

before the Council. It was even claimed that these very important bodies should, amongst them, have a majority of the Board elected from their ranks. He did not think it proper to go thus far, but he considered it reasonable as well as useful that they should be represented. He therefore proposed that High School Teachers should have one representative, Common School Teachers, one, and County Inspectors, one—these to be also elected every two years. He contended that every member should look upon this matter without party feeling or personal prejudice; and he was sure that the proposed changes would have the effect of adding largely to the public confidence with which the Council desired, and ought to desire, to be regarded, in so far as it could thus no longer be charged with being an irresponsible body, as it now is. The powers possessed by the Council could be exercised with more satisfaction to the public than they were by that body as at present composed. These powers he described as very large indeed, and he quoted the statute which named these powers in proof of the assertion. These powers had been in the possession of the Council for a considerable time, and even supposing that they had done their very best to exercise them in a manner which would tend to the efficiency of the schools, it was manifest that a great deal of dissatisfaction had arisen in the country regarding it. It was, therefore, necessary to devise some method by which increased confidence should be established in the public mind regarding its mode of doing its work, and the amenity to public opinion of its members. With regard to the question of books, he asserted that for a long time there had been a strong opinion in various parts of the country that the Depository should be abolished altogether, and that the purchase of books should be free—and not only of books, but of maps for school purposes. It appeared, from the evidence which had been laid before him, that there was considerable difference of opinion as to the expediency of entirely abolishing the Depository. On the other side of the line it had been found that many books had been put into the hands of children which it was not proper they should have had, and that this was largely the result of the unrestrained efforts of book canvassers to dispose of their goods in that way. It was justly argued that it was not right that public funds should contribute to placing improper literature in the hands of children, or in the Public School libraries. His object had been to find some way by which the purchase of books should be thrown open to the trade, and at the same time the danger arising out of the introduction of questionable books prevented. What he proposed was that the books to be purchased should be confined to those named in the catalogues of the Council of Public Instruction, and that the purchase might be made from any bookseller the corporation purchasing may choose to deal with. There was no reasonable objection that could be made to that arrangement. He did not know why the Depository should be retained, except as a means of enabling the public to make suitable purchases as cheaply as possible. It was not retained for the purpose of creating offices for those connected with it, nor yet for the purpose of making money out of its transactions. As a matter of fact if they opened the business transacted through the depository to public competition, they would be doing that which must inevitably tend to lower the price at which the article could be purchased. In order to effect a sale, of course a bookseller would offer the corporation such books as they required as cheaply as he could, and in order to make as much by his business as possible, he would, in the ordinary course of things, endeavour to make these sales as large, and extending over as wide a portion of the country, as possible. In this way he was acting in a manner as an agent for extending the use of books—the very purpose which it was presumed the Depository had in view. They would thus have the agency of the Government and that of the whole trade throughout the country engaged in accomplishing their common purpose. Of course it was desired to induce trustees to have good libraries in every section, and make them do what they possibly could to induce a taste for reading amongst the people. There were now settled agencies for that purpose, and by the plan proposed these agencies could be much more useful, while no evil could arise from the furnishing of the books being open to the trade so long as the Council of Public Instruction controlled the character of the books to be purchased. It really surprised him how very little had been done in this

matter of libraries throughout the country. From the report of the chief Superintendent, he learned that the expenditure for public school library books was only \$4,421 for the year to which the report referred. The amount for prize books was, of course, much larger. That amount for libraries, however, was a mere bagatelle as compared to the expenditure which one would have expected to find under that head. It astonished him, considering the large number of our public schools, that there was so little done in that particular department; but it would be found that there would be a great increase if the Bill which he asked the House to pass became law. These were some of the principal objects of the Bill; and he would briefly go over some of the other more important clauses, and state why he thought such provisions as he proposed would improve the Education Department and receive the sanction of the House and the country. There had always been a difficulty in maintaining our High Schools in many parts of the Province in a state of efficiency, and there had been a strong pressure brought to bear by those who took an interest in them to obtain a larger measure of public assistance for them. Very many strongly urged that the whole of every county should form part of some High School district, and should be subject to taxation for the support of that school in an efficient state. This was felt to be discretionary on the part of County Councils, who generally limited it to the town or village in which the school was situated. Thus limited, the schools could not of course be kept in a desirable state of efficiency. He thought we ought to regard High Schools as essential to our school system. The Public Schools of course had a much larger attendance, and the greater portion of the people necessarily received their education in them; but it would be a neglect of duty to forget that our High Schools should receive a share of our attention, and should be put upon a footing worthy of the country, in order to enable them to discharge the work assigned to them properly. He felt strongly the objection that might be raised by the people in the rural districts to being taxed in the way it would be necessary to tax every part of the county in which the school was situated, if they were to discharge its functions satisfactorily. At the same time they ought to remember that every person in the county had to contribute equally to the support of Public Schools, whether he derived any benefit from them or not, and he thought if the principle was good in one case, it was equally good in the other. People were taxed for Public Schools whether they were resident or not, and whether they had children attending them or not. It was a narrow view to take of the matter to refuse to contribute to the maintenance of High Schools because no direct personal benefit was derived from them. We were now engaged in founding a nationality, and he hoped that we should not show any feeling which would be so dangerous to its prosperity as an unwillingness to contribute to what was undoubtedly a great national benefit, whether we derived it directly or indirectly. A good deal of difficulty had always been experienced in consequence of the demand for a preparatory class in High Schools, and notwithstanding that the law was against it, there were as a matter of fact, such classes in all High Schools. It was apparently impossible to prevent them, and he thought they might as well accept that state of matters, and make arrangements accordingly. He proposed to do so by a provision in the 25th clause of the Act. These schools would receive a certain amount of assistance from the Government, a corresponding amount would have to be furnished by the county, and the remainder would be provided by the district to which the County Council might assign the school. He proposed that all pupils in the county should be at liberty, as they were under the present law, to attend the High School, although they