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THE ROYAL COMMISSION CLOSES LOCAL SESSIONS

Continued from Page One

for 23 years. He taught school 23 years. He did not think the schools were accomplishing what they might, though they did good work. He thought there was great need of continuation schools for the benefit of those who were obliged to go to work at an early age even among the farming class. He thought the public schools should be open in the evening to give instruction to older people calculated to enable them to become more efficient industrially.

The law making attendance compulsory up to 14 years should be better enforced. Many young people left school with a very deficient education and it was desirable that they be given opportunity to continue their education and get instruction in the technical trades. In Germany, he believed attendance at the continuation schools was compulsory.

He thought the classical tendency had exercised too much influence upon the course of instruction. Seven out of every eight boys who attended the public school entered mechanical pursuits. In the last 10 years there had been a great modification of the practice in the schools of New Brunswick, tending towards industrial training.

The Free Public Library. Miss Catherine Martin, of the public library, said there was a growing demand for books on industrial subjects. She was interested in industrial education, but found that most people did not care to study the technique of their own trade.

The library would be glad to co-operate in the way of providing supplementary reading for students of a technical school.

Miss Martin suggested that it would be a good plan for the merchants of the city to send their old technical magazines to the library.

In reply to Mr. Simpson witness said the trades and labor council of St. John had never been asked to select books. She thought it would be a good plan to do so.

Manual Training.

Hedley B. Hayes, principal of the manual training school, said the boys in this department showed great interest, often asking to be permitted to

stop overtime to continue their work. He did not know that employers were specially desirous of securing the services of graduates from the school. The school authorities did not run an employment bureau. Witness did not know the effect of manual training upon the progress of boys in other studies. But he thought it was a help to them when they went to work.

Mr. Simpson—"Do you keep track of the boys that pass through your hands?"

Witness kept no record. Mr. Simpson said trade unions had opposed manual training because they thought it would turn out batch carpenters, who took the places of regular journeymen. But in Toronto he had modified their attitude because investigation showed that only half a dozen boys from the manual training school had taken up the trade of carpentering.

Mechanics interested. W. Frank Hatheway said that he had found a general interest on the part of mechanics, but not of the employers, in the question of technical education. He thought the older workmen particularly would avail themselves of night schools, but he did not favor compulsory attendance.

Mr. Hatheway said he found a general opinion among workmen that instruction in arithmetic, drawing, and subjects of a technical tendency had proved most useful to them. He thought the courses were being broadened along technical lines.

To Mr. Simpson he said children should be taught the ways of wealth production and the mode of distribution of social products. The history of Caesar was probably not as instructive as the history of Rockefeller at the present time.

Superintendent Bridges.

Dr. Bridges, the superintendent of schools, was next examined. He said the school population of St. John was less than that of Halifax. Night schools had been conducted here for some years, but when they were asked to do hard work the students usually quit.

The superintendent thought manual training had great educational value. It had helped to stimulate the intelli-

gence of the pupils and make them more proficient in other subjects.

Prof. Robertson—"Don't boys from 14 to 17 fall back if they have left schools?"

They lose the power of application. If they could attend night school for two nights in the week it would keep their mental machinery in fair order, and benefit to the boy in this way as well as tend to increase his industrial efficiency.

He could not say off hand what would be the most efficacious means of interesting young people in night schools. Much would depend on the instructor, and the curriculum. If a technical college was established in the province he thought it would be admirable to modify the high school course, or introduce optional courses, designed to qualify the pupil to proceed to the technical college, rather than to the university.

The Evening Session. At the evening session of the royal commission, a good deal of evidence was brought out by Mr. McKinney, president of the typographical union, and Wm. McGorman raised a number of important points.

Wm. McGorman was the first witness. To Prof. Robertson he said he worked in a large blacksmith establishment, the principal business of which was making and repairing machines. He served no regular apprenticeship. At present young men entered the shop and picked up the trade as best they could. A smart man could command journeyman's wages in from three to five years.

Witness attended night school in St. John. Special training on drawing connected with his trade would benefit young men. He thought boys would attend a technical school.

To Mr. Simpson he said the trade had undergone important changes, but special skill was required today as much as formerly. Many machines had been introduced. Many machines done away with the need of skilled labor in some cases. But men required more technical knowledge to make or repair machines because they were bigger and more complicated. At present there were no facilities for getting this technical knowledge outside of the shops.

Arithmetic Important.

In his trade men needed a thorough knowledge of arithmetic, free hand drawing and a working knowledge of chemistry. Witness had taken a partial course in one of the correspondence schools. He thought these schools were not specially valuable because the courses of instruction did not bear on their practical work. Many young men could not get the full advantage of the correspondence schools because their common school education did not go far enough.

A Tinmith Examined. Edward Evans, a tinmith, said he worked in jobbing shops. There was no system of apprenticeship in the trade. Good journeymen tinmiths were not common in St. John. He did not think the parents or employers impressed the necessity of learning a trade thoroughly upon boys. He did not know whether this was interior to fact that boys were more independent of their parents today than formerly.

Witness had to buy books and pick up his trade as best he could. His first took a great interest in the work of the manual training school—more than in the ordinary courses. To Mr. Simpson he said his branch of the trade was different from that of the general factory tinmith. Men specialized in cornice work, etc. He thought instruction in drawing would be valuable to a tinmith. A technical school teaching house construction so that the boy could get ideas to apply to his work. Boys get discouraged now because nobody took any interest in teaching them.

Continuing he expressed the opinion that an increase in the number of skilled men would not have a tendency to lower wages. There wasn't a surplus of proficient workmen, or likely to be for some time.

Major J. J. Gordon.

Major J. J. Gordon said he was trying to make wire nails. He was employed about 7 men, half the number he had some years ago. He found skilled workmen scarce. The more intelligent the workmen, the more he could afford to pay them. Young men needed better education, but he did not think they would care to attend night schools.

Boys did not show enough earnestness and ambition and were not sufficiently amenable to discipline. He thought this was the fault of the parents, the teachers and the school trustees. Obedience was a matter of training, but rewards and punishments were not necessary to obtain obedience.

Witness said grown men were usually ready to teach boys who wanted to know, but they wouldn't waste time over indifferent boys. He thought they should return to the old apprenticeship system, and that the school system should be overhauled by men more concerned to receive practical knowledge than to get show results.

Edward Stephenson said he was in the machinist business doing repair work principally. While getting his training he was a great reader of trade journals and engineering handbooks. He thought one boy out of three would be glad of an opportunity to attend a night school.

Interested in Social Conditions. F. Hyatt, longshoreman, was the next witness. In summer men in his trade might work one week and loaf three.

Witness said he was principally interested in social conditions. They should first find out whether school children were well fed before trying to teach them.

Prof. Robertson—"In what city in Canada have you seen children underfed?"

After some discussion witness said this was in Calgary when during the last panic 2000 people were out of employment there, and the mayor was opening soup kitchens, and the witnesses who had come before the commission.

Q—"What is your trade?" A—"At one time the government was teaching me the trade of killing. I was a soldier for 12 years, serving in India."

Witness said the opportunities for the workingman to improve his education in St. John were limited. The public reference library was not open long enough in the evenings for workers to take advantage of it. He thought the library should be kept open on Sundays.

In closing the meetings here Prof. Robertson thanked the city authorities, the board of trade, and the witnesses who had come before the commission.

Notes. After the examination of Dr. G. U. Hay, Prof. Robertson, of the royal commission, took occasion to remark that in his efforts to arouse interest in agriculture education, he had found a valuable ally in Dr. Hay and

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