and twice, as in Northumberland and Victoria, by no number representing any specified fact; and in calculating the average of the averages, he has summed up the averages, so miscalculated, and divided them by the number of averages—a procedure which can give a correct result in only one class of cases, which will never occur in our School statistics.

There can be no legal School without a Teacher; nor more than one Teacher to each School. The average, therefore, ought to be calculated by dividing by the number of Teachers; but in attempting this, we find that 18 Teachers could not have taught 968 weeks in Albert in one year; nor 60 Teachers 3230 weeks in Northumberland; nor 52 Teachers 2710 weeks in St. John.

Disregarding all discrepancies, and calculating by Schools, the average duration would be 88 weeks; and calculating by the number of Teachers the average would be 37 weeks 5 days. But all such Statistics are valueless, and I would not have troubled you with so much detail but for an ulterior object and argument.

In 1850 the number of children attending the Schools was 29,030, and in making out that number I have reason to believe that all the necessary deductions were made. The returns for 1852 embraced six months only, and had the pupils who entered during the other period been added, there would have been such an excess above the number for 1850 as would have nearly met the alleged increase for 1853. I shall have some further observations to make on this point by and by.

"The average attendance of pupils of both sexes in 1852, appears to have been 15, while that for 1853 is 19; for males, and 13 for females; but it must be borne in mind, that the latter averages have been struck for 14 Counties, while the former ones are for 12 Counties only, and that had the totals been divided by 14 instead of by 12, the result would have been much smaller."

It may be that the Returns made to the Superintendent left no alternative in trying to get the average of the averages referred to in the preceding quotation; but to divide their sum by the number of Counties for which they had been calculated. Such results however cannot be depended on, and for comparative purposes are valueless, because it is scarcely possible that such a calculation should give a true result.

Our Superintendent is clearly in error when he adds the summer and winter averages for

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| 1852 | 1853 |
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| 101 | 5 |
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| 744 | 56 |
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each of the sexes, and predetermine the sums as the annual average attendance for each sex. Assuming his figures as given in the Tables, the true average is 54 for males; and 63 for females, which is a considerable decrease instead of an increase, as he thought. Were we to multiply the number of Schools (774) by his aggregate average, we would get 25,532, a number which would not leave room for the absences necessarily occasioned by the average cases of sickness. The errors involved show not only a total want of taste and skill in statistics, but indicate a superficial knowledge only of common arithmetic.

"Table B.—Following the course I have adopted with the preceding Table, we find—

| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------|-------|------------|
| | | 1868 | 1869 | In-crease. |
| * Number of Pupils studying | | | | |
| | English Grammar, | 3,250 | 4,151 | 901 |
| do. | do. Geography, | 2,737 | 3,665 | 928 |
| do. | do. History, | 715 | 1,289 | 614 |
| do. | do. Book-keeping, | 240 | 205 | 87 |
| do. | do. Geometry, | 89 | 181 | 92 |
| do. | do. Memorization, | 100 | 197 | 74 |
| do. | do. Land Surveying, | 34 | 75 | 41 |
| do. | do. Navigation, | 18 | 31 | 8 |
| do. | do. Algebra, | 55 | 66 | 10 |
| do. | do. Other subjects not prescribed, | 134 | 570 | 444 |
| * Female pupils learning common needle work, | | | | |
| | | 1,540 | 2,050 | 510 |
| * Number of School Houses, | | | | |
| do. | do. newly erected, | 700 | 221 | 121 |
| | | 19 | 60 | 41 |

"All these results are gratifying, and none more so than those which prove the due attention paid to the elementary branches. I have not given the corresponding totals of pupils learning spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic; for 1862 and 1863, but the increase under these heads is 18,567, to which, if we add 2,334, the increase in the number of those who are studying grammar, geography, and history, we shall have 21,901, (or deducting 15,336, amount of increase in total number of scholars,) 6,565 more pupils studying the elementary branches than in 1862; and 510 more girls learning needlework."

It is exceedingly difficult to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion as to the state of our Superintendent's mind when he penned the paragraph I have just quoted.

The tabular part is correctly taken from the Reports; but the other statements betray a state of mind and an ignorance of the first essential principle in arithmetic that are incomprehensible except on two suppositions—first, that the Superintendent is politically clever as politics go, or secondly, that he is incompetent. Either supposition is fatal to his prestige; and that is all that I labor to destroy by this special review of this part of his report. The halo of imaginary excellence by which some of you have surrounded

him must be dissipated into its original nothingness, for it is incompatible with the attention due to the educational rights and interests of every child in the Province.

The objection that our Superintendent compares the results of twelve months in 1868 with those of six months in 1862 lies against the increase paraded in the extract. But it is to the false reasoning and calculations in the other part that I wish to invite special attention. Some of you, gentlemen, may recollect the extraordinary calculation of Sewt. Jqr. 1776a at 17s. 6d. per cwt. made in 1844 by one of our Teachers of 16 years' standing; who made the amount £49 1s. 6d. as follows:—

$$\begin{array}{r}
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 10 \ 3 \ 7 \\
 \hline
 1 \ 22 \ 0 \\
 \hline
 \text{£}49 \ 1 \ 0 \ \text{Ans.}
 \end{array}$$

But, however absurd, it only betrayed the peculiarities exhibited by our Superintendent's calculations.

The whole paragraph is a tissue of nonsense which it is troublesome to dwell upon.

I have made the necessary corrections for the error of 10,000 in the increase of pupils attending school in 1863, discovered after the report had been laid before the Legislature.

Our Superintendent distinctly says that the increase in the number of pupils learning spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic, is 18,567, to which if we add 2334 for a certain other increase similarly calculated, we have as he states a total increase of 21,271 for 1863 in the number of pupils studying the elementary branches. Now however remarkable his manner of calculating and speaking of the increase of pupils may be, one can understand what he has said thus far, and the foundation; but when he goes on with an alternative and says, "on deducting 5,506, the amount of increase in the total number of scholars, we got 15,765 more pupils studying the elementary branches than in 1862," his language and the idea sought to be impressed overwhelm us with a sense of confusion and absurdity. On such reasoning and calculation, a Teacher who in 1862 had 15 pupils and in 1863 20 pupils, might say that in 1863 he had 56 more pupils in the elementary branches than in 1862, besides 139 in the higher branches. There might be nothing inconsistent in such a statement, on M. d'Avray's principles of calculation, however absurd it appears when tested by common sense. There is this further objection against the new method of calculation, that no Teacher having 20 boys learning to read; and the same 20 boys

learning in reading the same irregular

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leaving arithmetic over says that he has 40 boys in reading and arithmetic. It is useless to push the argument further and show the figure to be irreconcilable with other parts of the statistics.

Our Superintendent admits, in the next paragraph, that the increase in the number studying branches of Mathematics is 222, and argues from that and the classes of the Teachers employed, that his opinion, heretofore expressed, is borne out by the people, viz., that the instruction in the higher branches now allowed by law should be prohibited in the Parish Schools. I shall show up this point by and by, and in the meantime merely remark, that by leaving unexplained the extraordinary discrepancy between the number of Teachers employed and the Schools, he has failed to lay a foundation for his argument. There is not a doubt that the people prefer a sound elementary education for their children to any imperfect acquisition of higher branches; but the truth is, that they are likely to get neither the one nor the other on any system our Superintendent has labored to introduce.

"In other respects Table C affords pleasing evidence of progressive improvement.

| | 1853 | | | 1854 | | | Increase | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|----|------|----|----|----------|----|----|
| | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
| Average semi-annual Salaries of Male Teachers with board | 12 | 15 | 7 | 15 | 16 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Do. do. without board | 21 | 2 | 0 | 26 | 4 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| Average semi-annual Salaries of Female Teachers with board | 9 | 11 | 11 | 9 | 15 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 8 |
| Do. do. without board | 14 | 6 | 11 | 18 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 10 | 5 |

Here, again, our Superintendent has erred in his method of calculating the average of averages, better called, perhaps, the general average.

On looking attentively at Table C. we find that the Provincial allowance to the Teachers cannot, in some instances at least, have been included; and as uniformity is preferable to caprice, we shall, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, conclude that the allowance has been uniformly excluded. Taking our Superintendent's figures, then, we get for the average annual emoluments of our male Teachers without board and exclusive of the government allowance the sum of £72 8s., and for our female Teachers the sum of £36 16s. 8d. Now the Teachers in Massachusetts get, on an average, employment for only 7½ months in the year, and at the wages of male Teachers is \$57.26 per month and of female Teachers \$15.26 per month, according to the most recent statistics I have seen (viz.: recently in the St. John Courier, copied from the New-York Home Journal) their special emoluments can be only £60 16s. 10d.

for males and £26 16s. for females; being less by £2 11s. 8d. in the case of males, and by £7 18s. 8d. in the case of females than our Teachers receive, exclusive always, be it remembered, of the government allowances. It may be argued moreover, for nothing appears to the contrary, that our Teachers get the emoluments above quoted for 22 weeks or 8 months' services; so that whether you add the government allowance for the whole year, or a proportionate part, our Teachers are by all odds the best paid in this continent. Unfortunately, however, our Superintendent's statistics are incorrect, and are calculated to work a serious injury to our Teachers, for they must alienate for years these friends who conscientiously wish to see them better paid. They tend also to inveigle young men into the profession, only to blast their otherwise reasonable expectations.

The Table does not afford the data necessary to check our Superintendent's calculations; but absurdities enough are to be found on the face of it to afford the cumulative evidence I am seeking for. We accordingly find that each of the male Teachers in Victoria appears to get £260 per annum, exclusive of the government allowance, and of the female teachers £112, with the like exclusion! The rich city of Boston does not afford such incomes!

In like manner the order of things is reversed in Kingston, Gloucester and Charlotte Counties. In all the other Counties the Teachers' money allowances are, as they ought to be, greater when they board themselves than when board is furnished to them. But if we trust to the Statistics we must conclude that for some special reasons, probably the delights of their Company, the single Teachers in Kingston get their board and £3 6s. 5d. semi-annually, over and above what is given to the Teachers who board themselves. The same is the case in Gloucester, but the money part is raised to £9 7s. 6d. In Charlotte County the Ladies carry the day, and we accordingly find that such as board with the patrons of the school get their board and £8 7s. 4d. semi-annually in cash, over and above what is given to those who board at home or elsewhere at their option.

Although I hope I have said enough to convince any one that our Superintendent is not so perfect as to put all his work and opinion beyond question I shall make a few remarks on the remaining tables noticed by him in the following extract:—

"Table D shows at a glance the total amount expended for Parish School purposes in each County, under separate heads, as extracted from the returns of the Local Inspectors, and Table E the amount actually drawn from the Provincial Treasury for the Parish School Service. Table F exhibits the schools received by the various

“ Educational Institutions in New-Brunswick, by
“ annual Legislative Grants towards their support.”

Table D is defective in as much as it leaves us in doubt on several points. Waving all question as to these, we may assume that the amount received from the Provincial Chest is correctly stated at £2,125 15s. 11d., and that this amount refers exclusively to the Teachers' ordinary allowances. Table F, however, shows that for the same service £11,318 18s. 7d. was drawn from the Treasury, and it is not unreasonable to assert that some hint as to the cause of the discrepancy, which amounts to £2078 2s. 5d., or nearly one-fifth, would have been acceptable. I do not mean to insinuate that I require explanation; but it is impossible that all can have an intuitive knowledge of the course of business.

Table F ought to have been correct as to King's College, but it is not so. The Legislative grant is £1100, and the other part of the endowment is chargeable on the Civil List of the Province, and not on funds at the direct disposal of the Crown. The amount drawn from the Provincial Treasury, for the services mentioned in Table F, is therefore £2700. To these, if we add the total shown in Table E, (£12,636 9s.) we get the grand total of £17,266 9s.— exclusive of the College endowment (£1111 2s.) chargeable on the Civil List: the whole forming the grand aggregate indirect tax of a fraction less than 1s. 11d. for every soul in the Province.

On comparing Tables A and B we find some things that are irreconcilable. The total number of scholars is said to be 24,127; but of these 2000 are not learning to spell, 5000 are not learning to read, 10,000 are not learning to write, and 14,000 are not learning to calculate; nearly 20,000 are not learning English Grammar, and upwards of 20,000 are not learning Geography. Now as children that are learning Arithmetic, Reading and Grammar, must necessarily be learning to spell, the difference in the number of spellers and the total number of scholars (2,058) must be looked for among those studying the higher branches. They are not, however, to be found in the Tables, and Mr. d'Avray on that fact founds some part of his argument of the impropriety of allowing the higher branches to be taught in the Common Schools. The conclusion then is inevitable, that they have been made to disappear, or were originally added to the total number of pupils in order to make out an apparent increase, or that so much carelessness is connected with the duty as renders the whole of the Statistics, notwithstanding their costliness, no more authentic than the guesses of men of average intelligence.

The footing up of the columns devoted to the School Houses is correct, but in the body we find the sum of 27 and 20 set down as 29, and some

other minor errors. But the absurdity of these Statistics is best shown by comparing the several columns for 1852 with those for 1853, when we find that the gross total increase is 121, but the total increase, according to the distribution columns, is 208!

I am now done with our Superintendent's Statistics, for, turn we where we will, not only do we find evidence of ignorance and carelessness, but, if we credit our Superintendent's statement, (p. 22,) that they have been drawn up with great pains, we cannot resist the conclusion, that he is grossly incompetent to perform or superintend such work.

This is deliberate and determined language, Gentlemen, respecting a person holding an important public office, and I know it must be distasteful not only to you, but to all kindly disposed men. For using it as a closing remark on the exposure of errors, the continuous recurrence of which, some of you, in the kindliness of your hearts, may feel disposed to say would not for years to come work a very serious public injury, provided everything else were done correctly, I might plead in extenuation, great public insults and wrongs adopted to chastise me in office; but I plead nothing in excuse that is personal, but simply the necessity that our Superintendent's pretensions should be lowered, and his opinions on public questions subjected to the same ordeal as those of other public men; for they tend to affect the future lot of the Province in an immeasurable degree, and have already, in my opinion, wrought incalculable mischief. If I have succeeded in convincing you that his powers of mind are not perfect, nor his ability unquestionable as to the apprehension of the final result of many sequences, and consequently that he is not entitled to stand as it were on an elevated pedestal and dogmatize as to the education fitting for every child in the Province, I shall have accomplished all I have aimed at in the preceding investigation; and you will now be prepared to consider and decide upon the true value of the work he has hitherto accomplished, and what he now solicits for approbation, and proposes for the field of his future operations.

Without citing Acts of the Legislature or making special references to the regulations made by the several administrators of the Government of the Province, I feel justified in saying that, under the care of these proceedings, aided by the educational necessities and good sense of the people, a gradual improvement was taking place in Common School affairs up to the year 1844. A better class of teachers had supplied the place of many who retired under the influence of the Act of 1837, and more attention was paid to all the external arrangements. Shortly previous to 1844, the subject of Parish School Education was frequently agitated in the Legislature, and

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a strong desire was expressed by many, to take some active step which would expedite matters in internal improvements, that is, the teaching department. In that year an inspection of Schools was determined on, and was carried into effect. In 1845, full reports were laid before the Legislature, each Inspector having made a special report on every School inspected by him, and a general review of his own work; while all concerned in one general Report. A printed abstract of these documents, which our Superintendent has ever shown a studious desire to ignore, was laid before the Legislature in 1846; and in 1847, after mature deliberation, the Act, 10 Vic. c. 56, was passed; its provisions are correctly enough recited by our Superintendent (pp. 10 & 11) so far as he goes. It did not produce the anticipated good effects; but the Superintendent and myself are of contrary opinion as to the cause of failure. He blames the people in these words: "What more could be done to secure good Teachers and good elementary education throughout the Province? Nothing on the part of the Government or of the Legislature, but a great deal on the part of the people which was left undone, as it had been in 1833, in 1837, in 1840, which is not done now, and which never will be done until they shake off that spathy and indiffer-entness which is the real stumbling block in the way of educational progress, until they rouse themselves to a sense of the heavy responsibility which rests on them, to a determination to aid and assist the efforts made to serve them." In another place p. 14, he says "the root of the evil lies not in defective Legislative enactments, but in the defective mode in which they have been carried out."

Taken in one sense I agree fully with him in what he has thus said; for assuredly if the people did rouse themselves they would put an end to such chattering, and make an active inquiry as to the cause of the failure of a scheme from which some of the best men in the Province anticipated so much good. Taken in the sense the Superintendent meant I repudiate it altogether. The Legislature did its part, the Executive Government of the day did its part, but the Subordinate officers did not do theirs, and the cause of the failure was significantly hinted at in the following words in my Annual Report, to be found in the Journals of the Assembly for 1850, "nothing short of uncontrollable disappointment in the efficiency and zeal of servants ought to prevent the best results—the magnitude of the interests involved being paramount to every other consideration." What was true then is true now, and justifies me in speaking plainly.

The Act of 1847, (I quote again from my own Report) was "true in theory, except in so far as the practical interpretation be correct, that

"under its provisions the principal Teaching Master is not required to directly promote the elementary knowledge of the Teachers, which is a most important point that has been repeatedly mentioned to me and complained of by the Teachers.

"In the specification of the qualifications of the Teachers, the Law recognizes the true position of the Provincial Parish Schools, as distinguished from the establishments in other countries for the education of the poorer and miserablest classes of society. It implies the right of the youth of this Province to a liberal education so far as it can be conferred irrespective of the study of the classics; their title to that description of school education which is essentially necessary to them in the present age of progress and of the application of science; to that education indeed on which the future prosperity of the Province mainly depends."

Let us go back a little and trace the cause of failure which our Superintendent ascribes to the people, but which I ascribe to himself. The Act of 1847 being passed, he became a Candidate for the office in the full knowledge of its provisions. To assist him he was allowed an outfit of £200, enough, in all conscience, to turn a weak head. He accordingly thought he had come to take charge of the education of the Country; and in this spirit he set himself above the law and despised the official name assigned to his office. In his opening lecture, he said he did not intend to impart any thing like a scientific education to his pupils, that is, he intended to give them just such instruction as would result in such Aristotelian perceptions as I have shown he possesses after all the advantages he has had; and he otherwise refused the course to less than what Her Majesty's Ministers had proposed for the emancipated negroes of the West Indies. All were struck dumb with amazement at his bold pretensions. The law was liberal as to the Training School and no obstacle was thrown in the way of his making of the establishment just what he pleased. Nevertheless he found fault with every thing and the removal of every trivial inconvenience was made an indispensable prerequisite to his success. All that could be accomplished was done for him. He still found fault. He kept aloof from the Teachers, many of whom retired from the Training School after the usual period of service, without having heard him give a single lesson. They were required from time to time to write original compositions on prescribed subjects. Their errors however were not made the occasion of special instruction. Many of them were merely unobserved and others were left unheeded. Some mistakes were not corrected at all, nor returned. The

Teachers told me over and over again that they learned a little from each other, but nothing from him; and that it had somehow or other been intimated to them, that the less they had to do with me, the better they were likely to fare. I proposed the formation of a record, to convey the identical passage now suggested at page 48, by Inspector McLinnon; but the idea was rejected. I privately suggested the formation of a society among the Teachers, while attending the School, for mutual assistance and the discussion of Educational points. One was formed for practical purposes, on a mistaken idea then current, that many of the Teachers possessed immense political influence. In short, to use the expression of Mr. Speaker Weldon, the School became a nuisance, and it ceased to exist, without leaving on record an expression on any educational point or principle in which the Teacher and the Schooler are interested.

In the meantime a School was formed by Mr. Deval, in St. John, who attended in Fredericton for two or three days, and had interviews with Mr. d'Avray, extending over probably so many hours.

No report or official examination has ever been made of either establishment; and to this day we have no assurance that the system is not thoroughly subordinating. We know that the British School system was not intended for, nor is it adapted to such a population as ours. Each set of Teachers who attended in Fredericton, presented, it is true, a complimentary address to Mr. d'Avray, but immediately thereafter taught the people to despise the whole affair as unsuitable to the Provincial Schools. I, for one, was grievously disappointed, and officially recorded my opinion in these words:—"Evil reports have gone abroad; the time of probation has expired, and if on enquiry it is found that the establishments are defective, [there was no official information on the subject, he is remembered,] they ought either to be investigated or abandoned." In point of fact the Fredericton establishment died out, and Mr. d'Avray was gratified by being sent on his inspection tour up the River, a duty he was anxious for, because it freed him from the work he was hired to perform, and was a sort of step to the office of Inspector General, which he always coveted. His report was common place enough, and, with one exception, embraced only such matters as had been thoroughly examined in 1844, and were now well understood; consequently it was not officially laid before the Legislature. In my report, submitted to the Legislature in 1851, I spoke of it in these words:—

"There is only one point in the Report which particularly attracted my attention during the short and unofficial opportunity I had of perusing it. I allude to the expression of

"Mr. d'Avray's opinion, that instruction in the French Schools should be confined to reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar and geography, and the impossibility of accomplishing more. I approached that Mr. d'Avray confined his attention chiefly to the remote and poor settlements of the Province, in which, when the rudiments even of all these branches can be introduced, the means of organizing schools, it will be admitted, will be perfect. He is my opinion, however, overvaluing the boys in towns, and in wealthier farming districts, who already spend many years at school, and who would, under an approved system of instruction, devote more time to their education.— The limited course of Mr. d'Avray would leave no alternative to such youths but that of either wasting their time in vain repetitions or removing to the Grammar School in the Shiretowns, at an expense their funds are ill able to bear.

"If the object of the present exertions on behalf of popular Education be not a more rapid and thorough course of elementary instruction, so as to leave time for the prosecution of what may be emphatically called studies, few indeed will be able to comprehend the object aimed at, or will be likely to give it public countenance."

At this session of the Legislature (1851) it was determined to dispense with Mr. d'Avray's services altogether, for it was found that everything he intermeddled with failed. He is not, therefore, justified in ascribing the failure of the Act of 1847 to the apathy of the people, who in the matter of the Training Schools for the Teachers of their children have in my opinion been grievously wronged, and are in a fair way of being equally so by his reinstatement with increased power under the present law.

Reflection on our Superintendent's career in this Province, and particularly on his evident anxiety to restrain popular education, convinces me that his own early education has been very defective; and that while acquiring a knowledge of French, to which he is so much indebted, he has imbibed the political opinions of the French nobles in the Anti-Revolutionary times—the peculiarities of which I need not recite.

His report abounds with amazing sophisms, fallacies and absurdities, the common weapons of dishonest educators: pardon the expression, for it means no more than dishonesty in politics.

By defining the qualifications of the Teachers the law has determined what shall be taught in the common schools. The expression of Mr. d'Avray's desire to limit it is therefore unnecessary, and ought to be put down. He has no right to infer that any boy will be set to the study of any branch before he is fully prepared; and when so prepared it would be wrong to withhold

one to conduct Book-Keeping, Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, in the several schools operated. The Superintendent is very careful to see that he makes his reports as a matter of duty, and as the result of his experience and judgment. On the other hand, I never recall about his experience, except that he had no Teacher of the good-sense of the Hearings; but I feel it to be my duty as a parent, and on behalf of those who are interested in the Parish Schools for their improvement, to press against his judgment and interference in the matter: the law is our charter.

Our Superintendent is evidently anxious for the maintenance of the present Parish School Act, but thinks some alterations necessary or advisable. I cannot afford time to notice the details of them.

It is questionable if the division of the Parishes into districts could not be best effected by Deputy Sheriffs who have access to plans; for the whole Parish must be divided, or any amount, even will be illegal—say the authorities in the United States.

No ground is expected to arise from authorizing our Superintendent to travel and lecture. One would have thought he had ascertained all he wanted before he declared his propositions; and in regard to lecturing we have had three or four of them already, and each of them of a place with the present report. When he says a thorough inspection of the whole Province could not be effected in much less than nine months, he is right: for one individual could not make it in less than a year; but to be of the slightest use it would require to be of a very different character from the one he made in Victoria and Charlotte in 1840.

The Superintendent thinks that the Statistical information collected is valuable, and that prominently so on account of the fact, that he, aided by the local inspectors, is able to guarantee the proper application of every farthing of the amount granted by the Legislature for Parish School purposes, and to prevent the misapplication of any portion of it." Whatever be the value attachable to this statement, it is to be observed that the public has not the same opportunity of checking the expenditure that was formerly enjoyed; and it is desirable to insist on facility in this respect rather than curtail it.

From the past I suggest little for the future unless public attention can be kept in the right direction.

In School affairs there are three prominent general provisions. The first may refer to external arrangements; the second, to the internal arrangements, or in other words the qualifications of the teachers and their duty to the scholars, and the manner of performing it; and

the third, to the publication of the proceedings and results.

Attention in this Province has hitherto been almost exclusively directed to the external, but these are yet in an unsettled state. The statistics appear calculated to gratify curiosity rather than to promote any particular object, and are far from reliable. So far as connected with money matters they could be had without travelling to collect them. They ought therefore to be esteemed an unimportant part of the Inspector's duty; a slight increase or decrease in any one year being of so consequence in any argument.

With regard to the internal arrangements the case is altogether different. The result of what transpires between the Teacher and the Pupil cannot be devoid of interest, for it must promote Scholarship or be food for animadversion: it is not the *locus in quo*, but the *res in quo*, that is valuable. Except what was accomplished in 1844, nothing whatever has been put on record in this most valuable branch, which appears to be now purposely scowled, although it is evident that it could not be dealt with without exciting thought—the grand avenue of truth. Every school must furnish the foundation of valuable remark to the intelligent Inspector; and what may be elicited in one school may be profitable for instruction in many, and therefore ought to be recorded and published.

Above all, a detailed annual report on the Training and Model Schools ought to be published, for the School ought to be one of TRUTH. It is not sufficient that the Report should state the number of persons wholly or partially trained, and arrange them according to their ages, residences, place of birth, religious creed and preferences, and so forth. The school ought to exemplify, in perfecting the forms and means of instruction to be pursued in all the other schools. In it ought to be readily seen whether the educational system is vital or formal, elevating or subordinating, promotive or retardative of education properly so called. The Report should be conformable. Matter never can be wanting to form an interesting and a valuable report without trenching on the sphere of duty properly belonging to the Chief Superintendent, and, in a minor degree, to the Inspectors. It is one of these anomalies, which it is foolish to attempt to account for, that no report calculated to enlighten or inform us on any educational principle connected with our Training Schools has yet been produced: in the absence of such a document no one can have an unexceptionable ground of belief in the efficiency or the reverse of the system.

Time does not permit me to enquire whether the statistical forms are agreeable to the Law. It is evident however that some of the tables might be altered so as to afford the means of

consider for his address against the young people of this Province; but citing that to the satisfaction he has added the usual commission of a printing business in which he contrived to cheat, I find it would be unjust not to direct your attention to it.

While "Head master of the lower school at the Royal School in the Mauritius," the color of the evidence in which varied from that of Tappin to that of Rev. our Superintendent's empty pith to any well supplied was frequently illustrated by his humble position, and that in the midst of joyous scenes to which he was occasionally admitted, the scene of degradation would be the instant he almost inevitable, when he was accidentally or designly, kindly or mockingly, dubbed "Head Joe." The remembrance of these or similar things must be the origin of his careful designation of myself as "the American Mr. John Gregory, of the Secretary's Office." No pang, however, like those I am of full seven and twenty years standing in that office; and in this day I think I was fully in getting the situation, considering that with the exception of a few points useful in such a position, I was on the whole considerably indebted to the Bureau-accounts. These days are passed, but the remembrance of them has taught me much that bears on the question which both of us affect to interconnect with as men of the day.

In like manner I must regret his insincere thanks and solicitations. On his recent appointment he wrote me a sort of apologetic letter, marked private, to which I sent an answer

re-asserting his true and apparent, which he immediately afterwards published. We can hold, therefore, no private intercourse—neither to it necessary.

Whatever credit our Superintendent may have served by his public confession, he has lost by displaying a want of elementary thoroughness. He intended the words quoted by him, viz.: "a grand error that vitiated the greater part of the statistics therein given, inasmuch as Mr. Forter's Report for 1838 embraced only six months, while mine is for twelve months," to be understood as my language, which it is not. The defect is of no particular consequence, except as far as it shows our Superintendent's ignorance of the limit of the use of quotation marks; and shows how little solid foundation there was for confidence in his ability as a Training Master.

I did not intend to touch upon the matters of account, because I do not suppose any statement he could make would unfavorably impress the public mind; but as by his insidious knowledge of accounts he has given his friend, the Rev. Mr. Forter, some cause for uneasiness, I think it right once for all to state my belief that Mr. Forter has paid over all he received, except the small sum of 1s. 11d., which is necessary to balance his account. Our Superintendent, by making most unwarrantable assertions in transferring the balance from my account to his own, has given me the appearance of the unrighteous steward; but that I treat with contempt, as it probably proceeded as much from ignorance as from sinister design.

J. G.



