

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

The Educational progress of the Province of Ontario (formerly Upper Canada) was at first of very slow growth.

Nearly eighty years ago an unsuccessful attempt was made to endow out of public lands a grammar school in each of the four districts into which the Province was then divided, and a central University at York (now Toronto). But the sale of these lands was so slow, and the price per acre obtained for them was so small, that the revenue derived from this source barely defrayed the cost of management.

In 1807 the first legislative enactment was passed, establishing a classical and mathematical school in each of the eight districts into which Upper Canada was then divided. A grant out of the public revenue of £80 sterling (\$400) a year was made to each of these schools. That established at Cornwall (on the river St. Lawrence), under the mastership of Rev. John Strachan—afterwards Arch-deacon of York, and subsequently the first Bishop of Toronto—was the most efficient; and at it were educated most of the prominent public men of after years.

In 1816—nine years after the establishment of the grammar schools—the Legislature of Upper Canada passed the first common, or elementary, school law for that Province. It appropriated \$24,000 or nearly £5,000 sterling per annum for the support of the schools to be established; and provided for the management of these schools by trustees elected by the inhabitants in the localities concerned. In 1820 a retrograde movement took place, and the annual grant of \$24,000 was reduced to \$10,000 or about £2,000 sterling.