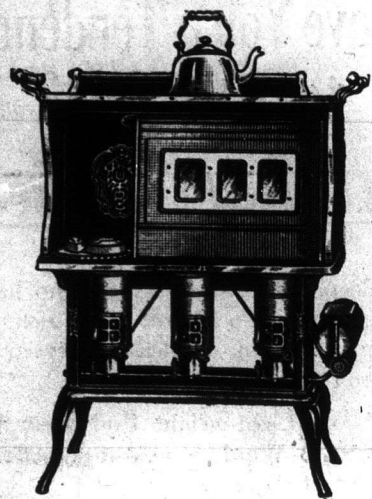




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The setting up by the government of Sir Lomer Gouin of the two great technical schools at Montreal and Quebec respectively, was the answer to this complaint—that the superior education of the province, while it turned out the literary person, neglected the practical considerations which must bulk in a new community in the making.

The elementary education, both Catholic and Protestant, had been for years in a backward state. There are probably some 10,000 elementary schools scattered throughout the province. These are administered by two educational committees which are called collectively, “the Council of Public Instruction.” There is the Catholic committee with the bishops of the provinces as ex-officio members; there is the Protestant committee, which is composed of lay and clerical members nominated by the government. The two committees are supposed to meet together as one body when any large question affecting education as a whole comes up. As a matter of practice, such meetings rarely take place. Each committee attends to the work of the denomination to which it is especially addressed.

The people in the rural parts took but little interest in the education of their children. They objected to be taxed for the maintenance of the schools. The committee had no money of its own to disburse; and fifteen years ago the vote for education was painfully negligible—not more than \$150,000 per annum—that is, exclusive of the local rates paid by the people.

not be allowed to remain hewers of wood and drawers of water.

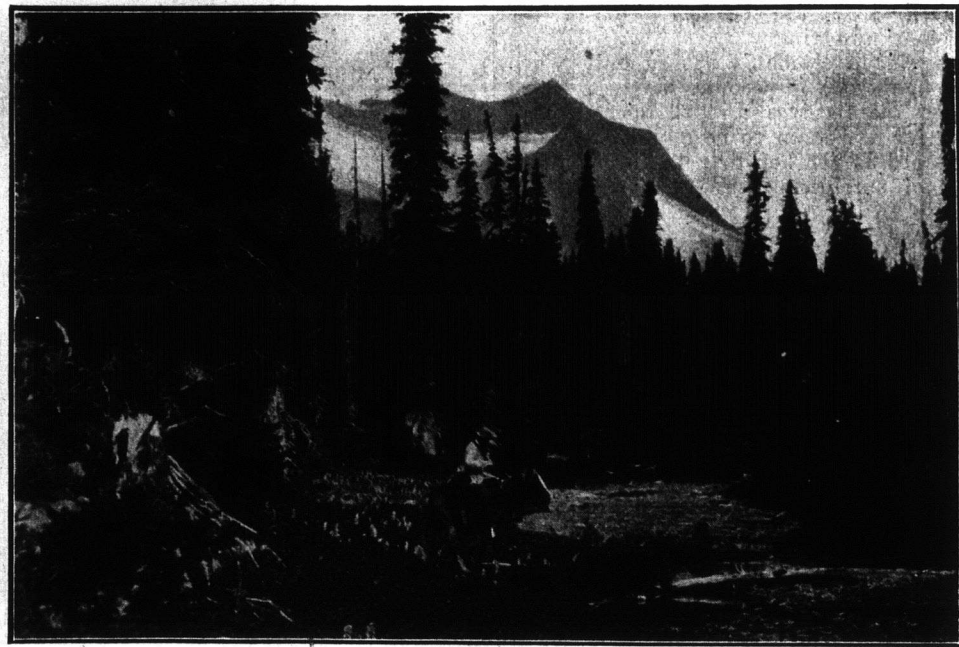
The province showed, some twenty years ago, over 68 per cent of illiteracy. To-day a great amount of leeway has been recovered. The salaries of the teachers have been improved, although nothing like what they should be. There are still a large but lessening number of young women teachers, getting from \$150 to \$200 per annum; but this scale will shortly disappear.

The technical schools are being availed of by the French-Canadian youth in large numbers. The superior education did not touch the life of the common people. That was its weakness. The age was a commercial and industrial one; the leaders of the people saw how woefully behind the young Canadians were in all that appertained to industrial pursuits.

The educated young man could be eloquent as alderman, or lawyer or member of parliament; but the bulk of the people had no part in the commercial or industrial life of the Dominion.

It will be the office of the technical schools to remove the disability. It has been said that the French-Canadian is a born politician, and it is the case that large numbers have the belief that their living is to be made from the government. There is to be a nice government job—a judgeship, a higher clerkship, at smallest; but something, at any rate, which will be sure and comfortable.

But the wonderful expansion of industrialism in the province has at last shown the majority the necessity for identifying



The Trail of the lonesome pine en route to Pyramid Lake.

Hundreds, aye, thousands, of young girls were taught without certificates. They received between \$70 and \$90 per annum. It was pitiful. The schools languished; the teachers had not themselves been taught; the total attendance in many instances would not exceed a dozen. The distances were great; the roads were impassable in the winter time. A spirit of hopelessness prevailed.

The advent of Mr. Marchand on the scene was like a fresh breath in a jaded atmosphere. He was an ardent patriot; he became Prime Minister, and in this position he had a large scheme of educational development in his mind. He meant, for one thing, to appoint a minister of education as Ontario had done. This, he thought, a first and necessary step in the modernizing of the elementary education of the province. He found that he was going too fast. He was obliged to abandon his project. Certain authorities were against the measure. At smallest, he increased the vote to education, making it something like \$300,000 per annum.

This gave an impetus. Succeeding governments have followed in his footsteps; but it remained for Sir Lomer Gouin to inaugurate a modern educational system. He increased the grant to nearly \$1,250,000. He improved the schools; he carried a measure for the uniformity of text books; and he created the two big technical schools, each of which has cost a million dollars.

To add to this, he built the big school in Montreal for higher studies. He has said many times that his people must

h themselves with the activities of the community. There are not enough government jobs to go around. While the system has been inimical to the doings of things, and friendly to the thinking of things, the change is already most marked. The young people in hundreds flock to the technical schools day and night. There is the greatest eagerness evinced to learn the use of the eye and hand and tool in the fashioning of form and body and mould.

The opening of agricultural colleges all over the province is also a movement full of hope. Agriculture has been backward in Quebec. It was a tradition rather than a science; antique rather than earnest intelligence. These new colleges will have a double effect; they will make the soil more productive and profitable, and they will tend, by enlarging the mind and the viewpoint, to make the young more contented on the land. The two together are mutually complementary.

Ontario spends, all told, some \$12,000,000 on education per annum. Quebec has reached the sum of \$7,000,000, that is, for all purposes. Ontario boasts the best public school system in the world; Quebec is making up leeway at a rapid rate under the direction and inspiration of Sir Lomer Gouin who, though he has not been able, so far, to set the seal of legislation upon his full desire and purpose, has given the modern tendency a splendid start in the better equipment and endowment of the public schools, the increase in salaries and the setting up of technical education for the first time in the history of the province.