CHAPTER 56.

An Act to make further provision for assisting Education in Public Elementary Schools in England and Wales.

[5th August 1891.]

BE it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Fee grant and conditions thereof.

1.—(1.) After the commencement of this Act, there shall be paid, out of moneys provided by Parliament, and at such times and in such manner as may be determined by regulations of the Education Department, a grant (in this Act called a fee grant) in aid of the cost of elementary education in England and Wales at the rate of ten shillings a year for each child of the number of children over three and under fifteen years of age in average attendance at any public elementary school in England and Wales (not being an evening school) the managers of which are willing to receive the same, and in which the Education Department are satisfied that the regulations as to fees are in accordance with the conditions in this Act.

(2.) If in any case there is a failure to comply with any of the conditions in this Act, and the Education Department are satisfied that there was a reasonable excuse for the failure, the Department may pay the fee grant, but in that case shall, if the amount received from fees has exceeded the amount allowed by this Act, make a deduction from the fee grant equal to that excess.

(3.) For the purposes of section nineteen of the Elementary Education Act, 1876, the fee grant paid or payable to a school shall be reckoned as school pence to be met by the grant payable by the Education Department.

Limit of fees in schools receiving fee grant.

2.—(1.) In any school receiving the fee grant—

(*a.*) Where the average rate of fees received during the school year ended last before the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and ninety-one was not in excess of ten shillings a year for each child of the number of children in average attendance at the school; or

(*b.*) For which an annual parliamentary grant has not fallen due before the said first day of January;

no fee shall, except as by this Act provided, be charged for children over three and under fifteen years of age.

(2.) In any school receiving the fee grant where the said average rate was so in excess, the fees to be charged for children over three and under fifteen years of age shall not, except as by this Act provided, be such as to make the average rate of fees for all such children exceed for any school year the amount of the said excess.

Prohibition of charges in certain schools receiving fee grant.

3. In any school receiving the fee grant, where the average rate charged and received in respect of fees and books, and for other purposes, during the school year ended last before the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and ninety-one, was not in excess of ten shillings a year for each child of the number of

children in average attendance at the school, no charge of any kind shall be made for any child over three and under fifteen years of age.

Power to modify limit of fees in certain cases.

4.—(1.) Notwithstanding anything herein-before contained, the Education Department, if they are satisfied that sufficient public school accommodation, without payment of fees, has been provided for a school district, and that the charge of school fees or the increase of school fees for children over three and under fifteen years of age in any particular school receiving the fee grant is required owing to a change of population in the district, or will be for the educational benefit of the district, or any part of the district, may from time to time approve such charge or increase of fees in that school, provided that the ordinary fee for such children shall not exceed sixpence a week.

(2.) The Education Department shall report annually to Parliament all cases in which they have sanctioned or refused the imposition or augmentation of fees under this section, with a statement of the amount of fee permitted.

(3.) The Education Department may, if they think fit, make it an express condition of such approval that the amount received for any school year from the fees so charged or increased, or a specified portion of that amount, shall be taken in reduction of the fee grant which would otherwise have been payable for that school year, and in that case the fee grant shall be reduced accordingly.

Provision for free school accommodation.

5. If at any time after the expiration of one year from the commencement of this Act it is represented to the Education Department that there is in any school district, or any part of a school district, an insufficient amount of public school accommodation without payment of fees for children over three and under fifteen years of age, for whom such accommodation is desired, and the Education Department are satisfied after inquiry that such is the case, the Department shall direct the deficiency to be supplied in the manner provided by sections nine and ten of the Elementary Education Act, 1870, and every other section enabling them in that behalf, with respect to the supply of public school accommodation; and the expression "public school accommodation" in that Act shall include public school accommodation without payment of fees.

Provided that whenever and so long as any deficiency in such last-mentioned public school accommodation in any district is in course of being supplied with due despatch, no requisition or order shall be issued in that behalf by the Education Department.

Power to contribute from fee grant to common school fund.

6. The managers of two or more public elementary schools in the same or neighbouring school districts, not being schools provided by a school board, may pay the fee grant, or part thereof, received by each school into a common fund for distribution, as may be arranged by them, between or among such schools.

Provided that the fee grant received by each school in the first instance shall alone count as income of such school for the purposes of this Act and of section nineteen of the Elementary Education Act, 1876, and a contribution to a school from any such common fund shall not be reckoned as income of such school from other sources within the said section nineteen.

Grouping of schools.

7. Where the managers of two or more public elementary schools in the same or neighbouring school districts agree to associate and elect a committee for the schools, any surplus income on the accounts for the school year of any of the associated schools may be paid into a common fund, out of which contributions may be made to any of the other associated schools; but the contributions received by any such school shall not be counted as income from other sources for the purpose of section nineteen of the Elementary Education Act, 1876, so that no addition to the public charge may result from this section taken in conjunction with the said section nineteen. Provided that no board school shall under this section be associated with any public elementary school other than a board school.

Explanation of 33 & 34 Vict. c. 75. s. 17.

8. Nothing in section seventeen of the Elementary Education Act, 1870, shall prevent a school board from admitting scholars to any school provided by the board without requiring any fee.

Provision for equality of treatment.

9. Nothing in this Act shall give any preference or advantage to any school on the ground that it is or is not provided by a school board.

Meaning of "school year" and "average attendance."

10. In this Act the expression "school year" shall mean a year or other period for which an annual parliamentary grant is for the time being paid or payable under the minutes of the Education Department; and the expression "average attendance" shall, for the purposes of the fee grant, mean average attendance calculated in accordance with the minutes in force at the commencement of this Act.

Repeal.

11. The Acts mentioned in the schedule to this Act are hereby repealed to the extent mentioned in the third column of that schedule.

Commencement of Act.

12. This Act shall come into operation on the first day of September one thousand eight hundred and ninety-one.

Short title and construction.

13.—(1.) This Act may be cited as the Elementary Education Act, 1891, and shall be construed as one with the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1890.

(2.) The Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1890, and this Act, may be cited collectively as the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1891.

SCHEDULE.

ENACTMENTS REPEALED.

Session and Chapter.	Short Title.	Extent of Repeal.
33 & 34 Vict. c. 75. -	The Elementary Education Act, 1870.	Section twenty-six.
39 & 40 Vict. c. 79. -	e Elementary Education Act, Th 876. 1	Section eighteen.