

A Century of Progress — Educationally and Otherwise.

PERHAPS in the initial years of the century it would not be amiss to glance over the past and see where we have been drifting — educationally and otherwise. At the beginning of the last century the population of this Province consisted of about five thousand souls, and a few Dutchmen. In Charlottetown there were only fifty families or three hundred people. Not much seems to have been done in regard to education until 1821, when the National School was opened, and in 1829 the Central Academy was established.

According to the first report of the first official Inspector of Schools, published in 1837, we find that there were 52 schools and 1649 scholars. This report gives a graphic description of the educational condition of the country at that time. The inhabitants were poor, and, having to struggle with numerous difficulties in procuring the means of subsistence for their families, the education of their children was with them a matter of secondary importance. However beautiful other things might be, the stomach naturally came first. Poets might sing of the heart, philosophers crown the mind, and preachers deify the soul, but the empty stomach would paralyse them all. And even when the people turned their attention to education, they were not very scrupulous in the selection of their teachers, —satisfying themselves with the common idea that it was better to have any teacher than none at all. Hence it frequently happened that it was only persons of shipwrecked character and blasted prospects in life, after every other resource had failed them, who took up the important office of schoolmaster. Sometimes a man, too proud to beg, too up-