

REPORT ON

POPULAR EDUCATION IN ENGLAND, 1897-98.

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*To the Honourable the Minister of Education for Ontario.*

I enclose herewith, for publication, as an appendix to your Report, a special Report on the state and progress of "Popular Education in England"—the statistics illustrating which I have brought down to the latest date of their publication in England, viz., in 1897-98.

I was prompted to prepare the substance of this Report, while recently in England, on leave, when I became aware of the remarkable progress which had been made in educational affairs there, since 1846, when I accompanied the Rev. Dr. Ryerson, late Chief Superintendent of Education, in his visit to various Schools in England and Scotland. 5

I found upon enquiry, that in 1844—the year in which the Rev. Dr. Ryerson was appointed to his office, (and I as his assistant,)—the grant made by Parliament in aid of popular education in England and Wales did not exceed the sum of £40,000; while, in this last year, (1898), when I was in England, this grant had arisen to the truly imperial sum of £8 520,175 for elementary education, besides the grants of £3,445,621 for education in Ireland and Scotland, or a total of £11,965,796 for the three Kingdoms. Of course, the question naturally arose, as to what were the causes which brought about so remarkable a change in public opinion, in England, in regard to popular education.

This question is partially answered by the Honourable George C. Broderick, Warden of Merton College, Oxford, in an article which he wrote in the *Fortnightly Review* for July, 1896. In that article he points out what has been the result of the far reaching and powerful influence of Oxford and Cambridge in stimulating and moulding public opinion in England on the subject of Elementary, as well as Secondary, Education in that Country.

Two other influences have been, of late years, at work in England to produce a like result. These influences have been almost as strong and effective as that of the Universities, but they were of a totally different character, and of a more direct and practical kind.

The first, and most potent, of these influences has been partly commercial, in its active side, in pursuit of openings, and partly national, in its competitive form. The other educational factor, which has produced good results, and which has largely helped to mould public opinion, has been the practice of prominent men and politicians, of all shades of opinion, to address gatherings of various kind on some special educational topic. These addresses rarely take a political form; but deal with such questions as "Commercial Education," "Agricultural Education," "Training Colleges," "Secondary Schools," "Manual Training," "Naval and Military Education," "Museums," "College Endowments," "Technical Instruction," and "Science Schools," etc.

This feature of English educational life is dealt with more fully in the last Chapter of this Report, I would, therefore, refer you to it for fuller information on the subject.

I have briefly referred, in some Chapters, to the interesting collateral subjects of Industrial Education, Secondary Schools and University Extension in England.

J. GEORGE HODGINS.

Toronto, 20th of February, 1899.