

and ears open cannot help learning many things that confirm opinions previously held, and suggest improvements on what he may have thought perfect or the necessity of revising his former judgments. He gets new points of view, and that of itself is a great matter."

Our American neighbors became fully alive years ago to the evils of the fluctuating and uncertain character of the prevailing system of educational administration in vogue amongst them. They saw that new and officially untrained men, of merely local experience and knowledge, were constantly being elected to take charge of the administrative department of the schools of a state. Such men were often able educators, but by no means experienced educationists, or masters of systems of education. The American people, shrewd and practical as they are, felt the absolute necessity, therefore, of furnishing such men, and the vast army of their educationists and educators, with full and accurate information on systems and plans of education all over the world. With this object in view, they established a central observatory, or Bureau of Education at Washington. I need hardly say how ably the work of this Bureau was systematized and most efficiently performed under the direction of the Hon. John Eaton, Commissioner of Education. His successive reports and periodical Circulars of Information are mines of educational wealth. Their fulness and comprehensiveness have been a marvel. They have aroused and stimulated educational workers everywhere. They are largely welcomed, and are highly prized in these Provinces and elsewhere, as suggestive, and as invaluable storehouses of information, and of the practical details of education all over the world. They have, therefore, largely supplied the place of personal inquiry and research, and yet have greatly stimulated both.

It was Dr. Ryerson's ideal that sooner or later a similar Bureau would be established by the central government at Ottawa, the object of which would be, not only the supplying of abundant and reliable information to each province on the subject of systems and plans of education, but also, by intercommunication, to secure a general harmony of aim and purpose. And that further, without attempting any interference in local administration, the Bureau would be the means of keeping up an active yet friendly intercolonial rivalry; and thus, on Dominion and national lines, to build up the confederacy, and to stimulate and encourage the efforts made in each province for the promotion of substantial educational progress, combined with efficiency and economy.

It is not my purpose to do more on this occasion than to give a *résumé* of a somewhat elaborate paper (which I have prepared for this occasion), on the early origin and subsequent growth of public education in Ontario. My synopsis of that paper will be chiefly confined to that part—omitting biographical references—which treats of the labors of that distinguished Canadian which Ontario honours to-day in the person of the Rev. Dr. Ryerson.