

Governor-General Lord Dorchester (Sir Guy Carleton), in which, lamenting the educational privations which they had endured since their settlement in Canada, they prayed the Governor to establish a "seminary of learning" at Frontenac (Kingston). Their prayer was granted, so far as the setting apart of lands for the support of the seminary was concerned, as well as the support of schools wherever the expatriated colonists had settled, or might settle, in the country.

Immediately after the passing of the Constitutional or Quebec Act, of 1791, by which, among other things, Upper Canada was separated from Quebec, the Governor of the new Province (J. Graves Simcoe), sought the co-operation of the Church of England Bishop (Mountain), of Quebec, who had ecclesiastical jurisdiction over both Provinces, in urging upon the Home Government the necessity of providing for a University and for classical schools in Upper Canada. Provision for elementary schools formed no part of this scheme. The British Colonial idea of providing for such schools never crossed the mind of the Governor nor of the Bishop. They were filled with the old-fashioned English ideas of those times—that the systematic education of the masses was unnecessary, as it might tend to revolution, and the upsetting of the established order of things.

As the years passed on, nothing practically was done by the Legislature for the promotion of education until 1809, when a few district grammar schools were established. Subsequently, Rev. Dr. Strachan became a Master of one of these schools, and Rev. George Ryerson and his brother Egerton, Master and Usher of another. Seven years afterwards (in 1816), an attempt was made to establish a system of common schools, and to provide for their maintenance. For the first three years, the parliamentary grant was \$24,000 per annum, but, in 1820 the old-fashioned ideas again asserted themselves, and it was suddenly reduced to \$10,000 a year—closing up schools here and there, all over the province, and inflicting grievous hardship on many worthy, and (in the scornful language of the day, and even of the parliamentary report) many unworthy teachers also.

For 20 years—from 1816 to 1836—spasmodic efforts were made from time to time by progressive and earnest men in the Legislature to establish a system of schools. Enquiries were instituted and reports made, chiefly but not wholly, by the House of Assembly. A vigorous contest was maintained between that body and the Legislative Council on the subject. Bills were passed by the Assembly and rejected by the Council. The contest continued until the Rebellion occurred, and this event turned all men's thoughts into another channel for the time.

As to the state of education in the Province prior to this date, a Report of the House of Assembly, in 1831, states that—