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**LORD ELGIN'S REPORT TO THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT ON THE STATE OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN CANADA.**

From an admirable and comprehensive report, addressed to the Colonial Secretary by the Earl of Elgin in December last, on the state of the Province, we select those portions relating to the progress of education. His Excellency did not, in his report, confine himself to a mere expression of opinion upon a few leading topics, but has with great skill constructed a valuable statistical paper for future reference relating to the state and progress of Canada during his administration of its affairs. His remarks and statistics extend to a period of seven years, (from 1847 to 1854), and relate to our commercial transactions: imports and exports, shipping, revenue and expenditure, emigration, public lands, municipalities, railways, education, Indian tribes, fisheries, defences, and general system of government. In regard to the progress of education in Upper Canada, Lord Elgin remarks:—

I extract from a general statistical abstract compiled from returns in the educational department for Upper Canada, some interesting details with respect to the comparative state of education in Upper Canada in the years from 1847 to 1853, inclusive. In the former of these years the normal school, which may be considered the foundation of the system, was in-

stituted, and at the close of the latter, the first volume issued from the educational department to the public school libraries, which are its crown and completion. If it may be affirmed of reciprocity with the United States, that it introduces a new era in the commercial history of the province; so may it I think be said of the latter measure, that it introduces a new era in its educational and intellectual history. The subject is so important that I must beg leave to say a few words upon it before proceeding to other matters. In order to prevent misapprehension, however, I may observe that the term school libraries does not imply that the libraries in question are specially designed for the benefit of common school pupils. They are in point of fact, public libraries intended for the use of the general population; and they are entitled school libraries because their establishment has been provided for in the School Acts, and their management confided to the school authorities.

Public school libraries then, similar to those which are now being introduced into Canada, have been in operation for several years in some states of the neighbouring Union, and many of the most valuable features of the Canadian system have been borrowed from them. In most of the states, however, which have appropriated funds for library purposes, the selection of the books has been left to the trustees appointed by the different districts, many of whom are ill qualified for the task, and the consequence has been that the travelling pedlars, who offer the most showy books at the lowest prices, have had the principal share in furnishing the libraries. In introducing the system into Canada, precautions have been taken, which I trust, will have the effect of obviating this great evil.

In the School Act of 1850, which first set apart a sum of money for the establishment and support of school libraries, it is declared to be the duty of the chief superintendent of education to apportion the sum granted for this purpose by the legislature under the following condition, "That no aid should be given towards the establishment and support of any school library unless an equal amount be contributed or expended from local sources for the same object;" and the council of public instruction is required to examine, and at its discretion to recommend or disapprove of text books for the use of schools or books for school libraries. "Provided that no portion of the legislative school grant shall be applied in aid of any school in which any book is used that has been disapproved of by the council, and public notice given of such disapproval."