

**TERMS OF PUBLICATION**  
 The Subscription price for one Year in Advance is \$1.00. Single Copies, 5 CENTS.  
 Foreign Postage, 25 CENTS. Payment in Advance.  
 The Subscription price for one Year in Advance is \$1.00. Single Copies, 5 CENTS.  
 Foreign Postage, 25 CENTS. Payment in Advance.



**OFFICES: 253 ST. JAMES ST. MONTREAL, Que.**  
 Remittances may be by Bank cheque, Post-office money order, Express money order, or by Registered letter. We are not responsible for money lost through the mail.

**VOL. XLVI. NO. 20.**

**MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1896.**

**PRICE FIVE CENTS.**

# OUR PROVINCE NOBLY DEFENDED.

An Able Exposition of the History of Educational Work and Legislation in the Province of Quebec since the Opening of the Century, by the Hon. Gedeon Ouimet.

A POLICY CHARACTERIZED BY A TRUE SPIRIT OF PATRIOTISM.

The Position of Absolute Freedom which the Protestant Minority Enjoys in the Midst of an Overwhelming Catholic Majority. Some Interesting Reminiscences of the Motives of the Founders of the Royal Institution.

FACTS FOR THE OPPONENTS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

Striking Statistics Showing the School Attendance and Qualifications of Teachers—Some Practical Advice to the Enemies of Denominational Schools.

**T**HE Honorable Gedeon Ouimet delivered, a few days ago, a very important address in the Legislative Council, on the education system in the Province of Quebec. Coming as it did from the former Superintendent of Public Instruction, who is the greatest living authority on the subject, his remarks will doubtless be read with special interest at the present juncture. We therefore give a translation of his speech in full. The Hon. Mr. Ouimet spoke as follows:—

It is well known that at the time of the establishment of this colony the immigrants who came to our country were French. They were endowed with a primary education which was remarkable, and which has not only been continued, but has progressed from year to year. Yes; it is an attested fact that education here, whether scientific, moral, or religious, has always followed an ascending progression—this education, which is the art given by the Creator to develop the intellect of youth, so that they may adore their God, honor their family, and serve their country. I have said that, in the early days of the colony, one of the finest gems in the crown of France, those who came here were endowed with a remarkable primary education. But it is necessary for me to remind you also of the innumerable difficulties which the first arrivals in this country had to overcome? No; you are all aware of them. You all remember what brave efforts they put forth to colonize the country and to civilize the savage population that surrounded them. In spite of these difficulties they never for one moment paused in their work of advancing education; and the progress they made was continual until the time when the French regime had to be abandoned, the regime which had given us our strength. Everybody knows that at that epoch the largest portion of the educated class, with the exception of the clergy, quitted New France to return to their old motherland.

**Early Drawbacks.**  
 This desertion of the colony by the educated and well-to-do people was a great drawback to the colony. There was still left to us, however, a sufficiently strong band of devoted men to carry on the work of civilization and education. After the session a new struggle under favorable auspices lay before our forefathers. But the aspect of the situation soon changed. As the conquerors did not share the fate of the conquered, our ancestors had to fight for the preservation of their language and their religion and for the maintenance of their institutions. Before the session the foundation had been laid of a school system which, if it had been completed, would have largely developed the education of the young colony. In Mgr. Laval's own time efforts had been made to establish normal schools, primary schools and other institutions. But when the conquest came it was sought to set up a new school system; and this gave rise to a new struggle, which slowly died out. I shall not speak of the law of 1763, which decreed the establishment of universities. In 1801 the British government created

**The Royal Institution**  
 for the Province of Quebec. This was a system of Protestant elementary schools, which the Catholics rightly rejected. The promoters of the system were perhaps actuated by good motives in regard to us, but it was evident that they wanted to Anglicize us and change our religion. I do not say that they committed a crime; but they should not have expected that our forefathers would

accept a measure which was so inimical to their religious belief. After twenty-eight years of existence this law fell into desuetude.

**The Troubles of 1837.**  
 We now reach another animated epoch in the history of our Province. In 1829 we obtained "les écoles de fabriques," which produced marked results. These schools were frequented by 60,000 pupils, and the grants given to the French schools reached the vicinity of \$100,000. All the schools were under the charge of male and female teachers. There were, besides, a large number of travelling professors, who went about from point to point, from group to group. As to these travelling professors, I remember that, in my youth, my mother related to me the strange fact that an Irishman came to teach school in my native parish, St. Rose, which was composed entirely of French-Canadians.

In 1835 and 1836 the legislators tried to improve our school system; but the troubles which arose in 1837 prevented their projects from being put into execution. It is needless for me to talk to you about those stormy times. I shall content myself by saying that, in my opinion, French-Canadians gained nothing by that agitation and those days of sorrow. I have such strong confidence in British institutions that I believe that we would have got what we demanded without having to deplore the upheavals and the tears of blood which produced no result whatever. It was an unfortunate policy, badly directed; and I can speak of it the more familiarly because a member of my family took part in that ill-considered movement. This troublous period arrested the progress of public education by hindering the reforms which it had been decided to make in our school system.

**The Education Law of 1841.**  
 The same state of things, in regard to education, existed until 1841. Amongst the Governors of Canada at that period I shall mention two: Lord Durham and Lord Sydenham. The former drew up a report which has become historical; this report, which contains both the good and the bad sides, did us some service in England. Lord Sydenham was gifted with a keen intellect and a restless energy. He was a man of strong and resolute will; but he had come here with special instructions. In 1841 he secured the adoption of an education law which still exists to-day in its main lines, having been changed only in details. This law in effect established boards of school commissioners, separate schools, etc.; it decreed that Catholic schools should be administered by Catholic commissioners, and Protestant schools by Protestant boards. This distinguished statesman had sufficient greatness of soul to declare that the majority and the minority had rights that ought to be respected. If this principle had not been forgotten elsewhere we would not have had so much trouble and persecution to deplore. The best way to govern is to give justice to everybody. It was recognized at the time to which I refer that the minority possesses legitimate rights and that they should not be violated. This is what we have done in our Province. We have given the minority all its rights without any restriction.

**Justice to the Minority.**  
 As I have said, it was in 1841 that the principle of our existing school law was adopted, declaring as it did that our schools would be denominational—that is, that religion covered them with its protecting shadow. Having decreed the organization of school municipalities which should be directed by school commissioners and boards of dissentient schools, the law created examining boards, a superintendent, school inspec-

tors, certificated conformably to established rules. The law was amended during the sessions of 1842, 1845, and 1847, but it still preserved the same character. The majority of the people of our province being Catholic, the taxpayers were charged to elect commissioners who, in their turn, were to direct the schools, engage the teachers, fix and levy the school taxes, build the school-houses, or hire suitable structures to be used as such—to make, in a word, all the regulations necessary to the good working of the schools. Nevertheless it was not desired that the religious minority in these municipalities should be made to submit to the regulations adopted by the commissioners of the majority; and it was decreed that any number of taxpayers "not professing the religion of the majority in the municipality, might separate themselves from it by signing a declaration to this effect, and thereafter these taxpayers became a corporation composed of dissentients, with the same rights and the same powers as those of the majority."

The law decreed that the taxpayers in each municipality should be separated into Catholics and Protestants. These are the two categories indicated. Thus, a majority of taxpayers with a school municipality professing the Catholic religion, is directed by Catholic commissioners, five in number, and if the religious minority separates itself from it, it becomes a "dissentient corporation," and has, I repeat, the same rights, powers, and duties that the majority possesses.

This minority is governed by three syndics or representatives elected by the dissentient taxpayers. Thus the school of the province are administered by commissioners elected by the majority or by syndics, in the cases which I have mentioned; and they are under the full and complete control of each of these boards. There are no fixed hours for the minority, or for the parents or guardians of the children of the minority, to receive instruction during certain hours of the day or of the week, but it is a strict right the working and the practice of which has given general satisfaction, each governing itself conformably to the regulations of the school laws. No one will deny that this is a separate school system.

**The First Superintendent.**  
 The first superintendent under this education law of 1841 was Mr. J. B. Meilleur. He was appointed in 1842, I think, and he performed his duty with a devotion and zeal from which the province has derived substantial benefit. Called upon to enforce the school laws which decreed the taxation of the property of ratepayers at a proportion equal to the subventions given by the Government, Mr. Meilleur rose to a proper conception of the task entrusted to him, and took great pains by circular letters, by writings of all descriptions, by his imperturbable patience, and his unflinching good will, to explain the law to those whom it affected. Teachers' conferences were first held under his superintendence and at his request; and he laid the foundation of the Normal schools and got the first school inspectors appointed. Although there were regrettable difficulties in several municipalities which refused to levy the school tax, and notwithstanding the agitators known as the exhorters, the law took its course; and to-day, and ever since 1844, it may be said that there remains no trace of those unwholesome agitations, though it is only right to say that our people accept very willingly the tax that is devoted to be laudable purpose of education.

In 1855 Mr. Meilleur was replaced by Mr. Chauveau, whose erudition, learning and social position singled him out for the honorable and responsible post of Superintendent. It is to his untiring efforts that we owe the opening of the Normal schools, the appointment of school inspectors, and the foundation of the "Journal de l'Instruction Publique." It was in his time, too, that the Council of Public Instruction was formed; composed for the most part of Catholic and Protestant laymen, appointed by the Government in proportion to the relative Catholic and Protestant portions of the population. The Council set to work seriously to discharge the duties imposed upon it by the School law, and most of the regulations which it adopted are still in force.

**The Amended Law of 1875.**  
 In 1875 the education law was amended. The law, as amended, created the present Council of Public Instruction, which is composed of the archbishops and bishops (Ordinaries) of the province, of an equal number of laymen, and of as many Protestant members as there are Catholic members. This council is divided into two committees, one of which is formed of all the Catholic members, and the other of the Protestant members, who have power to add five more Protestants to it, the latter being members of the Protestant committee only. I was then appointed superintendent in place of Mr. Chauveau, who had been superintendent from 1855 until 1868, when he became Minister of Public Instruction, which he remained until 1873. The new Council of Public Instruction has only sat once since 1876, under the presidency of the superintendent, but the Catholic committee of the council sits regularly twice

a year. The Protestant committee sits several times a year. The regulations which govern our schools were drawn up by the committees.

**Religious Instruction.**  
 The first article of the regulations of the Catholic committee decrees that religious instruction shall be given in every school, and in each of the classes in every school; and the Protestant committee stipulates that the classes shall open with the Lord's Prayer. These are its regulations:

"158. Religious instruction shall be given in all public schools, but no person shall require any pupil in any public school to read or study in or from any religious book, or to join any exercise of devotion or religion objected to in writing by his parents or guardians."

"159. Every Protestant school shall be opened each day with the reading of a portion of the Holy Scriptures, followed by the Lord's Prayer."

Article 160 is to the same effect. As will be seen, our schools, from every point of view, are denominational, essentially denominational; but this does not mean that the things which constitute a proper and wholesome education in every respect should not be given in them. Anyone who takes the trouble to read the regulations of each of the committees will see that provision is made for a good education, according to the age of the children, and while observing the gradation necessary and indispensable to the schools.

**Faculty of School Attendance Explained.**

But it may be said that only the catechism is taught in the Catholic schools. I do not see any harm in this; quite the contrary. Cannot a child learn to read in that book, or in sacred history, as well as in any other school book? Is it to be said that those who have only seen the catechism in school have seen or learned nothing else—that there were not there also the A, B, C, the reading books, graduated and otherwise; geographies, arithmetics, books of history, wall maps, copy books and everything that should be found in a school? Somebody has gone, it seems, into certain poor schools, and held them up to the animadversion of the public. Why is that? Is it because it is only in our province that there are poor districts where the parents find it difficult to procure for themselves the bare necessities of life? Surprise has been expressed that all the children who ought to be in those distant schools are not in attendance. But has the distance which separates these schools from the children been taken into consideration? Have inclemency of the weather, the snow-storms, the condition of the roads leading to the schools, been taken into consideration?

**Only Catholic Schools Attacked.**

How is it that only the Catholic schools have been attacked? Is bigotry at the bottom of it? I do not know; but while paying homage to the condition of the schools controlled by the Protestant committee I must say that our Catholic schools are equally prosperous, and that the same drawbacks that exist in the latter exist also in the former.

**Necessity of Religious Teaching.**

I have already spoken of religious teaching in our schools. This is what Guizot, a Protestant writer, says about religious teaching in school:

"You have admitted moral and religious teaching as an essential portion of primary education; but, gentlemen, moral and religious teaching is not like a reading or an arithmetical lesson which is given at a fixed hour and which is then over and done with. Moral and religious teaching is continual. The atmosphere of the school must be moral and religious. Only on this condition will you have moral and religious teaching in the schools. A time is coming when the sciences will become the object of all study; but in the primary schools, if you do not establish moral and religious teaching, you will not attain your object. Does not the master open and close the school with prayer? When he teaches the children how to read, is it not in the catechism? When he teaches them history is it not in the Holy Scriptures? Religious instruction, in a word, is associated with every act, and is felt at all hours in the primary school. Beware of a fact which has never been so prominent as in our time. The development of the intellect when it is accompanied by moral and religious development, gives rise to sentiments of order and of submission to law, and lays the foundation of the greatness and prosperity of society. Intellectual development by itself develops principles of insubordination and disorder, and threatens society with grave perils."

**Very Important Statistics.**

Those who have been writing about education in this province have got so far as to count up the number of children who do not attend school, and to get at the number of children under ten years of age who do not attend school they have counted all the children from birth up to five years of age. This sort of thing may satisfy a certain class, but we ought at least to admit that our children are not born with books in their hands!

In my opinion education is as good here as elsewhere. Have we not a cultured clergy and a professional class as highly educated as a professional class anywhere else? Are not our public men capable of filling the positions they

occupy? Look at the reports of the superintendent, and you will see the progress that education has made in our Province. The reports giving the number of children of an age to attend the schools in each municipality are sent to the superintendent every year. They are drawn up by the secretary-treasurers, the commissioners, and by the dissentient boards. Here are the latest statistics—those of 1895-96:

Total number of schools.....	5,903
Total number of pupils.....	303,619
Average number of pupils to each school.....	51
Average attendance of pupils.....	230,419
Percentage of attendance of pupils.....	76
Number of children in the province from 5 to 16 years of age.....	328,420
Number of children from 5 to 16 years of age who attend school.....	289,979
Percentage of attendance.....	88.29
Total number of lay professional teachers, male and female.....	6,515
Total number religious teachers.....	3,465
Grand total of teachers.....	9,980

Number of uncertificated teachers:	
In 1894-95.....	1,080
In 1894-95.....	809
In 1895-96.....	685

Decrease in two years..... 394

This decrease is due to the rigor of the regulations of the Council of Public Instruction, which require a written promise from all who ask permission to teach without diplomas pledging themselves to undergo an examination for the purpose of obtaining a certificate at the ensuing meeting of the examining board of their district.

Average salary of lay male and female teachers:—

In 1895-96.....	\$149.70
In 1894-95.....	142.05

Increase in 1895-96..... 7.05

Expenditures from the pension fund have been in

1895-96.....	\$37,800.32
--------------	-------------

Receipts to the pension fund

in 1895-96.....	\$1,185.86
-----------------	------------

Deficit for the year..... \$36,623.46

The capital belonging to this fund is now..... \$182,352.53

This sum is deposited with the Provincial Treasurer, and bears 5 per cent. interest.

**Great Progress Made**

The following official statistics show the great progress made in education in this province since Confederation:

Number of schools.....	1867-96	1867-88	1895-96
Number of pupils.....	13,867	53,222	303,619
Teachers, male and female, lay and religious.....	212,837	229,131	303,619
Contributions paid by taxpayers.....	4,536	8,172	9,980
Contributions paid by the government.....	\$1,313,148	\$2,022,808	\$2,407,703
Expenditure.....	256,762	342,230	302,700

These are consoling statistics, for they show exactly what has taken place in our primary schools properly so called, which comprise elementary schools, academies, and model schools. In addition, we have agricultural schools, the schools under the control of the Council of Arts and Manufactures, and the night schools. Nor must we forget our universities, our colleges, our polytechnic school, and our normal schools. These institutions render such very important services that they should always be mentioned when we are speaking of education.

**SCHOOL BOOKS.**

I must not forget to mention that the school-books in use in both the Catholic and the Protestant schools, are selected and approved by each committee of the Council according to its creed. There are perhaps too large a number of those which have been selected and approved for our Catholic schools; but I am in a position to state that the Catholic committee is doing its best to decrease their number so far as is possible. The committee, however, is acting prudently, because its members hold that it is important that the emulation which we all should desire to see kept up amongst authors who deal with education should not be diminished.

It should not be forgotten that the schools under the direction of religious communities of men or women—whose classical books are likewise approved by the council—prepare their own school-books themselves. There are also lay authors who practise the teaching profession, and whose books are approved. There can only be, however, one book on one subject in each school; and we are still far from that uniformity for which certain people are clamoring, although it is probable that we shall reach it in the near future—under the direction, it should be understood, of the Catholic committee.

**Teachers' Pension Fund.**

In the first article of the government's programme, His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor states that it is going to assist the teachers by grants proportionate to their most pressing needs. In 1880 a pension fund was established to aid this deserving class, whose remuneration has never been proportionate to the services they render society. The object of this law was to create a fund to support teachers forced to abandon their work owing to age or sickness. The law was amended in 1886, and the number of pensions has since increased to such an extent that the demands upon the fund have exceeded the sum provided for. A mistake was made. The law should be again amended in the direction of restricting the stipulated advantage; but meanwhile the sum of \$6,000 should be

granted to the fund so as to meet the year's deficiency. I ask you, Mr. President, to put this request before your colleagues. Let us not expose to want those whose profession is so honorable and who have always been so poorly rewarded for their services.

## ARCHBISHOP LANGEVIN

**Preaches And Her Vigorous Sermon on the School Question**

Archbishop Langevin, preaching at St. Mary's Church, Winnipeg, on Sunday last, said that the Catholics of Manitoba had been unjustly treated during six years under the School Act of 1890, and lately by the so-called school settlement, and that they must more than ever lift up their eyes to God. The principal reason why the settlement was unsatisfactory to Catholics was that it did not grant them what they had fought for during six years—that is, truly Catholic schools. Section 8 of the so-called settlement concentrates and proclaims them common and secular or neutral schools. If the Catholics should accept this settlement which did not give them even the shadow of their rights, they would abandon their position and condemn themselves. Last year they received a letter from the Sacred Congregation of the Faith, and in this it was stated that they should oppose neutral schools, and it was a false opinion that went to say that Catholic children could attend without danger neutral schools.

His Grace, in the course of his remarks, said his heart had been filled with grief as he read in the papers utterances coming from Catholic quarters and expressing views altogether contrary to the direction of the Church. These men not long ago wrote things that they now swallow in order to say just the contrary. The doctrine of common education was the doctrine of the Radicals of France, and he was quite sure many honest men who upheld the system would never accept the consequences so agreeable to revolutionary men. Alas, this neutral, secular, Godless education, had wrecked poor France! Did the people think the non-Catholic minority of Quebec, having been deprived of their denominational schools, would accept from the Catholic majority just a few crumbs, not a shadow of their rights? "We are but a minority," he said. "We are feeble, powerless, and we have to battle against those who are more powerful than we, but even if they heap a mountain over our schools they will emerge again, for they can never kill them. They cannot kill our rights; they cannot kill justice!"

## C. M. B. A.

**The Celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of Branch No. 50**

The officers and members of St. Anthony's Branch, No. 50, C.M.B.A., are to be congratulated on the success of the supper and social given on Thursday evening, November 26, in the hall, No. 2446 St. Catherine street, in honor of the tenth anniversary of this branch. It was indeed a most successful gathering. Quite a few members of sister branches were present with their families, showing the harmony which prevails among all members of this association. About 125 persons sat down to supper, which was served by Mr. J. E. Dixon, the well known caterer, in his usual good style. After ample justice had been done to the good things provided, the president, Mr. M. J. Polan, rose, and in a few words thanked those present on behalf of the branch for their large attendance. Chancellor T. J. Finn, of Branch 26, was called upon to say a few words, and in speaking, complimented the members of Branch 50 on the success of their celebration. Short addresses were made by Chancellor T. P. Tansey of Branch 50, and others.

An adjournment was then made to the large concert hall, where a choice programme of vocal and instrumental music was rendered by the following:—Miss N. McAndrew, Messrs. J. Milloy, J. Reid, J. Lemieux, D. Tessier, D. Shea and J. Morgan, all of whom received well merited encores. Prof. C. M. Hockley presided at the piano in good style.

At the close of the celebration every one departed expressing the wish that the delightful entertainment just ended would be made an annual one.

The committee who had charge of the celebration were: Messrs. M. J. Polan, T. P. Tansey, M. Neher, F. McCabe, N. Freerault, J. P. Gunning and W. P. Doyle.

## Resolutions of Condolence.

At a meeting of St. Vincent de Paul Society, of St. Ann's Conference, on 29th Nov., the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas,—It has pleased Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, to remove from this life our good and faithful secretary, Mr. Patrick O'Reilly.

Resolved,—That the members of this Conference extend to the sorrowing widow and family their most sincere sympathy in their sad bereavement; and pray that God may give them grace and strength to bear their loss with Christian fortitude and resignation to His Divine Will.

Resolved,—That these resolutions be spread on the Minutes of the meeting, and a copy be sent to the widow of our late secretary, and also be published in the TRUE WITNESS and DAILY STAR.

THOMAS LYMAN, President.