

Mr. HATHEWAY'S SPEECH

Mr. Speaker:—

It is a great joy to belong to a nation that has risen to power on those sure foundations of national life—a well-paid people, a well-protected people and a well-educated people. The institutions of a country are not as great as the men who compose that country. Thus, the men of today are greater than the laws of yesterday. However hoary with age, and moss-covered with custom the Educational Institution of this Province may be, I trust it will not be considered irreverent for me to say that our educational system is based on a wrong conception of human duties and aims. This system is not aboriginal, it is not rooted never to be upset. It may have been good in its time, when the Family Compact ruled, and when there were only the three estates, the court, clergy and King. At that period the mechanic, the miner, and the farmer had no great power in making laws and in regulating institutions, and were afraid to say that the main drift of an Educational System should be to aid the farmer and mechanic rather than the professions. That older time of 1800 to 1850 regarded property as the sole care of Government. The statutes of that day forgot the sacredness of personal right, but remembered keenly the sacredness of property. Great estates were owned by a few persons, the Simonds, Gilberts, Whites and others, through whom we have an heirloom in renewal land leases so hindering to progress and development in St. John City and County. Property and professions were the influences ruling our politicians when they laid the basis of our Educational System. Even when the Free School System was adopted in 1871 through the efforts of Hon. Geo. E. King and others, the taint of this deference to property and professions still obtained as seen in the curriculum before 1900. The laws and teachings of that day bear the stamp of this deference, this servility to property and to the professions. To such a degree has this been so that until about 1900 those great doers of human labor, the mechanic and the farmer were practically forgotten as far as education is concerned.

THE NEED OF SKILLED LABOR.

The time is come for this province and other provinces of the Dominion to take steps towards providing agricultural and technical education for our youth. Dr. Robertson in an address in this chamber several years ago pointed out the necessity of increased agricultural and technical education in Canada. In St. John recently, at a meeting of the building trades, the need of more skilled labor was mentioned. Since 1900 every Labor Congress has passed a resolution favoring the Dominion government taking some action along this line. Other bodies have passed similar resolutions, and many newspaper articles have been written on the subject. The result of all this was that finally a Royal Commission was appointed with Dr. Robertson as the head, which visited all the provinces of this Dominion and afterwards the United States and European countries.