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# JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

FOR

## Upper Canada.

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**Vol. I. TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1848. No. 2.**

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As it is necessary to lay the foundation of an edifice before proceeding with its superstructure, so we have felt that the exposition of the general principles, objects, and provisions of the School Law should precede the introduction of those articles which relate more directly to the improvement of the Schools, the establishment of School Libraries, and the various considerations and appliances which demand and promote the development of the youthful mind of the country. We complete the foundation part of our work in this number of the *Journal of Education*, and will proceed with the more interesting and practical applications of it in future numbers.

In our last number, we explained the law and system of Schools in relation to Cities and Incorporated Towns in Upper Canada. We also explained the great principle of universal education, by making the property of the country educate the youth of the country, and directed attention to several particulars in which District Councils can aid Trustees and advance the interests and efficiency of the Schools. We likewise explained the constitution of the School Fund and its expenditure, and showed that not a farthing of it has been expended in the management of our School system. We furthermore made some remarks on the importance of the Provincial Normal School, and office of District Superintendent, to which exception had been taken.

On no subject have some Canadian journals been more successful in misapprehending, and on few subjects have more groundless fears and suspicions been created, than on the primary design and fundamental principles of the present Common School Laws. The staple objection to them has been, that they were intended to subvert our existing system of Government, interfere with constitutional rights, and establish a species of Prussian despotism in the country; and we believe, from extensive personal intercourse in various parts of the Province, as well as from the nature of the objections themselves, that nine-tenths of the sensitiveness created to some extent on the subject, have not arisen from any examination of, or objection to, the provisions of the School Laws themselves, but from the jealousies which had been excited in regard to

their alleged design and tendency. We have therefore anxiously desired an opportunity for effectually disabusing the public mind on a matter of so great importance, and to demonstrate, beyond reasonable doubt, the objects contemplated in procuring the present School Acts. This we are now enabled to do by the condescension and kindness of the GOVERNOR-GENERAL, and the interest which His Excellency feels in imparting to the public mind correct views as to the principles and objects of our School system, and thus placing it upon a broad and permanent foundation. At the moment of our arranging the matter for the present number of this Journal, the following letter from the Provincial Secretary was received :—

“ SECRETARY’S OFFICE, Montreal, 7th Feb’y, 1848.

“ SIR,—I have the honour, by command of the Governor-General, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo, transmitting for His Excellency’s perusal, copies of two circulars recently addressed by you, one to the Wardens of Districts, and the other to the Heads of the Corporations of Cities and Towns in Upper Canada, with a view of bringing the Common School system of Upper Canada into more general and efficient operation, and requesting His Excellency’s permission to publish in your forthcoming ‘*Journal of Education*,’ the whole of the explanatory Reports which accompanied the original Drafts of the Common School Acts, and of which extracts are given in the circulars transmitted, as their publication would, you are of opinion, aid very much in correcting erroneous impressions as to the design and reasons of the School Acts generally.

“ In reply, I am directed to state that His Excellency concurs with you in thinking that the publication of the Reports in question may be attended with the advantages pointed out by you, and that His Excellency feels much satisfaction in assenting to your request.

“ I have the honor to be, SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

D. DALY, *Secretary*.

“ The Rev. EGERTON RYERSON, D. D.,

Superintendent of Schools, C. W., Toronto.”

For the first time, therefore, is the author of the original drafts of the Common School Acts enabled to lay before the public the communications which accompanied them to the Governor-General, and which explained their principles and objects, and the reasons for the amendments which they contained of former School Laws. The first of these communications was written within three months after the author’s return from more than a twelve-months’ tour in Europe and the United States ; and he now submits to even those who have so grievously misinterpreted his motives and sentiments, and much more to the candid reader of any party, whether the following communications do not contain indubitable evidence that the present Common School Acts were framed with the single view to carry out the system of Responsible Government to its

fullest extent, and to establish and administer our Common School system in the most impartial and efficient manner, without regard to sects or parties, and for the greatest convenience and best interests of the entire country. We are far from claiming infallibility for the recommendations made; nor are we prepared to say that in every particular they are the best that could have been made; with the personal observation and experience we have since had of the working of our school system, we are free to confess that we should have modified our recommendations in some of their details; but what we submit is, that the views we have submitted to the Government for the last two years on the subject of our school Laws are sound and constitutional, and that our object has been to assimilate our Common School system to the established institutions of the country, and adapt it to the social condition and intellectual wants of the people.

And we venture to believe, apart from the considerations above stated, that the following communications will throw considerable light upon some features of our School system, and several provisions of our School Law, which have hitherto been very inadequately appreciated.

As public attention has recently been specially devoted to two leading features of the School Law—the offices of Provincial Superintendent and Board of Education—we furnish also in this number of our Journal a full account of the powers of the former and the constitution of the latter in the neighbouring United States, whence we have adopted them. The perusal of the two articles in this number,—the one headed, “*Powers of Superintendents of Schools in the United States and Upper Canada compared,*” the other, “*Boards of Education—their origin, constitution and objects,*” will satisfy the inquiring and candid reader how much a portion of the public have been mistaken and misled on these subjects. He will see that in no free country has the Superintendent of Schools so limited powers as in Upper Canada; that in no free country has the Board of Education as large powers as those which have been conferred upon our Provincial Board; and that the “highest power in the administration of Schools,” as well as other “affairs,” is the Governor in Council, and made so by means of a subordinate officer, or head of a department, who is responsible to the Government to the extent of his salary and character for all his acts—the Government also being responsible to the people, through their Representatives, for the conduct of each subordinate officer, whether Superintendent of Schools, or Sheriff, or Judge of a District—all these officers being appointed in precisely the same manner, and equally responsible for their official conduct.

[Since the foregoing was in type, we learn that there is not room in the present number for the article headed “*Powers of the Superintendents of Schools in the United States and Upper Canada compared,*” though it is in type. That article will be given in the next; but the subject is briefly noticed in the other articles above referred to.]

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LETTER EXPOUNDING AND RECOMMENDING THE ORIGINAL  
DRAFT OF THE PRESENT SCHOOL ACT.

(NOW FIRST PUBLISHED BY SPECIAL PERMISSION OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.)

EDUCATION OFFICE, (WEST,)

Cobourg, March 3rd, 1846.

SIR,

In obedience to the commands of His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, conveyed by your letter of the 11th ultimo, I have the honour to submit, for His Excellency's consideration, the following remarks and suggestions on the Common School Act, 7th Vic., Cap. xxix, [passed in 1843,] together with the annexed Draft of a proposed School Bill.

Many of the observations which I may make in this paper will appear to disadvantage in the absence of a *Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada*,\* which I hope to be able to submit to His Excellency before the meeting of the Legislature, or very shortly afterwards.

My present remarks and suggestions will be confined to the School Act itself, and shall be made in as few words as possible.

From a careful examination of the present Act, (of 1843,) it is obvious that it was constructed with a benevolent intention; that its object was to secure to the whole people the benefits of a Common School education—providing for the establishment of both elementary and superior Common Schools—protecting the religious feelings of each class of the community—rendering the Schools accessible to the poor, by providing for their relief from the payment of School rates—and evidently contemplating the true theory of public instruction under a constitutional government, the co-operation of the government and the people in its administration.

But with these general objects, and with many excellent provisions for accomplishing them, the Act is intricate and lame in many of its details, and altogether defective in some essential provisions; and it contains some provisions which are incompatible with other provisions of the Act itself; and others again which are not in harmony with the principles of our general system of government.

By comparing the Act with the Common School Law of the neighbouring State of New-York, it will be seen that the principal provisions of our Act, in regard to every class of Officers mentioned in it, and in respect to the whole system of proceeding, is borrowed from the New-York Statute, with the alterations and changes of terms only, which our Municipal Institutions and phraseology rendered absolutely necessary.

And in this adoption of the New-York School Law, two things seem to have been overlooked. 1st. The difference between the workings of a democratic Republic and those of a Responsible system of Government under a Constitutional Monarchy. 2nd. There is no provision for the exercise of the same

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\* This Report was transmitted the 27th of the same month, and two editions of it have been printed by order of the House of Assembly.

executive authority over the system of public instruction with that which has been provided for in the State of New-York. The functions of the Regents of the University, and the most material powers of the Superintendent of Schools,—constituting the regulator, if not the main-spring of the New-York system—are wanting in the Canadian Act.

Without adverting to the duties of that important body, called the Regents of the University, I will remark, that in respect to the State Superintendent, (or, as we term the same Officer, *Chief Superintendent*,) it is provided, "That, if any person who considers himself aggrieved by any decision made by any School district Meeting, or any decision in regard to the altering, forming or refusing to form or alter any School district, or in regard to paying any Teacher, or refusing to pay him, or in refusing to admit any scholar gratuitously into any School, on account of alleged inability to pay ; or, in fine, *concerning any matter arising under the general School Law*, may appeal to the Superintendent of Common Schools, and his decision upon the case is final and conclusive." Not a shadow of any part of this power is vested in the hands of the Superintendent of Education in Upper Canada, nor even in the Governor in Council. Nay, the Governor in Council does not possess so much authority in the administration of the Law as any County or Township Superintendent, or even the Trustees of any single School District. The Government has no authority whatever to interfere with the doings of any County, Township, or School District in Upper Canada.

There can be no Provincial system of Education—except that of apportioning money—where there is a completely independent power in each of the Schools, in regard to both the books and regulations of the School—a subject on which the Government itself is not authorized to say a single word !

It is true that the spirit of the people is very far from being conformable to the provisions of the Act. All parties have been in the habit of appealing to the Superintendent on doubtful and disputed questions, and he has been in the constant habit of deciding upon them ; but there is no law for either the one or the other ; the whole course of proceeding has been voluntary, and dictated by necessity and the fitness of things.

The Act authorizes the Chief Superintendent to draw up Rules and Regulations for Schools ; but no one is required to observe them. The 65th Section provides that the qualification of Teachers of Model Schools shall be attested by the principal Teachers of a Normal School, after it shall have been established ; but the Act makes no provision for the establishment of such a School. Similar defects and anomalies pervade the details of the Act.

Before proceeding to offer any suggestions for amending the Act, I beg to lay down two or three principles which I consider fundamental.

If it be intended that the *system* of public instruction be Provincial, or National, it must be *one* throughout the Province. There cannot be a distinct system, or no system, as it may happen, in every County, Township, or School district.

In order that a system of instruction may be Provincial, the machinery of it must be so—the various parts of it must be made to move in harmony the one with the other, and the whole must be subject to one common direction. This cannot be the case where the different parts are wholly independent of each other—where the County and Township Superintendents, and each Corporation

of Trustees, are as independent of the Crown in Canada as they are of that in China.

Furthermore, one chief design of a Monarchical system of Responsible Government is to stamp the sentiment and spirit of the public mind upon the administration, as well as legislation of the country, and to secure the collective acts of the country against the antagonistic or selfish acts of individuals or isolated sections. It makes the Executive Government not only the representative of the whole community in its actual composition, but also in the execution of every part of the law for the benefit of the community. As there is one responsibility, so there is one authority, one mode of appointing to, and removing from, the head of every department of authority—whether supreme or subordinate—in all localities, and gradations of office. This principle of Responsible Government is contravened by the Common School Act, in the whole system of local superintendency. The Act therefore makes no provision for a Provincial system of Schools, but contains provisions which are the reverse of it, in every respect, and which are not in harmony with the principles of Responsible Government as applied to every other department of the Administration.

I assume, also, that Christianity—the Christianity of the Bible, regardless of the peculiarities of sects or parties, is to be the basis of public instruction, as it is of our civil Constitution. I beg, also, to remark, that the Common School Act of Lower Canada—passed during the last session of the Legislature—supplies several of the defects of the Upper Canada Act; and I think it much more desirable to assimilate, as far as possible, the Common School systems of the two sections of the Province, than to assimilate that of Upper Canada to the New-York State system.

The first seven sections of the Act [of 1843] relate to the appointment and duties of the Chief and Assistant Superintendents of Common Schools. At the time of my appointment to the situation I have the honour to hold, I was informed that it was the intention of the Government to separate the office of Chief Superintendent of Education from that of Secretary of the Province, and to place the Superintendent of Schools in Upper Canada upon the same footing as to means of support with persons in similar situations in other departments. This has been done in respect to Lower Canada; and the reasons for the change there apply with equal, if not with greater, force to Upper Canada—the latter being at a distance from the Seat of Government.

I would also add to the prescribed duties of the Superintendent of Schools. In place of the first seven sections, and the sixty-seventh section of the present Act, I would propose the first and second sections of the accompanying Draft of a Bill.\* The duties which I propose to impose upon the Superintendent will more than double the work which the present Act prescribes to him.

I propose the appointment of a Board of Education, and the establishment of a Normal School, (see annexed Draft of Bill, Sec. 3-5.†) The Board ought to consist of the most competent men in the country, and be a fair representation of the religious feelings of the country, without reference to political party.

The Superintendent of Schools, as an Officer of Government, and account-

\* 9th Vic., Cap. xx, Sec. 1, 2.

† 9th Vic., Cap. xx, Sec. 3-5.

able to it for all his acts, ought not, I think, to be, in his administrative acts, under the control of any intervening body; and in availing himself of the counsels of such body, which he may often have recourse to, he should do so, as well as act, upon his own responsibility. It will be observed, that the power which each District Superintendent has over each District Model School is not given to the General Superintendent in respect to the Provincial Normal School, but to the Board of Education, under the sanction of the Governor, and that the Superintendent has only a general oversight of the Normal School.

The proposed arrangement in respect to School Books—a matter of extreme delicacy and difficulty—will, I hope, be an essential improvement on a vitally important feature of the system of public education. Nothing can be worse than the present state of things in respect to School Books. Every communication received at this Office referring to the subject, speaks of the absolute necessity of something being done; but no one suggests what should be done, except that there should be an uniformity in the text-books used in the Schools. In the State of New-York, by a law passed in 1843, the State Superintendent of Schools, and even every County Superintendent, has authority to reject any book from the School libraries. Objections would be made in this Province to giving such power to the Superintendent of Schools. In the State of New-York the Regents of the University make out a list of books for School libraries, and no books can be introduced into them except such as are contained in the Regents' list, or except the permission of the Regents of the University be first obtained. I do not propose to give quite so much power as this to the Board of Education. In practice I intend that the Board should make out a list of School Books in each branch of learning that they would *recommend*, and another list that they would *permit*,—leaving the Trustees of Schools to select from these lists.

The proposed duties of Municipal Councils are stated in the annexed Draft of Bill, Sections 6–10.\* With one or two exceptions, they are the same as those prescribed by the present Act.

I propose the abolition of the office of Township Superintendents—the least popular class of officers created by the present Act, and against whose continuance objection is expressed in nine out of ten of the communications received at this office on the subject—especially those from private individuals and District Superintendents. This proposed change affects the greater part of the machinery of the present School Act. The duties now performed by Township Superintendents, I propose to be discharged respectively by the Municipal Councils, the District Superintendents and the Trustees; the first making, instead of approving of the School divisions; the second giving notices of apportionments, and paying Teachers; the third giving notices of local School meetings.

I have learned that much inconvenience has been experienced in respect to School meetings, for want of the proper notices which it is scarcely possible, in all cases, for a Township Superintendent to give. I think the proposed arrangements in respect to such meetings will add much to the convenience of the people. The principal, and, indeed, only inconvenience, in the proposed plan, is the payment of Teachers. Under the old School law, the Teachers were paid by the District Treasurers. I have never heard of any particular

\* 9th Vic., Cap. xx, Sec. 6–11.



inconvenience attending it. I would propose the same now, if the District Treasurers would not deduct a per centage on the School moneys passing through their hands.

The payment of the District School Tax to the District Superintendent will be quite as convenient for each Township Collector as the present system, as such Collector must go to the District Treasurer to pay the other taxes, and the District Superintendent's residence is generally adjacent to that of the Treasurer. Then the District Superintendent is required to visit each School throughout his District once a year—which will afford facilities for financial, as well as other arrangements.

The mode of appointing District Superintendents, and their duties, are prescribed in the annexed Draft, Sec. 11, 12.\* It will be seen that such a change in the mode of their appointment is proposed as accords with the principle of Responsible Government, and is essential to the harmonious and efficient working of the School system. It would doubtless be more simple and consonant to our system of Government, if the District Superintendents were appointed in the same manner as all other administrators of the law; but, as a completely opposite system has obtained, so great a change might create dissatisfaction. It is also proposed that, as soon as practicable, the offices of Clerk of the District and of District Superintendent shall be filled by the same person.† The convenience of this arrangement in performing many of the duties of Superintendent, and the financial gain of it to the several Districts, will be apparent to every observer. The duties of both officers can be easily performed by the same person; the allowance will naturally be such as to secure the services of persons of high intelligence, both as Clerks of Councils and District Superintendents of Schools.

In the proposed arrangement the duties of Superintendents will be very considerably increased, which will doubtless be considered by District Councils in fixing the amount of their remuneration.

The discontinuance of the office of Township Superintendent will be attended with considerable advantage to the School Fund. Township Superintendents (as far as I can judge by Reports from several Districts) receive, each, from five to twenty-five pounds per annum. To place the average amount paid to each Township Superintendent as low as ten pounds (for 310 Townships) it would amount in all to more than £3000 per annum.

The smallness of the remuneration to Township Superintendents prevents competent persons, in many instances, from undertaking the task. On the other hand, many of the Township Superintendents are well qualified and efficient men; but such men are almost invariably Clergymen of some

\* 9th Vic., Cap. xx, Sec. 6, 12 and 13.

† It was proposed to appoint District Superintendents in the same way that Clerks of District Councils were at that time (1846) appointed—nominated by the District Councils, and appointed by the Crown. The clause for that purpose was advocated by the then Attorney-General (now Mr. Justice) Draper in the House of Assembly, but was lost by a small majority; and the old mode of appointing District Superintendents was retained. It was also proposed that as soon as any Clerkship of a District Council should become vacant, the two offices of Clerk of the Council and District Superintendent should be filled by the same person. This clause was not sanctioned by the Government; but such has been the case up to the present time in the Victoria District. It may be so in other Districts at the pleasure of the District Councils.—*Ed. Jour.*

denomination. I do not propose to dispense with their valuable co-operation ; on the contrary, I propose to relieve them from the vexatious and thankless part of their duties, and add to their numbers by providing (see Sections 13 and 14 of the annexed Draft,\*) that all Clergymen, and Magistrates also, shall be School Visitors, under such precautions, regulations and instructions as may be prepared by the Superintendent of Schools, under the immediate sanction of the Governor in Council.

It is not proposed, as will be seen, to give such Visitors any control in the management of Schools ; but from their co-operation and influence I anticipate the greatest advantages in the improvement of our Schools, and in the diffusion of useful knowledge.

The election of Trustees and their duties, as proposed, are stated in Sections 16-27.† The most important change proposed is, their continuing in office three years instead of one. The disputes respecting the appointment and payment of Teachers, arising from annual changes in the present system, are numerous and painful beyond conception. The evils of annually electing all the Trustees of each School has been deeply felt in the neighbouring State of New-York, and are vividly portrayed in some of the Reports of Superintendents. In 1843 a law was passed extending their period of office to three years. This is the period prescribed in the Lower Canada Act, passed last session. On the importance and advantage of this change I need not enlarge. Two other important changes are proposed in common with the duties of Trustees : The one is, that they shall not receive aid from the School Fund until the amount of the Rate-bill which they have imposed is collected, or shall not receive a larger amount from the School Fund than they provide and pay by Rate-bills or voluntary subscription, [the system in the State of New-York.] This arrangement will secure the School Fund from the abuses which are constantly being practised upon it ; it will also secure the Teacher a minimum amount of support. Under the proposed arrangement, if the Legislative grant to a School be ten pounds, the District Council must provide ten pounds more. These two sums constitute the School Fund. The Trustees must raise a sum equal to that of the School Fund—namely, twenty pounds, in the case supposed ; the whole amounting to forty pounds. [In the State of Massachusetts the inhabitants of each School division are required to raise, by local rate on property, at the rate of one dollar and twenty-five cents per annum for each child between the ages of 4 and 16 years, in order to be entitled to any aid from the State School Fund.] In looking over the Reports from several Districts I find that, in the majority of cases, the amounts heretofore raised by Rate-bill have exceeded the ratio I propose.‡ But, in other cases, the amount

\* 9th Vic., Cap. xx, Sec. 14-16.

† 9th Vic., Cap. xx, Sec. 18-27.

‡ The clause of the bill here recommended was approved of by the Government, but was opposed and lost in the House of Assembly. Had it become law, in common with the clause recommended in the following paragraph, (authorizing Trustees to impose Rate-bills upon all the inhabitants of their School Section according to property,) how different, already, would have been the state of many of our Schools from what they now are,—how different would have been the circumstances of School Teachers—and how plain and comparatively easy would have been the duty of Trustees. The amount of apportionment to the inhabitants of each Section would have determined the minimum of the amount to be raised by them by Rate-bill or voluntary subscription. That amount, payable by all the inhabitants according to property, would have been little for each—would always have provided a salary sufficient to enable them to have a good

raised by Rate-bill has not exceeded a few shillings—the School has been kept open only three months of the year, and that at a very low salary—just long enough to get the public money. My attention has been repeatedly called to this evil by local Superintendents. I propose to remedy it by requiring that a School Section, in order to be entitled to a continuation of aid from the School Fund, shall have a School open during at least six months of the year; and shall, *bonâ fide*, pay an amount equal to that which they draw from the School Fund. This arrangement will also tend to secure the punctual payment of Teachers, and keep the accounts of each year separate and distinct.

The next important change which I propose is, that the Rate Bill, imposed by the Trustees of each School Section, shall be levied upon the inhabitants of each Section, generally, according to property. It is the inhabitants generally who elect the Trustees; it is for the inhabitants generally that the grant is made; and the same principle, I think, ought to be acted upon throughout the system—all having a right to avail themselves of the School.

I need not say how just and patriotic is this principle; how important it is for the poor, and especially those (as is often the case) who have large families; how much it would lighten the burthen of supporting the Schools; how greatly it would increase the attendance of pupils, and, consequently, the blessings of education, and how strictly then would our Schools be public Schools. I may observe, that this system obtains in the States of New-England, where there are the best Common Schools in the United States. It is also the Prussian and Swiss system.

On the other hand, the evils of the present system of School Rate Bill have been brought under my notice from the most populous Townships, and by the most experienced educationists in Canada. When it is apprehended that the Rate Bill will be high, many will not send their children to the School at all; then there is no School, or else a few give enough to pay the Teacher three months, including the Government part; or even after the School is commenced, if it be found that the School is not so large as had been anticipated, and that those who send will consequently be required to pay more than they had expected, parents will begin to take their children from School, in order to escape the Rate Bill, as persons would flee from a falling house. The consequence is, that the School is either broken up, or the whole burthen of paying the Teacher falls upon the Trustees, and often a quarrel ensues between them and the Teacher. I have been assured, by the most experienced and judicious men, that it is impossible to have good Schools under the present system of Rate Bill. I think the substitute I propose will remedy the evil. I know of none who will object to it but the rich, and the childless, and the selfish. Education is a public good; ignorance is a public evil. What affects the public ought to be binding upon each individual composing it. In every good

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Teacher during more than half, and in most cases, all the year; all the children would have had equal access to the School; and the causes of most of the disputes between neighbours, and between Parents, Teachers and Trustees, would have been prevented. The harmony of the bill was destroyed; it was mutilated and maimed in some of its most practical and essential details by the successful opposition to them while under the consideration of the Assembly, and the Superintendent of Schools has been assailed for the very defects in the law thus created, and which he has employed all the means in his power to prevent—defects which have, indeed, been partially remedied by subsequent enactments, but which cannot be wholly removed without further legislation.—*Ed. Jour.*

government, and in every good system, the interests of the whole society are obligatory upon each member of it.\*

To secure the punctual transmission of School Reports, I propose that the payment of the last instalment of the School Fund to each Section shall be conditional on the presentation of the Annual Report from such Section; and to relieve the Trustees from preparing the Report, (a duty to which many of them have strong feelings of repugnance, and for which, in many instances, they are not very well qualified,) I propose that the Teacher shall act as their Secretary, in preparing it, if required; a duty to which he will be prompted in order to get his money.

I also propose a Section (28†) stating the general duties of Teachers. These duties are applicable to all Common School Teachers. I think it is important, on various grounds, that such duties should be made law. The first division under this Section is transcribed from the School law of Massachusetts, except that I have *modified* and *limited* it.

As the term '*District*' is retained in our laws and applied to the larger municipal divisions of the Province, I have thought it inconvenient to apply the same term to the minor School divisions of Townships. I have proposed to apply to these latter divisions the term '*Section*,' which is as convenient and as appropriate as any other which has occurred to me.

On the miscellaneous provisions (see Sec. 29-43,‡) proposed it is, perhaps, not necessary for me to remark. Each will speak for itself. I have retained all the Sections of the present Act which appear to me to be necessary.

There are several minor modifications to which I have not referred; the expediency of which will be sufficiently apparent without remark; and I am aware how impossible it is, within any tolerable limits, to explain by writing the nature and importance and operations of many of the modifications and amendments to which I have alluded, and which I think it expedient to submit.

Considerable changes in any system are always attended with inconvenience, if not with difficulty. The transition from the generally complained of working of the present Act, to the adoption of the modifications recommended, in the annexed Draft of Bill, can be but very partially effected the present year. The year has commenced; the apportionments have been made; all is in the hands of the several local officers. They must be continued to the end of the year. But I think the first *ten* Sections of the annexed Draft of Bill might go into immediate operation without at all interfering with the local machinery of the present Act, and would fully prepare the way for completing the transition

\* The important clause of the Bill thus recommended, was strongly advocated by Mr. Attorney-General Draper, but was opposed and lost in the Assembly by a majority of four or five. It was the poor man's clause, and the clause of the enlightened patriot; and the loss of it has inflicted great injury upon many Common Schools, besides involving Trustees in great perplexities and embarrassments in consequence of their not being able to impose a general Rate Bill for School-house, repairs, furniture, &c. But we rejoice that the principle thus first submitted to the consideration of the Government in 1846, has been incorporated into our system of Schools for Cities and Incorporated Towns in Upper Canada, and that District Councils have also been invested with power to act upon it, as far as they may think it advisable. See the whole subject explained in the first number of this Journal, pp. 11-15.—*Ed. Jour.*

† 9th Vic. Cap. xx, Sec. xxviii.

‡ 9th Vic. Cap. xx, Sec. xxix-xliii.

by the first of next January, without producing any disorder or inconvenience. I have accordingly prepared a Section to that effect.

In the meantime, in case of the approval by His Excellency of the annexed Draft of Bill, and its becoming a law, it would be proper to have all the regulations and instructions, and forms, for which it provides, together with copies of the Bill itself, prepared, printed, and put into the hands of all persons who may be administrators of it. I think it would also be advisable to prepare and get printed blank forms for Reports, both for District Superintendents and Trustees—so that all parties may commence properly, and that there may be an uniformity forthwith in the administration of the law throughout the country. Such precautions and aids, for a year or two, will render the working of the whole system harmonious, uniform, and efficient.

The annexed Draft of Bill may have some cases unprovided for; but it provides for all the cases that have yet come under the notice of this Office, and all that I can conceive after examining the various Schools laws of different States and Kingdoms.

I beg to remark, generally, that I have retained as much of the machinery and phraseology of the present Act as I could; have sought to make the arrangements more methodical and more simple; and have reduced the number of Sections from 71 to 44.

I would also observe, that the annexed Draft of Bill does not give the Government, through the Superintendent of Schools, any thing like as much power as the new school law for Lower Canada gives the Superintendent of Schools there. I have desired to retain no more power in the hands of the Superintendent than is absolutely necessary to enable the Government to control the general principles and character of the system of public instruction, and to see that money appropriated by the Legislature is faithfully and judiciously expended. I hold it as a true principle, and as expedient, that the Legislature, in appropriating money, should provide, through one or more general officers, that its liberal and benevolent intentions be accomplished in the expenditure of that money. Then, as the people contribute locally, they have the local right of employing and dismissing Teachers at their pleasure.

It is not easy to adjust precisely the different parts of a mixed machinery. I have sought to simplify it as much as possible, and have proposed to give the Government no more power than is indispensable to make the system Provincial, and fulfil the intentions of the Legislature.

I would that the habits and circumstances of Canadian society might allow of simplifying the system still more.

Numerous and intricate legal provisions in matters of detail, in relation especially to Education, are perplexing to the people and embarrassing to the Government.

In respect to the means for the establishment and support of a Normal School, I may remark, that the Legislature of the State of New-York has granted \$9000 to rent and furnish Buildings for a State Normal School at Albany, and \$10,000 per annum for its support.

I think there should be placed at the disposal of the Provincial Board of Education, at least £1500, to establish a Normal School, and the same amount, per annum, for its support. I hope it may be established and maintained for a somewhat less sum; but, it appears to me especially desirable that the Board

should not be meanly tied down to a possibly insufficient sum. Such a proceeding might occasion a complete failure, with all its melancholy consequences. The circumstances, and management and authority of Government, in the expenditure of the Grant, would be a guarantee that not a sixpence more should be expended than would be absolutely necessary.

I trust some means will be available from the sale of school lands by which encouragement may be given to the formation of *School Libraries* in the several Districts and Townships. A small sum disposed of annually in that way would prompt to the contribution of much on the part of the inhabitants of different Districts, and would lead to the circulation and reading of a vast number of useful books. But I am not sufficiently informed on this point to suggest any clause to be introduced into the Act respecting it. I am inclined to think it may be done by the Government without any Act on the subject, and in conformity with the provisions of the proposed Bill.

In conclusion, I have to repeat, that, although this communication is protracted to a great length, several topics remain unnoticed, and to others, I am afraid I have alluded too briefly to be either explicit or satisfactory. Should any farther explanations be deemed necessary, I shall be happy to give them in any way that they may be required.

But I must beg permission to add what escaped me to notice in the proper place—that I have received information that there are several Townships in Upper Canada settled by Germans, in which all the Schools are German, and all the Teachers aliens.

Believing that it was not the intention of the Legislature, and that it is not expedient, to prohibit European Aliens from being employed as common school Teachers, I have excepted them in the annexed Draft of a Bill. It is perhaps not necessary to except any other than foreign Germans, but I have thought there might be cases of French and Italians proposing to teach schools in Upper Canada. The study of the French language especially should, I think, be encouraged to as great an extent as possible.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

EGERTON RYERSON.

The Hon. D. DALY, M. P. P.

Secretary of the Province, Montreal.

#### RESPONSIBILITY OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS—PAYMENT OF SCHOOL MONEY TO TREASURERS OF DISTRICTS, &c. &c.

[Parts of the explanatory communication (dated 27th March, 1847,) which accompanied the draft of the amended School Act, passed the last session of the Legislature, 10th and 11th Victoria, chap. 19, were published in the last number of this Journal. That part of it which explained the necessity, design and provisions of the Act in regard to Cities and incorporated Towns, will be found on pages 16–19; and the remarks which illustrated the property principle of supporting Common Schools as the basis of universal education, may be seen on pages 12–15. We now give the remainder of the communication, explanatory of the following subjects; namely, *the appointment of a*

*second District Superintendent under certain circumstances—the principle of Responsible Government as applicable to District Superintendents—the payment of School Moneys to Treasurers of Districts under certain conditions—and the reason for appointing the Mayor of Toronto a Member of the Board of Education.* What follows, in addition to the foregoing communication, may also be referred to as a practical demonstration, that the leading object of the Superintendent of Schools has been, not only to introduce into our school laws those provisions which, in other countries similarly situated with ours, have been found most conducive to the progress of common school education, but also to assimilate, as far as possible, the principles and administration of our whole school system to the established principles of Responsible Government.]

The *eleventh* Section of the accompanying Draft of Bill provides for the appointment of a second District Superintendent of Common Schools, at the discretion of the Council, in Districts the Schools of which exceed one hundred and fifty in number; a provision analogous to one which exists in the State of New-York. It will obviate an objection which exists to the present Common School Act, in regard to two or three of the largest Districts in Upper Canada.\*

The *twelfth* Section [authorising the Governor in Council to remove a District Superintendent for neglect or violation of duty, until the ensuing meeting of his District Council,] is rendered necessary by the loss of the clause in the Assembly during the last Session, which was introduced into the School Bill relative to the appointment of District Superintendents of Common Schools. That clause provided for the appointment of District Superintendents by the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the District Councils. I refer to my communication of the 3rd March last for the reasons of that clause,—namely,—to conform the School law to our system of Provincial Responsible Government, and to secure the fulfilment of the intentions of the Legislature in establishing and aiding a Provincial system of Schools. But that clause not having been adopted by a majority of the House of Assembly, and the appointment of District Superintendents having been left exclusively with the District Councils, it was necessary to provide some means by which responsibility shall be secured to the Government in respect to the application of moneys which have been granted by the Legislature, and in respect to the administration of the School system, so far as the Government is responsible for it. At the present time any District Superintendent may or may not execute the law, may or may not apply the School Fund according to the conditions and regulations required by law, and the Government has no power to prevent him from doing so. If the School Fund were created entirely by local assessment, then a local responsibility alone could be properly insisted upon; but as one-half of the Fund is provided by the Provincial Legislature, there ought to be responsibility to the Provincial Government on the part of all those who are entrusted with its management. The propriety of appointing all such Officers by the Provincial Government is obvious; but it would then follow that their salaries

\* This was lost in the Legislative Council, after having passed the Assembly.

should be paid out of the public revenue, as are those of other public officers. But an opposite system of appointment has obtained; and as the District Councils provide for the salaries of District Superintendents out of District Funds, and provide also one-half of the amount of the School Fund, I do not think it advisable to propose any change in the relations and responsibilities of District Superintendents to the District Councils. But for the same reason that District Superintendents are thus responsible to the Councils, should they be responsible to the Government—being entrusted with the control of moneys and other powers for the due administration of which the Government is responsible. And such is the object of the *twelfth* section of the annexed draft of Bill.

The law of the State of New-York, from which so much of our School law has been derived, contains, among others, the following provisions relative to the appointment, removal and duties of District Superintendents:—

“The Board of Supervisors in each County of the State shall appoint a County Superintendent of Common Schools for such County; and in those Counties in which there shall be more than one hundred and fifty School Districts, reckoning two parts of joint Districts as one, they may appoint two County Superintendents, or one in their discretion; and at all such appointments hereafter made, the Board shall divide the County into two convenient Districts, designating the person appointed for each District respectively, when there shall be two appointed; but no share of the public money shall hereafter be apportioned to any County in which a County Superintendent shall not have been appointed, unless by order of the Superintendent of Common Schools. Such County Superintendents shall hold their offices, respectively, for two years, subject to removal by the Board of Supervisors, on complaint, for causes to be stated.

“Any County Superintendent may be removed from office by the Superintendent

of Common Schools, whenever, in his judgment, sufficient cause for such removal exists; and the vacancy thereby occasioned shall be supplied by appointment under his hand and official seal, until the next meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the County in which such vacancy exists. A copy of the order making such removal, specifying the causes thereof, shall be forwarded to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, to be by him laid before the Board at their first meeting thereafter.”

“The County Superintendents shall be subject to such general rules and regulations as the Superintendent may from time to time prescribe, and appeals from their acts and decisions may be made to him in the same manner and with the like effect as in cases now provided by law, and they shall make Reports annually to the Superintendent at such times as shall be appointed by him, which shall be the same as are now required to be made by the County Clerks, with such additional information as he shall require.” [Laws of 1843.]

The School Laws of the State of New-York are the result of many experiments and upwards of *forty years' legislation*; and the above quotations show how fully the adequate authority of the Executive Government is recognized and maintained in regard to all the regulations and proceedings of the State School System. But, I think, it is more congenial with our system of Government to place in the hands of the Governor in Council that power in regard to the removal of a District Superintendent which the law of the State of New-York gives the Superintendent of Common Schools. There it extends even to *competency or fitness* for office; in the accompanying Draft of Bill it is proposed to extend it only to *misconduct*.

The *thirteenth* Section of the annexed Draft of Bill provides for making, at the discretion of the Governor in Council, the Treasurers of District Funds,



the Treasurers of the District *School Funds* also. I suggested this provision in my Report on the School Bill of the 3rd of March last ; but stated that as some, if not most of the District Treasurers received per centage on the moneys which passed through their hands, a loss would be sustained by such a provision unless a special arrangement could be made exempting School moneys from such a draw-back. Since then an Act has been passed changing the tenure of the office of District Treasurers ; and I believe most, if not all, the District Treasurers now receive fixed salaries. I think that it will now be practicable to carry the thirteenth Section of the annexed Draft of Bill into execution, (should it become a law) without any loss to the School Fund, and with advantage to the School system.\*

It is not considered good policy in any other Department of the Public Service, to unite in the same person the three offices of Treasurer, Auditor and Paymaster. Yet it is so in our School system. The District Superintendent is made the Treasurer of the School Fund of the District ; he judges of the propriety of all orders and claims made upon that Fund ; and he pays them or not as he thinks proper. Now, as a general rule, it is an advantage for one to have such funds in his hands, and to retain them as long as possible, especially if he is engaged in or connected with any kind of business. It is his interest, therefore, to defer the payment of claims upon funds in his hands as long as possible, or the notification of them to parties concerned ; and the local administration of the School Act presents numerous opportunities and pretexts for procrastination in both these respects. Many complaints have, down even to the present month, been made against Township Superintendents for delaying, on various grounds, the payment of School Funds in their hands. Whether any one of these complaints is well founded or not, I have no means of knowing ; but assuming them to be ill-founded, as I hope they are, is it proper to place Superintendents of Common Schools in circumstances in which they are liable to such imputations and suspicions without any means of disproving the injustice of them ? To District Superintendents no such suspicions can attach ; for they have, as yet, had nothing to do with the payment of the School Fund to Teachers. But under the present Statute, they are about to assume this part of the duties of the abolished office of Township Superintendents. It will now be the duty of the Common School Superintendent of each District to pay out in detail all the Common School Funds of such District. It is, therefore, a question whether he should continue to be the Treasurer of School Funds, or whether they should not be placed in the hands of the ordinary Treasurer of the District, payable to School Teachers on the orders or cheques of the District Superintendent. According to the latter mode, there would be the most effectual provision for correct accounts of the expenditure of the School Fund, and for its prompt payment to parties entitled to it—the best security against any abuses in connexion with its application, and against attacks or suspicions unfavourable to any District Superintendent. Should the thirteenth Section become law it would, of course, not be necessary for a District Superintendent, any more than the Provincial Superintendent, to enter into bonds with two or more sureties for the faithful performance of his duties. The amended law of the State of New-York is the same as that which is

\* This clause passed the House of Assembly, but was lost in the Legislative Council.

proposed in the thirteenth Section of the annexed Draft of Bill. It is as follows:—"The sum annually to be distributed for the encouragement of Common Schools shall be paid on the first day of February, in every year, on the warrant of the Comptroller to the *Treasurers* of the several Counties and the Chamberlain of the City of New-York."

But, still, I do not propose that the power given by the thirteenth Section of the annexed Draft of Bill should be exercised, unless where the change of District Treasurership of the School Funds can be made without any additional charge upon them.

The *fourteenth* Section of the annexed Draft of Bill provides for the appointment of the Mayor of the City of Toronto as member of the Board of Education. The reason for this appointment is, that the Provincial Normal School is established at Toronto, and the Model School connected with it will be composed of children resident in the City. The City will, therefore, have a peculiar interest in the Provincial Normal School, and its authorities may yet feel themselves called upon to contribute something towards its support. The authorities of the City of Albany provide the buildings for the Normal School of the State of New-York. Under these circumstances, I think it very proper that the Chief Magistrate of the City of Toronto should be a member of the Board of Education.

I have thus explained, as fully as appears to me necessary, and as briefly as the nature of the subjects involved would admit, the principal provisions of the annexed Draft of Bill, and which I most respectfully submit to the favourable consideration of the Governor-General in Council, with a view to its introduction into the Legislature, in order to establish a proper system of Schools in Cities and Towns in Upper Canada, and to remedy the defects which have been referred to in the Common School Act, 9th Vic. ; cap. xx.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

The Hon. D. DALY, M. P. P.

EGERTON RYERSON.

Secretary of the Province, Montreal.

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## BOARDS OF EDUCATION—THEIR ORIGIN, CONSTITUTION, AND OBJECTS.

As imperfect and erroneous notions appear to exist relative to the appropriate functions of Boards of Education, it will be useful, and we trust acceptable, to give some account of their origin, constitution and objects in connexion with a system of public elementary instruction. In this connexion, they are of American origin : and from the United States have been incorporated into the Common School system of Upper Canada. We refer not here to such a body as the *University of France*—which stands at the head of the entire system of University, Collegiate and Primary instruction—presided over by a Council of six, each Councillor having charge of one or more divisions of public instruction, and over which Council presides a Grand Master, or Minister of Public Instruction ; or as the *Ministry of Public Instruction* in Prussia, which has been separated from that of the State since 1817, and which is divided into several sections, having the oversight and direction of the whole system.

of Education in the kingdom, from the primary Schools up to the Universities. In both these countries, each section or division of public instruction has a head, and the whole system is administered by individual heads of departments. Nor do we refer to such a Board as the Commissioners of National Education for Ireland. For though their functions are limited to primary instruction, they alone constitute the machinery of elementary instruction in that country. In both Prussia and France, the provinces, regencies and parishes, the departments, arrondissements and communes, co-operate in the elementary School system as do our District Councils and School Sections ; but in Ireland the local Municipal bodies have nothing to do with the School system ; the social state of the country unfits it for such Municipal co-operation ; and the Board alone educates, determines the rank and scale of salaries to teachers, appoints the School Inspectors, publishes the School books, and controls all the School houses aided by the Parliamentary grants. The system is simple, central, magnificent, powerful ; its School publications are unrivalled, as its principles are Christian and catholic ; but it is necessarily expensive—the current expenses of Officers, salaried Commissioner, Secretaries, Clerks, &c., being upwards of £6000 sterling per annum, independent of the expenses (£7000 sterling per annum) of the Normal and Model Schools, and about £4000 per annum over and above the receipts, expended in the publication of books ; and its mode of administration is foreign to the local institutions, circumstances and habits of the people of this country. The Board was not created to execute a law, but to be a law ; it was established and existed fifteen years under the authority of a Royal despatch, not to administer a prescribed system defined by law, but to create a system ; and it is the sole, absolute moving power of that system. The powers exercised by local patrons are given, not by statute, but by the Board itself, and can be modified at its pleasure. The Board expends the Parliamentary grants upon terms of its own prescribing ; nor is a sixpence given to a Teacher not on its own list, nor an Inspector of Schools employed except by its own appointment, nor is there any local School authority except by its own creation. It can hardly be expected that the local Councils in Upper Canada would be willing to relinquish the powers which they possess in our School system to a central Board appointed by the Crown—like that in Dublin, and designed for a state of society like that of Ireland.

The Boards of Education of which we propose to speak are those which have become a part of the Common School systems from which we have chiefly borrowed, and which have not as yet deducted a farthing from the School Fund of any country. The first of these Boards was created in the State of Massachusetts in 1837—an example which has been followed by the State of Maine, while the States of Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont, have followed the New-York State model in having a State Commissioner or Superintendent.

The system of Common Schools in these States is peculiar. For more than a century each town or township of six miles square has been required by the law of the State to have a School or Schools of a certain rank so many months in the year, according to the population—and for the support of these Schools every inhabitant was made liable according to his property. In case of the requirement of the law being neglected, the dissatisfied inhabitants desiring education for their children could complain to the Grand Jury of their county, and the delinquents would surely be indicted and fined. The remedy was so

certain and effectual, and the desire for education so general, that in very few instances have the requirements of the law been disregarded; in most instances they have been exceeded. But still, the system was not a *state*, or even *county*, it was only a *town* system. The ordinary courts of law were the only School authorities beyond the town committees. Each town had no higher standard for Schools than that furnished by itself. The Schools had therefore remained stationary for more than half a century, and were falling behind the wants of the age, when, to supply to some extent the desideratum of a central and general system by the diffusion of useful knowledge, a Board of Education was established in the State of Massachusetts in 1837; and as that Board is the model after which others have been established, we will quote entire the Act creating it. It is as follows:—

“SECT. 1. His Excellency the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Council, is hereby authorized to appoint eight persons, who, together with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor *ex officio*, shall constitute and be denominated the Board of Education: and the persons so appointed shall hold their offices for the term of eight years: *Provided*, the first person named in said Board shall go out of office at the end of one year, the person next named shall go out of office at the end of two years, and so of the remaining members, one retiring each year, and in the order in which they are named, till the whole Board be changed; and the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Council as aforesaid, shall fill all vacancies in said Board, which may occur from death, resignation, or otherwise.

“SECT. 2. The Board of Education shall prepare and lay before the Legislature, in a printed form, on or before the second Wednesday of January, annually, an abstract of the school returns received by the Secretary of the Commonwealth, and the said Board of Education may appoint their own Secretary, who shall receive a reasonable compensation for his services, not exceeding one thousand dollars per annum,

and who shall, under the direction of the Board, collect information of the actual condition and efficiency of the Common Schools, and other means of popular education, and diffuse as widely as possible throughout every part of the Commonwealth, information of the most approved and successful methods of arranging the studies, and conducting the education of the young, to the end that all children in this Commonwealth, who depend upon Common Schools for instruction, may have the best education which those schools can be made to impart.

“SECT. 3. The Board of Education, annually, shall make a detailed report to the Legislature of all its doings, with such observations as their experience and reflection may suggest, upon the condition and efficiency of our system of popular education, and the most practicable means of improving and extending it.

“SECT. 4. For the Salary of the Secretary of the Board of Education, provided for in the second section of this act, the Governor is authorized to draw his warrants from time to time, as the same may be required.”

(Passed in 1837.)

In the following year the Legislature passed three Acts relating to the Board of Education—the one compensating its members for their expenses, the second authorizing the Board to prepare blank forms and inquiries to be filled up and answered by School Committees—and directing that the returns to these inquiries should be made to the Secretary of State, and an abstract of these returns be made under the direction of the Board “in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth;” and the third Act prescribing the duties and increasing the salary of the Secretary of the Board, and is as follows:—

“SECT. 1. The Secretary of the Board of Education, in addition to the duties re-

quired of him by the act establishing the Board of Education, shall, once in each

year, at such times as the Board of Education may appoint, attend in each county of the Commonwealth a meeting of all such teachers of public schools, members of the school committees of the several towns, and friends of education generally in the county, as may voluntarily assemble at the time and place in the county designated by the Board of Education, of which sufficient notice shall by him be given; and shall then and there diligently apply himself to the object of collecting information of the condition of public schools of such county, of the fulfilment of the duties of

their office by all members of the school committees of all the towns, and the circumstances of the several school districts in regard to all the subjects of teachers, pupils, books, apparatus, and methods of education; with the intent of furnishing all requisite materials for the report by law required from the Board of Education.

SECT. 2. The compensation of the Secretary of the Board of Education shall be one thousand five hundred dollars per annum, to be made in equal quarterly payments.

SECT. 3. This act shall take effect from and after its passage. (*Passed in 1833.*)

Such are the powers of the Massachusetts Board of Education. It will be perceived that the Board has nothing whatever to do with the administration of the Common School law; but that the sole objects of its establishment were to collect and diffuse useful knowledge in the most popular and impressive methods for the improvement of the Schools generally. The annual County School Meetings held by the Secretary of the Board, and his able lectures (of which he has published a volume), together with his elaborate annual reports, have already resulted in a very great improvement in the Schools of that State. He has also edited the *Common School Journal*; but the journal itself is published by a private Book establishment in Boston, and for its contents the Board of Education are not responsible. In 1838 a wealthy and philanthropic citizen, T. Dwight, Esquire, placed at the disposal of the Hon. Horace Mann, Secretary of the Board of Education, the sum of \$10,000, upon condition that the Commonwealth would contribute the same amount, to be disbursed under the direction of the Board in qualifying Teachers of Common Schools. The Senate and Assembly, by a joint resolution, accepted the proposal, and other similar proposals since; and the result is the establishment of three State Normal Schools—two male, and one female. The Board has also recommended a series of books for school libraries, published by a Bookseller in Boston. Thus the Board has charge of the State Normal Schools—recommends library school books—collects and diffuses useful information, and makes practical suggestions as to schools; but, though including the Governor and Lt. Governor among its members, does not as a Board administer the school law of the State.

The system of management which obtains in the other New-England States, may be inferred from the following concluding paragraphs of the Report of the Massachusetts Board of Education, dated Dec. 4, 1846:—

“We cannot conclude this Report without submitting a few remarks rather of rejoicing than of pride at the changes which have followed the educational policy of our own Commonwealth, in other States.

“In the State of Rhode Island, under the auspices of that distinguished educationist, Henry Barnard, Esq., State Com-

mon School Commissioner, the whole school system has been reorganized and greatly improved; a wise and efficient school law enacted, and a public sentiment thoroughly revolutionized. Few States, if any, are now animated by a better spirit, or promise more favourable results, on this subject, than the State of Rhode Island.\*

\* The School law of the State of Rhode Island, which the Massachusetts Board of Education term “wise and efficient,” confers upon the Commissioner of Public Schools

"During the recent session of the Maine Legislature, a Board of Education for that State was established. Its constitution bears a strong resemblance to that of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and its objects are identically the same. In order to carry on its work with more system and vigor, the Board is empowered to appoint

and employ a Secretary, whose whole time is to be devoted to the improvement of the schools.

"At its last session, the Legislature of the State of New Hampshire, also, appointed a Common School Commissioner; and, in the act establishing the office, it is expressly provided that the Commissioner

much greater powers than are possessed by the Superintendent of Schools for Upper Canada. The Act which was passed in 1844, provides that the Commissioner shall be appointed by the Governor of the State, and defines his duties as follows—

"§ III. The Commissioner of Public Schools is authorized, and it is made his duty—

"¶ 1. To apportion annually, in the month of May, the money appropriated to public schools, after deducting such sums as may be specifically appropriated by the General Assembly, among the several towns of the State, in proportion to the number of children under the age of fifteen years, according to the census taken under the authority of the United States, next preceding the time of making such apportionment.

"2. To sign all orders on the General Treasurer, for the payment of such apportionment in favour of the treasurer of such towns as shall comply with the terms of this act, on or before the 1st July annually.

"3. To prepare suitable forms and regulations for making all reports, and conducting all necessary proceedings under this act, and to transmit the same, with such instructions as he shall deem necessary and proper for the uniform and thorough administration of the school system, to the Town Clerk of each town, for distribution among the officers required to execute them.

"4. To adjust and decide, *without appeal* and without cost to the parties, all controversies and disputes arising under this act, which may be submitted to him for settlement and decision; the facts of which cases shall be stated in writing, verified by oath or affirmation if required, and accompanied by certified copies of all necessary minutes, contracts, orders, and other documents.

"5. To visit as often and as far as practicable, every town in the State, for the purpose of inspecting the Schools, and diffusing as widely as possible by public addresses, and personal communication with school officers, teachers, and parents, a knowledge of existing defects, and desirable improvements in the administration of the system, and the government and instruction of the schools.

"6. To recommend the best text books, and secure, as far as practicable a uniformity, in the schools of at least every town; and to assist, when called upon, in the establishment of, and the selection of books for school libraries.

"7. To establish at least one Model School and Teacher's Institute in each county, and one thoroughly organized Normal School in the State, where Teachers, and such as propose to teach, may become acquainted with the most approved and successful methods of arranging the studies, and conducting the discipline and instruction of public schools.

"8. To appoint such and so many inspectors in each county, as he shall from time to time deem necessary, to examine all persons offering themselves as candidates for teaching public schools, and to visit, inspect, and report, concerning the public schools, under such instructions as said Commissioner may prescribe: *Provided*, that as far as practicable such inspectors shall be, or shall have been, experienced teachers, and shall serve without any allowance or compensation from the General Treasury.

"9. To grant certificates of qualification to such teachers as have been approved by one or more county inspectors, and shall give satisfactory evidence of their moral character, attainments, and ability to govern and instruct children.

"10. To enter, or cause to be entered, in proper books to be provided for the purpose in his office, all decisions, letters, orders of the Treasurer, and other acts as Commissioner of Public Schools; and to submit to the General Assembly at the October session, an annual report containing, together with an account of his own doings,—

"*First*.—A statement of the condition of the public schools, and the means of popular education generally in the state;

"*Second*.—Plans and suggestions for their improvement;

"*Third*.—Such other matters relating to the duties of his office, as he may deem useful and proper to communicate."

shall spend at least twenty weeks, each year, in visiting the different counties, delivering addresses, &c. He is to prepare blank forms for the schools, make an annual report, and perform other services incidental to so important an office.

"In the autumn session of 1845, the Legislature of Vermont reorganized its whole system. It adopted the general features of the system under which the State of New-York, within the last few years, has made so gratifying and astonishing advances in the career of improvement. The distinguishing feature of this system is, a provi-

sion for the appointment of a State Superintendent for the State, of one or more County Superintendents for each county, and of a Town Superintendent for each town.

"Thus five of the New England States are now zealously engaged in the promotion of a cause, from which posterity will receive ampler and more precious blessings, than if they were to inherit from their ancestors the richest mines of silver and gold, imbedded in a soil spontaneously teeming with the choicest productions of the earth."

It will thus be seen that two out of the six New-England States administer their school laws as other laws, without any general superintendence—their local and ancient social institutions not admitting of it; but that they have Boards of Education for limited and special purposes: while the other four States have adopted the system of the State of New-York in having a General Superintendent or Commissioner.

When it was determined to establish a Normal School for the State of New-York, the following provision was made for its management:—

"By chap. 311, Laws of 1844, the sum of \$9,600 is appropriated for the first year, and \$10,000 annually for five years thereafter, and until otherwise directed by law, for the establishment and support of a 'NORMAL SCHOOL for the instruction and practice of Teachers of Common Schools in the science of education and in the art of teaching.' This institution is required to be located in the county of Albany; and is to be under the supervision, management and direction of the Superintendent of Common Schools and the Regents of the University, who are authorized and required 'from time to time to make all needful rules and regulations; to fix the number and compensation of teachers and others to be employed therein: to prescribe the preliminary examination, and the terms and conditions on which pupils shall be received and instructed therein—the number of pupils from the respective cities and counties, conforming as nearly as may be to the ratio of population—to fix the location of the said school, and the terms and conditions on which the grounds and buildings therefor shall be rented, if the same shall not be provided by the corporation of Albany; and to provide in all things for the

good government and management of the said school.' They are required to appoint a board, consisting of five persons, including the Superintendent of Common Schools, who are to constitute an executive committee for the care, management and government of the school, under the rules prescribed by the Board of Regents. Such executive committee are to make full and detailed reports from time to time to the Superintendent and Regents, and among other things to recommend such rules and regulations as they may deem proper for said schools.

"The Superintendent and Regents are required annually to transmit to the Legislature an account of their proceedings and expenditures, together with a detailed report from the executive committee, relating to the progress, condition and prospects of the school.

"Executive Committee.—Hon. Samuel Young, State Superintendent, Rev. Alonzo Potter, D. D., Rev. Wm. H. Campbell, Gideon Hawley, and Francis Dwight, Esqrs."—*Mr. Randall's Digest of the Common School System of the State of New-York*, p. 335.

The *Regents of the University* are a body which have been in existence more than sixty years—their sixtieth annual report having been printed. They consist of the Governor, Lieut. Governor, and Secretary of State, *et officis*, and twenty other members, appointed for life; and have the visitation of all Colleges and Academies receiving aid from the State, and the appropriation of money for books, apparatus, and the aid of Colleges and Academies upon certain conditions; but have no connexion with the administration of the Common School law beyond the regulations and appointment of the Committee for the management of the State Normal School. It was after this example that the Board of Education for Upper Canada was constituted—giving the Superintendent of schools in Upper Canada less, and the Board more power, than in the State of New-York; the Committee there having nothing to do with school books, they being among the instructions of the Superintendent,—to whom also the annual reports of the Executive Committee are made, the Superintendent countersigning them and expressing his concurrence in them; nor are the Executive Committee or even Regents of the University authorised to do any thing in the administration of the Common School law, or even to give advice to the Superintendent if he should ask it. They were constituted for other purposes; and were no more constituted for the general administration of the school law, than was the Council of King's College at Toronto.

We have thus given the origin, constitution and objects of the State Boards and Committees of Education in the countries from which the Canadian school system has been derived. In every instance do those Boards include the Governor or responsible head of a department of each State in which they are established; in no instance are they connected with the general administration of the school law; in no instance are they invested with as large powers as have been conferred on the Board of Education for Upper Canada; and in every instance are the powers of the State Commissioner or State Superintendent of schools greater in the United States than those which have been conferred upon the Superintendent of schools for Upper Canada.

The inquiry may arise in the minds of some readers, why it is that in every free country, both European and American, both monarchical and republican, where a general system of elementary instruction has been established by legislative enactments, its administration has been placed in the hands of an individual head of a department, and in no instance in the hands of a Board or Committee? The answer is obvious, that the administration of a law by a Board is at variance with the practice of free governments in all their ordinary departments, and is the principle of irresponsible oligarchy, while the administration of it by a salaried head of a department is an essential element of the principle of practical responsibility. How can the principle of personal responsibility be applied to the acts of a Board? Is the Council Board of King's College, Toronto, responsible? Not only is personal responsibility divided, but it cannot be known what individual members have or have not been parties to particular acts: nor can any penalties be justly inflicted upon unsalaried persons for what is gratuitously performed. But an individual head of a department can be called upon to account for every thing that he does; and his acts can be arraigned before the Government or Legislature, and he be dismissed for any neglect of duty, or abuse, or improper exercise of power. Acting under a responsibility in which his character and prospects in life are involved, an individual will not only seek the best information from men and



books, but act with corresponding caution and energy. The only way to have this principle of effective responsibility applied to a Board, is to have each member of it the recipient of a salary—to require that its acts should be unanimous, and of course the attendance of its members unanimous, and that each member should be responsible for every act. This, however, would be a departure from the ordinary practice of responsible government by heads of departments—would greatly increase expense—would impede if not, in many instances, altogether obstruct the performance of administrative duties—would be a fruitful source of discord; while the dismissal of a number of men for an individual act would be attended with inconvenience in various respects.

The reason is, therefore, obvious why our successive administrations of Government since the Union of the Canadas, acting upon the principles of practical responsibility, have provided both in law and practice that the new department of elementary instruction should be administered as are other departments; and the nature of the case, as well as the practice of other countries, has suggested the propriety of the provision of the present School Act, in separating the department of elementary instruction from any political office, as had been done in Lower Canada, while the responsibility of it is greatly increased by the many additional and important duties attached to it.

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### CONVENIENT MODES OF PAYING THE SCHOOL FUND TO TEACHERS.

It has been objected that the payment of the School Fund by District Superintendents alone, is attended with inconvenience to Teachers. We have heard of this objection in but two or three Districts; and in every case it is, as a general rule, in the power of all parties concerned to pay the school money with even less inconvenience to the recipients, and certainly with much greater advantage to the Fund, than under the former system in which there were as many Treasurers and Paymasters as there were Townships. In such an army of officers there must be not only great expense, but, judging from the past, many delinquents, and not a few defaulters. In every such case, the Teacher is the loser; and inconvenience, if not loss, is inflicted upon School Trustees. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the great majority of Districts the present system, with all the inconvenience of its newness, is preferred to the former one. But there are two modes in which District Superintendents can pay School Moneys to Teachers with comparatively little inconvenience.

1. The School Fund is payable half-yearly; the Legislative Grant part of it payable in August—the Council Assessment part of it payable in December. We assume that every District Superintendent, for both safety and convenience, has his Banker. If then a Teacher enclose by letter, to the District Superintendent, an order from his Trustees for the money due their Section, the District Superintendent can enclose back a cheque upon his Banker for the amount of the order, and the cheque will be the same to the Teacher as a Bank Note for

the amount, and will be readily changed by any trader in the vicinity. When the District Superintendent balances his accounts with his Banker once in three or six months, he will receive back his cheques with the Bank endorsement upon them as having been paid; and in submitting his accounts to the Auditing Committee of the District Council, the orders of the Trustees will be his authority for paying the money, and the endorsed cheques will be his vouchers for having paid it. In that case the usual receipts from Teachers will not be necessary. In most of the Districts in Upper Canada, the Superintendent of Schools, during a recent tour, mentioned this mode of paying the School Fund to Teachers, and he was assured that, as a general rule, it would be a very convenient and satisfactory mode of paying school moneys; that to some Teachers in Townships remote, the District Superintendent was accustomed to enclose the money by mail, or by their authorised agents, when they did not call themselves; but that these were exceptions to the general rule. The general rule should, of course, be our guide, and not the exceptions.

2. There is, however, a more convenient and useful mode still of paying the School Fund to Teachers. Let the District Superintendent have a half-yearly School Lecture and School Teachers' Convention in each Township in his District; and at the same time let him pay the Teachers of such Township, (on their presenting the orders of their respective Trustees), the half-yearly instalment of the District School Fund.\* What an opportunity is thus presented for mutual consultation and advice—for devising means to improve the Schools—for exciting interest in Common School Education, and in the diffusion of useful Knowledge! It is by such means that the County Superintendents in the State of New-York have been instrumental, during the last five years, of changing the aspect of the schools, and even the character of the Teachers, and of elevating the public mind upon the great subject of Common School Education. This was stated in the last number of this Journal (under the head of "Office of District Superintendents") in an extract from the N. Y.

\* The Superintendent of Schools, during a late provincial tour, was informed by several District Superintendents that they had given public notice and visited each Township of their respective districts, at the time appointed, and paid the Teachers of such Township the amount due them from the first half-yearly instalment of the School Fund for 1847. This punctual and uniform mode of paying the school moneys, we are assured would be much preferred by Teachers and Trustees to the old mode of having the District School Fund parceled out to persons in the several Townships. The chief difference between the duties of District Superintendents under the new and old act is that by the new act they are required to distribute and pay the District School Fund to Sections instead of Townships;—(for the late act required District Superintendents to visit Schools as often as the present act:)—and for this difference District Councils have added considerably to their salaries—certainly not so much as should have been added; and for this additional allowance, it was, of course, expected that District Superintendents would render the present mode of paying school moneys as convenient to Teachers as the former mode. We believe District Superintendents have done so in the great majority of cases; and had it been done so in every instance, no objection could have been made to the provisions of the act on this point. But it requires a little time to bring even the most simple and best system into complete operation.

**State Superintendent's Report of 1844. The State Superintendent remarks in the same Report :—**

“Through frequent and periodical meetings of town and county associations of teachers and friends of education, the improvements adopted in any one school district, are made known to all; and the experience, observations and suggestions of each county superintendent communicated to all. By these means the streams of popular education, purified at its source, and relieved from many of its former obstructions, is dispensing its invigorating waters over a very large portion of the state.”

In the State of New-York each County Superintendent is required to visit all the schools under his charge twice in the year, and to make a report of both his *summer* and *winter* visitations. There should be no drone or idler among the overseers of our public education. The Provincial Superintendent is willing to work to the utmost of his strength and ability; and he wishes to see industry and energy characterise the supervision of our entire school system. Every District Superintendent should feel as if each child attending the Common Schools of his district were his own—as if each school were for the education of his own family—and that he is responsible to God and to the country, and even to future ages, for the moral, and, to a considerable extent, the intellectual character of each teacher, and, in no small degree, the efficiency of each school under his supervision. His heart, his powers, his best labours should be for the youth of his district, in the spirit of the noble Dinter—the devoted Prussian School Inspector—“I promised God that I would look upon every Prussian peasant child as a being who could complain of me before God, if I did not provide him the best education, as a man and a Christian, *which it was possible for me to provide.*” The following excellent observations of the Superintendent of Common Schools for the State of New-York, are as applicable to Upper Canada as to that State :—

“The correct and harmonious movements of the school machinery of this State depend to a very great extent upon the proper selection of local Superintendents. However judicious any system may be in theory, yet the perfection of its practical operation is graduated by the skill and ability of those to whose care is committed its administration. Among the various systems which might be devised, it would hardly be a figure of speech to pronounce that—

‘*Whate'er is best administered is best.*’

“The ability, zeal and singleness of purpose of any set of officers, even under an imperfect and disjointed system, might accomplish much good; and without these indispensable qualifications, the most simple and perfect organization would prove a failure.

“Hitherto the Supervisors [analogous to our District Councillors] have, with some few exceptions, appointed individuals as County Superintendents who were highly qualified for the station; and in

canvassing the State, it will be found that in all those counties where the most happy selections have been made, the popularity of the system is most firmly established. That these officers by a capable and zealous discharge of their duties, can confer benefits infinitely more valuable than their meagre compensation, begins to be understood; and it is fervently hoped that in every selection hereafter to be made, the most competent individual, without reference to sect or party, will be selected. On such a subject, where the good of their children is at stake, men should dismiss their narrow prejudices, and tear in sunder the shackles of party. They should consult only ‘the greatest good of the greatest number’ of the rising generation. They should direct their preferences to those only who are the ardent friends of youthful progress—to those only, the smoke of whose incense offered in this holy cause, daily ascends to heaven; and whose lips have been touched with a burning coal from the altar.”—*Annual Report of 1844, p. 24.*

## PROGRAMMES OF LECTURES IN THE NORMAL SCHOOL FOR UPPER CANADA.

Last month we made some remarks on this most important Institution, and observed that its success thus far had exceeded the expectations of its founders—the number of Students already exceeding *forty*. We may now add *fifty*; and several applicants for admission have been advised to defer entering the School until the commencement of the second or Summer Session,—which will be in May.

Arrangements have been completed for opening the MODEL SCHOOL on the 21st February; when the Students in the Normal School will have the additional advantage of witnessing examples and engaging in exercises of practical teaching—thus reducing to practice the instructions which they receive in the exercises and lectures of the Normal School. We may also remark, that a Music Master has been employed to teach the Normal School Students Hullah's System of Vocal Music.

In the mean time, we give the programmes of the Lectures which have been delivered since the commencement of the Normal School by Mr. ROBERTSON, the very able and most efficient Head Master, and by Mr. HIND, the excellent Mathematical Master and admirable Lecturer in Chemistry and Natural Philosophy. No person can reflect upon the course of instruction embraced in the following programmes of Lectures without being deeply impressed with the immense advantages which will be conferred upon Upper Canada by having its School Masters trained in the Provincial Normal School.

The HEAD MASTER devotes *five hours* per day to Lectures, according to the following programme :

Every morning, 9 to 10—Philosophy of Grammar, Parsing.

Three days in the week, 10 to 11—Geography; Mathematical, Physical, and Political.

The other two days, 10 to 11—Art of Reading.

Two days in the week, 11 to 12—Linear Drawing.

The other days, 11 to 12—Lessons on Reasoning.

Every day, 12 to 1—An *extra* hour devoted to the instruction of the Junior Class in Grammar and Mathematical Geography.

Three days in week, 2 to 3—History.

Two days in week, 2 to 3—Trigonometry, with a view to Land Surveying; occasionally, method of Teaching 1st Book of Lessons.

Saturday, 9 to 10½—Repetition.

Music—Mode of Teaching Writing—Writing from dictation—Exercises in Composition—Orthography—Derivations of Words—Philosophy of Education—Practice of Teaching, about to be commenced.

Mr. HIND devotes *four hours* per day to Lectures, besides preparing his experiments. He has delivered Lectures during the last three months on the following subjects :—

Geometry—Algebra—Science and Practice of Arithmetic.

Electricity, (including Machine and Galvanic Electricity, &c.)

Magnetism—Heat—Mechanics, (Statics.)

Agricultural Chemistry ; comprehending the nature of the substances which enter into the composition of Vegetables, the sources from which those substances are derived ; the origin and composition of soils ; the conditions necessary for producing a luxuriant vegetation, &c. &c.

The following Scheme affords an illustration of the time and subject of each Lecture during the period of one week :—

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, and FRIDAY.

2 to 3, P.M.—2nd Division, Geometry.

3 to 4, P.M.—1st and 2nd Division, Science and Practice of Arithmetic.

6 to 7, P.M.—do. do. Mechanics.

7 to 8, P.M.—do. do. Agricultural Chemistry.

TUESDAY and FRIDAY.

2 to 3, P.M.—2nd Division, Algebra.

3 to 4, P.M.—1st and 2nd Division, Geometry.

6 to 7, P.M.—do. do. Algebra.

7 to 8, P.M.—do. do. Agricultural Chemistry.

SATURDAY.

½ past 10 to 12—Repetition.

PROCEEDINGS OF DISTRICT COUNCILS.

HOME DISTRICT COUNCIL.

BUILDING SCHOOL-HOUSES—DIAGRAMS OF SCHOOL SECTIONS.

*Extracts from the first Report of the Standing Committee on Education.*

TO THE HOME DISTRICT COUNCIL.

“The standing Committee on Education beg to report upon the various petitions referred to them as follows :—Twenty-two of those petitions were applications to the Council, from the Trustees and others of their respective school sections ; praying the Council to assess the resident inhabitants, for the purpose of building School-

houses, which request has been complied with, and the sum of one hundred and seventy-three pounds eleven shillings and one penny half-penny has been ordered to be raised by taxing the applicants for that purpose. In addition to this the sum four hundred and fifty-five pounds loaned to five school sections in January 1847, for a like purpose, has been ordered to be raised by Assessments in order to reimburse the District for the money then advanced ; and the sum of two hundred and sixty-eight pounds eighteen shillings and seven pence

half-penny has been ordered to be paid, by the Treasurer, to such school sections where school-houses had been erected in anticipation of the funds to be derived from taxes now imposed.

"Your Committee beg to call the attention of the Council to the want of diagrams of each Township, showing its divisions into school sections, and the necessity that exists for the Clerk to be supplied with correct plans, without delay, as otherwise it will not be in his power to furnish the information required by the Assessors, to

enable them to make out the Rolls for school section Assessment.

"The Committee, therefore, recommends that a coloured diagram of each Township, exhibiting its divisions for school purposes, be furnished by the Councilors of the Township to the Clerk, as soon as the same can be prepared, together with a written description of the lots or parts of lots, composing the present sections, that the Assessors may be enabled to make correct returns of the persons being in them."

[Remarks by the Jour. of Ed.—It appears from the above extracts, that Petitions were presented to the Council for the imposition of taxes, to erect no less than twenty-two school-houses; and we understand the petitions for taxes to erect more than twice that number were presented at the next preceding session of the Council. These facts speak strongly in favour of the interest which the inhabitants of the Home District are beginning to take in their common schools. It is likewise gratifying to observe that the Council, in not only imposing taxes for the erection of school-houses, but also in having directed the District Treasurer to advance money in anticipation of their collection, has proceeded in an enlightened and patriotic spirit.

Around the walls of the Council-room of the Colborne District, the writer of these remarks observed, a few months since, coloured maps of the several Townships of the District, exhibiting the concessions, roads, &c., and diagrams of the school sections, and parts of sections, in each—the whole having been prepared with skill and taste by the indefatigable Clerk of the Council—Walter Sheridan, Esquire.]

[It is pleasing to observe from the minutes of the proceedings of the Home District Council, that the *three* improvements recommended in the following extracts of the second report of their Educational Committee have been sanctioned—the first to secure the payment of the school assessment before the end of the year—the second to prevent the alterations of school sections at another period than the beginning of each year—the third to impose an assessment for the entire salary of a Teacher in any school section the inhabitants of which, through the Trustees, may desire it. Should every District Council proceed in this manner, the advantages to our schools throughout Upper Canada would be incalculable.]

*Extracts from the second Report of the Committee on Education on Dr. Ryerson's Circular, &c. &c. &c.*

"The standing Committee on Education beg to report that they have had under their

serious consideration the various matters alluded to in the circular letter of the Superintendent of Common Schools. That in order to insure the receipt of the money applicable to the payment of Teachers within the year in which it is assessed, they have

submitted to the Council an amendment to By-Law No. 25, inflicting as a penalty upon Collectors not making their returns by the third Tuesday of December, in each and every year, the loss of one-half of their commission, a measure which they trust will produce the desired effect.

"The inconvenience, embarrassment, and trouble arising from alterations in the boundaries of school sections taking effect at any other period than the commencement of a year is so manifest, that your Committee have felt it necessary to draft a bill for its prevention, which is now submitted for the approbation of the Council. Your Committee also recommend that for the future in ordering assessments for school-houses, the locality of the school-house proposed to be erected should be designated in the By-Law authorizing such assessment.

"The most important question, however, in the opinion of your Committee, is that which arises from the plan proposed in the circular above alluded to, of supporting common school education according to

property, by empowering the Trustees to levy rate-bills on the rateable property of all residents in their school sections, instead of confining the charge to the parents or guardians of the children in attendance at the schools. The amount of money raised by rate-bills in 1845 and 6 as appears by the common school report for that year was £5,366 2s. 6d. Your Committee are not prepared to recommend raising so large a sum by assessment, neither can the Council confer the power on Trustees to enable them to levy by rate-bill on all the property in a school section, but the course your Committee deem advisable to pursue is to declare the willingness of the Council to assess the resident inhabitants of any school section for the payment of the Teacher's salary, &c., whenever an application for that purpose shall be made by the Trustees stating such to be the desire of a majority of the inhabitants in the section.

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

(Signed) W. GAMBLE,  
Chairman."

### GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL.

*Honourable Proceeding.*—We are glad to find the following recommendation, in the Auditor's Report presented on the 1st instant, to the Gore District Council:—"When arranging the assessment for school purposes, for the current year, we beg to suggest, that beyond the sum needed, with expenditures, a levy should be made for £311 6s. 2d., being the amount that the District School Fund is now in arrear, arising from the deficient levy of past years."

### COLBORNE DISTRICT COUNCIL—NATIONAL SCHOOL BOOKS.

Should all the District Councils in Upper Canada pursue the same course with the Council of the Colborne District, in respect to School Books, one of the most important improvements in Schools which any country has witnessed would soon take place in this Province. The following resolution was adopted at the recent session of this Council:—

"That the District Clerk be, and is hereby authorised to address a Circular to the Trustees of each School Section in the District, apprising them that the books of the 'National Board in Dublin,' are now procurable at several places in Peterbo-

rough and other parts of the District, and that the District Council have resolved to recommend, that, as the school books at present in use in the several schools, become worn out or lost, they be replaced by the National School books, and no others."

ON THE EXTENSION OF TRUSTEES' TERM OF OFFICE TO THREE YEARS.

The election of Trustees for School districts for a term of three years, in connexion with the annual election of one of their number, cannot fail to secure a much more efficient and systematic administration of the affairs of the several districts, than has heretofore been found practicable. The duties and responsibilities of this class of officers are important; and their intelligent performance requires experience, as well as public spirit. Great embarrassments have heretofore been experienced in relation to the pecuniary concerns of the districts, and the fulfilment of contracts with Teachers and others, arising from the frequent and entire change of Trustees, and the impracticability in money cases, on the part of new officers, of obtaining a satisfactory account of the affairs of the district from their predecessors; and not unfrequently, large amounts have been recovered by legal process against the former, on the unexecuted contracts of the latter, for which no indemnity, short of legislative provision, existed. Under the present system, ample time is afforded for the complete execution of all contracts entered into by the Trustees; and on the accession of a new officer, he will always find two colleagues intimately acquainted with the concerns of the district, and prepared to co-operate efficiently in the administration of its affairs. Every facility will thus be afforded for the systematic transaction of official business, and for the enlightened discharge of official duty.—*N. Y. State Superintendent's Annual Report of 1844, pp. 25, 26.*

UNIFORMITY OF THE TEXT BOOKS IN SCHOOLS.

It is believed that the period has now arrived when an earnest and systematic effort should be made, under the auspices of the Town and County Superintendents, to relieve our institutions of elementary instruction from the serious embarrassments resulting from the diversity and constant change of text books. The several County Superintendents are therefore enjoined to avail themselves of the earliest practicable opportunity to cause an uniform series of text books, embracing all the elementary works ordinarily used in the common schools, to be adopted in each of the districts subject to their supervision, under the direction and with the consent of the Trustees; and when so adopted, not to be changed for the term of three years. Whenever such uniformity can be extended throughout all the districts of the Town, and throughout all the Towns of the County, it is very desirable that such extension should be made; but from the great diversity of views in relation to the relative merit of different works, the progress of this extension must necessarily be slow. The foundations may, however, be laid by the attainment of uniformity in the respective districts, for an ultimate harmony of views and concert of action on a wider theatre.—*Official instructions of N. Y. State Superintendent of Schools, 1843.*

INTELLECT.—The only true source of happiness is that which springs from the intellect, because it is pleasure enjoyed by that faculty which is to live throughout eternity; and it is not certain whether our amount of happiness in the next world may not depend upon our intelligence and the cultivation of our talents in this, provided they are cultivated consistently with religion.



## MISCELLANEOUS.

**SELF-MADE MEN.**—Columbus was a weaver. Franklin was a journeyman printer. Massillon, as well as Flechier, arose amidst the humblest vocations. Niebühr was a peasant. Sextus V. was employed in keeping swine. Rollin was the son of a cutler. Ferguson, the great astronomer, and Hogg, the celebrated poet, well known as the Ettrick Shepherd, were both shepherds. Burns, the unsurpassed poetic genius of Scotland, was a ploughman. Ferguson, whose namesake is mentioned above, and who holds no mean place as one of the poets of Scotland, was an attorney's copying clerk; while Tannahill, also of the same country, a poet, surpassing perhaps Ferguson, was a weaver. Aesop was a slave. Homer was a beggar. Daniel Defoe was apprenticed to a hosier. Demosthenes was the son of a cutler. Hogarth an engraver of power pots. Virgil was the son of a baker. Gay was an apprentice to a silk mercer. Ben Jonson was a bricklayer. Porson was son of a parish clerk. Prideaux, was employed to sweep Exeter College. Akenside was the son of a butcher. Pope was the son of a merchant. Cervantes was a common soldier. Gifford and Bloomfield were shoemakers. Howard was apprenticed to a grocer. Halley was the son of a soap-boiler. Richard Arkwright was a barber for a number of years.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF RESOLUTION.**—“Resolution,” says a writer, “is omnipotent.” And if we will solemnly determine to make the most and best of all our powers and capacities; and if to this end, with Wilberforce, we will but ‘seize and improve even the shortest intervals of possible action and effort,’ we shall find that there is no limit to our advancement. Without this resolute and earnest purpose, the best aids and means are of little worth; but with it even the weakest are mighty. Without it we shall accomplish nothing—with it, every thing. A man who is deeply in earnest acts upon the motto of the pickaxe on the old seal: ‘Either I will find a way, or I will make one.’ He has somewhat the spirit of Bonaparte, who, when told on the eve of a battle circumstances were against him,

replied, ‘Circumstances! I make or control circumstances, not bow to them.’ In self-cultivation, as in every thing else, to think we are able is almost to be so; to resolve to attain, is often attainment. Every where are the means of progress, if we have but the spirit, the fixed purpose, to use them. And if, like the old philosopher, we will but take as our motto, ‘Higher—for ever higher!’ we may rise by them all. He that resolves upon any great end, by that very resolution has scaled the chief barrier to it; and he who seizes the grand idea of self-cultivation, and solemnly resolves upon it, he will find that idea, that resolution, burning like living fire within him, and ever putting him upon his own improvement. He will find it removing difficulties, searching out or making means, giving courage for despondency, and strength for weakness; and like the star in the east to the wise men of old, guiding him nearer and still nearer to the sun of all perfection. If we have but a fixed and resolute bend on self-improvement, we shall find means enough to it on every side, and at every moment; and even obstacles and opposition will make us like the fabled ‘spectreships which sail the fastest in the very teeth of the wind.’—*Self-Culture by Rev. Tyron Edwards.*

**THE CHEAP-DEAR SCHOOL.**—“Why, neighbour Simple,” said Mr. Farsight, one bright July morning, when Mr. Simple was mowing in a lot, where the grass stood so thinly, that the spires looked lonesome;—“why, you had a fine lot here, with a strong soil, but your blades of grass are so far apart that they might grow into hoop-holes and not crowd each other.” “Yes,” said Mr. Simple, “I’ve been thinking I was almost a fool, for I ought to have sowed a bushel of good hay-seed upon this piece, but the truth is, I bought only a peck, and so I scattered it about so much the thinner, and now I see I’ve lost a ton or two of hay by it.” “Well, don’t you think you was about as near being a fool when you voted against granting more money for sowing the seeds of knowledge in the minds of the children? Next year, where there is not grass here there will be weeds.”—*Com. Sch. Jour.*