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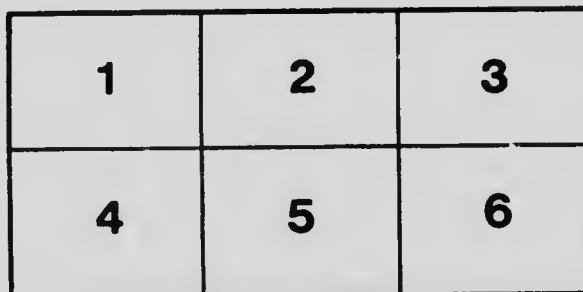
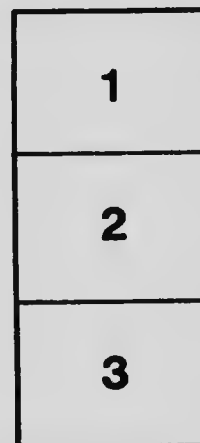
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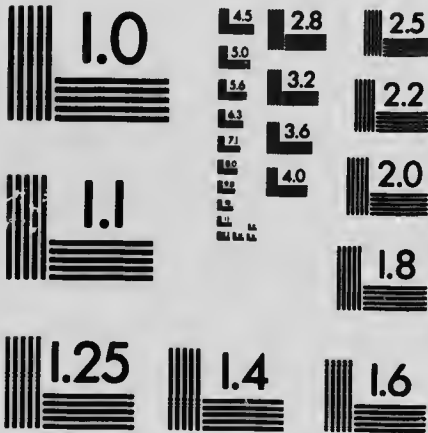
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REFERENCE

# Educational Exposures

—By—

J. N. Muir, Former Principal of Victoria High School



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## HAS POLITICS GOT INTO OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

In 1906 Earl Grey donated eleven extra bronze medals, making fifteen to be awarded as prizes in the public schools. In 1908 public attention was called to the unaccountable manner in which these Governor-General bronze medals had been distributed. The Spallumcheen School Board then asked the department for an explanation.

### EXPLANATIONS

The Minister of Education states in the Votes and Proceedings of 1910:—That Spallumcheen was informed that these medals were offered to schools where a high school was established; that he, on information from the superin-

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tendent, informed Chilliwack that they were given to places where there was the most competition at the high school entrance examination; that these medals in 1906 were given to CITIES of the first, second, and what were considered the most important of the third class; that since 1906 these medals were awarded to those SCHOOL DISTRICTS that in the opinion of the department were best entitled to them, care being taken not to transfer a medal from any district to which one had been awarded in 1906 except for good reasons.

### **POLITICS**

Whether Politics actually influenced the department or not I do not say. I merely point out some facts and let them speak. The reader can form his own opinion. I intend to be fair, and to get fair play for the children.

### **FIRST YEAR**

Why was Trail considered a more important CITY than Cranbrook or Enderby? In 1906 the department had those eleven extra medals at its disposal, and the Minister of Education says they were given to the most important CITIES.

### **FACTS**

Cranbrook, a city of 3,000 people, two banks, two newspapers, several officials of both governments, five teachers in the school, passed up two pupils at the entrance examination, got NO medal.

Trail, a city of of 1,800 people, one bank, a newspaper, three teachers in the school, passed up ONE pupil, and got a medal.

Enderby, a city with one bank, two teachers in the school, passed up SIX pupils, and had the BEST SCHOLAR in the province at that examination; but it got NO medal.

## POLITICS

Cranbrook Liberal, Trail Conservative, Enderby a Liberal stronghold in 1906. As Trail passed up only one pupil, this disposal of the medal looks like a gift. Earl Grey would likely be "shocked" if he heard that any of those medals were ever disposed of in any other manner than as real rewards of merit.

## SECOND YEAR

In 1907 a change was made in the manner of distributing these medals. They were given to SCHOOLS where a high school was established, according to the superintendent's explanation, but not in fact. Why was Golden preferred to Chilliwack? In 1907 the department had two unappropriated medals to dispose of that had been taken from Fernie and Trail.

Golden, a rural school district with a high school for half a year, passed up 5 pupils and got a medal. Chilliwack, a rural municipal school district with a high school for four years, passed up 18 pupils and got NO medal.

## POLITICS

The district in which Golden is situated had flopped from the Liberals to the Conservatives. Chilliwack remained Liberal.

Why was Golden preferred to Spallumcheen? Spallumcheen, a rural municipal school district with a high school a whole year, passed up 10 pupils, got NO medal. It had twice as good a right to the medal as Golden.

Enderby, a city, passed up 6 pupils and had a better claim than Golden with 5 pupils.

Why was Kelowna preferred to Chilliwack and Spallumcheen? Kelowna, a city with NO high school, passed up only ten pupils, and got the other medal.

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## LYING

The following answers given by the Minister of Education are found in the Votes and Proceedings of the last session of the Legislature (1910):

Q.—Was a letter sent from the Education Department at some time between the first and tenth of August, 1908, to Dr. E. J. Offerhaus of Lansdowne about the manner of distributing the Governor-General bronze medals? A.—Yes.

Q.—Was E. J. Offerhaus a member of the Spallumcheen school board? A.—Yes.

Q.—Did the letter contain these words? “With reference to the awarding of the Governor-General’s medals, I beg to say that these are offered to pupils of schools where there is a High School established. Armstrong and Golden are the only points outside incorporated cities where these medals are competed for.” A.—Yes.

Q.—Whose signature was attached to that letter?

A.—That of the Superintendent of Education.

Q.—Did Ladysmith get a medal in each of the years 1906, 1907, and 1908? A.—Yes.

Q.—Had a High School been established there then? A.—No.

Q.—Did Kelowna get a medal in 1907? A.—Yes.

Q.—Had a High School been established there then? A.—No.

Q.—Did Cumberland get a medal in 1908? A.—No.

Q.—Had a High School been established there for several years? A.—Yes.

Q.—Did Chilliwack get a bronze medal in any of the years 1906, 1907, or 1908? A.—No.

Q.—Had a High School been established there for several years? A.—Yes, since August, 1903.

These answers, given by the Minister of Education, prove conclusively that the statement in that letter to Dr.



Offerhaus, about the medals being given to places where a High School had been established, is absolutely FALSE.

The Superintendent of Education is thus proved to be a LIAR, by the answers of the Minister.

### FAVORITISM

If CITIES were to be preferred as in 1906, then Enderby as well as Kelowna, should have got a medal in 1907.

If SCHOOLS where a high school was established were to be preferred, then Chilliwack and Spallumcheen had both a better claim than Golden, and Kelowna had no claim.

Why were Golden and Kelowna so specially favored?

The department was certainly very careless about the rights of Chilliwack, Enderby and Spallumcheen.

### THIRD YEAR

In 1908 the CITY of Chilliwack with a high school for five years, passed up 17 pupils got NO medal. Golden, a rural school district with a high school for a year and a half, passed up only 10 pupils, and got a medal.

Why was Golden so specially favored and why was Chilliwack so neglected?

### LYING

The following answers given by the Minister of Education are found in the Votes and Proceedings of the last session of the Legislature (1910):

Q.—Did any official of the Education Department explain in 1908 to A. L. Coote, the Chairman of the Chilliwack School Board, that the Governor General's bronze medals were given to places where there was the most or the greatest competition at the High School entrance examination? A.—Yes.

Q.—Who was the official?

A.—The Minister of Education, on information supplied by the Superintendent.

The Public Schools Reports show that in 1908 Kelowna passed up 4 pupils at the entrance examination, Kaslo 5, Grand Forks 8, Golden 10, Rossland 11, Ladysmith 12, Revelstoke 13, Vernon 14, and each got a medal. This proves that there was more competition at Chilliwack that year than at those other 8 places that got medals; yet it got no medal.

When the letter that contained that false statement to Dr. Offerhaus was made public, Chilliwack wanted to know why it had never got a medal although it had had a High School since August, 1903. The above further false statement was then made to Chilliwack.

That statement was made on information furnished by the Superintendent and so it proves him again to be a LIAR.

#### **FOURTH YEAR**

Why was Cumberland preferred to Enderby in 1909? The department had two medals to dispose of that had been taken from Kaslo and Kelowna. Enderby and Cumberland, both cities with a high school. Cumberland passed up 4 pupils and got a medal. Enderby passed up 5 pupils, and got NO medal.

#### **POLITICS**

Cumberland Conservative, Enderby Liberal. The pupil who got the medal in 1909 at Cumberland is the daughter of a Conservative ex-M.L.A.

#### **FIFTH YEAR**

North Vancouver, a city with no high school with 9 passed up, gets a medal this year. Kamloops, a city with a high school, passed up 7 pupils, gets a medal. Vernon, a city with a high school, passed up 6 pupils, gets a medal. Enderby, a city with a high school, passed up 8 pupils, gets NO medal. Why this discrimination against Enderby?

## FAVORITISM

Why is such different treatment meted out to Spallumcheen this year in favor of North Vancouver to that which was meted out to Golden in 1908 in competition with Chilliwack?

Chilliwack in 1908, a CITY with a high school for five years, passed up 17 pupils, got NO medal. Golden, a rural school district with a high school for a year and a half, passed up 10 pupils, got a medal in 1908.

North Vancouver, a city, with NO high school, passed up 9 pupils, gets a medal in 1910. Spallumcheen, a rural municipal school district with a high school for three years, passed up 11 pupils in 1910, gets NO medal. Why were Golden and North Vancouver so specially favored?

If school districts without a high school where there is the most competition are to get a medal, then South Vancouver that passed up 27 pupils, has three times a better claim to that medal than North Vancouver.

## INJUSTICE

The Minister of Education says that since 1906 these medals were awarded to the SCHOOL DISTRICTS that were considered best entitled to them. This was likely the intention of the department; but through ignorance or carelessness the medal in 1908 and 1909 has been given to the wrong pupil in the Spallumcheen school district. William Offerhaus and Maggie Heartwell were the real winners of the medal in 1908 and 1909; but they did not get a medal. It was given to the head pupils at Armstrong though they got fewer marks and though there has been no Armstrong school district since 1906. The department through its lack of knowledge of up-to-date current events has done an injustice to those two pupils.

### SELECTIONS

The foregoing shows some facts about a few of the places that got these medals or should have got them; but only a mind reader could tell how and why the department made the selection it has.

### EXPLANATIONS

There is one fact shown quite clearly, that the plausible explanations made to Spallumcheen and Chilliwack by the Superintendent of Education were absolutely false.

### HONOR

Premier McBride may or may not care for the rights of the pupils, or for the evil example set before them by his Superintendent of Education; but for the honor of Earl Grey, the giver of those medals, it is to be hoped that he will take some steps to remedy the injustice that has already been done and to prevent the like from occurring again.

He was informed about the unfair manner in which they had been distributed during the past four years in ample time to have prevented it from happening this year.

### THE SCHOOL CHILDREN VINDICATED

All the pupils of four City schools who tried the High School Entrance Examination in June, 1905, were deprived of the marks for the work done in their Drawing Books because the Drawing examiner stated that there was ruling in every drawing book where no ruling should be.

This fact was printed by the Education Department and sent to every teacher in the Province. This punishment was meted out to the pupils without any opportunity having been given to them to defend themselves. A treatment that dare not be meted out in a court of Justice to the meanest criminal in any land under the Union Jack. The pupils were thus punished in order to punish the teachers.

One of the four teachers insisted that it was unfair to punish any innocent pupil. An inquiry was finally held before Judge Lampman with respect to the Drawing Books of that one school.

Judge Lampman decided first that the rules on the covers of Blair's Drawing books were binding upon the teachers.

### HUMILIATION

Judge Lampman's decision is likely according to law, but it placed, the Council of public instruction in the awkward position of sanctioning rules which were impossible to be carried out. For instance the rule that the teacher do the erasing for the pupil. If Blair himself had charge of a school with sixty pupils, it is not likely that even he would be so stupid as to try to carry out that rule of his own making.

Another rule was that no teacher should have more than twenty pupils.

Another rule was that 3 pictures (four inches on the longest side) of a chalk box should be drawn on a page 8 inches by 10 inches. These rules being both absurd and impossible were regarded as merely expressing impossible ideals.

The Council (until Judge Lampman's decision was given) was credited with having common sense enough not to have imposed such stupid rules upon the teachers.

### MORE HUMILIATION

Another rule was "no ruling whatever" in free hand or model drawing. That rule was taken to refer to lines forming a part of the picture and not to merely construction lines. Judge Lampman decided that it referred to construction lines also. This decision placed the Council in a still more humiliating position (if such were possible).

What educationist in any other part of the world than British Columbia would compel much less even permit the

children of the public schools to be taught and trained to build up a picture or anything else, on an imperfect foundation—a foundation of guess work!

### ROTTEN

Judge Lampman's decision proves that Blair's rule compelled the teachers to insist upon the pupils building their picture upon any old foundation—crooked or otherwise.

All sensible teachers (before this decision) gave, PERMISSION to use a ruler and set squares, to those pupils who could not get the foundation lines, or scaffolding, "true" in any other way.

This statement of fact should convince any reader that when the school trustee at Victoria described Blair's system of drawing as "rotten" he did not use too strong a term.

Judge Lampman's investigation and decision proved that a majority of the pupils had been punished because construction or foundation lines were said to have been ruled.

A majority of the condemned pupils, however, insisted to the last, like Anton Henderson, that they had not done the ruling (if any) which appeared in their books. A ruled line on the TISSUE PAPER in their books, was enough to condemn them.

### COWARDLY

Judge Lampman says only this about Miss Ida B. McNiven's book, "Four samples, Admits datum line in Ex 17, 19 and 23. In Ex. 23 there has been a horizontal line; but it was so lightly drawn and so completely erased that it is impossible to say whether or not it was ruled and the pupil says she remembers nothing about it. This line was not used in any way."

Can you imagine anything more cowardly or unjust than this? That an innocent young lady should have been punished as a cheat on such evidence in order to punish the teacher? The teacher had given the pupils permission to

rule the datum lines, and quite correctly too, I think. I always did so.

### **SCANDALOUS**

This punishment of innocent children by the department in order to get at the teacher is so cowardly, so unjust, so contrary to British principles that it will forever remain as a blot on British Columbia.

Inspector Stewart stated on oath "these books were thrown out as a matter of DISCIPLINE FOR THE TEACHERS."

The department informed the Victoria School Board that it was done as a REBUKE TO THE TEACHERS.

### **MONSTROUS**

Judge Lampman says only this about Miss Dorcas Pearson's book: "Datum line in Ex 17, 19 and 23 admittedly ruled and also a top horizontal line in Ex 17, but not used."

Is it not monstrous that an innocent young lady should have been punished as a cheat on such evidence in order to get at the teacher?

### **BARBAROUS**

Judge Lampman says only this about Miss Ada Schv. enger's book: "The only lines that Mr. Blair said were ruled were the datum lines in Ex 17, 19 and 23 and a top line in Ex. 17, and all of these the pupil admitted having ruled: all of these she thought were allowed to be ruled and the top line in Ex. 17 she intended to use for vanishing points."

Can you imagine anything more barbarous than that this innocent young lady should be condemned and punished as a cheat by the department on such evidence in order to punish the teacher?

### **SHAMEFUL**

Judge Lampman says this about Sidney L. Wilson's book:—"Admits ruling datum line in Ex. 17, 19 and 23.

In Ex. 17 there are traces of a horizontal line which he says he did not put there, but I think he is mistaken about it.

Is it not shameful that a young man should be condemned and punished as a cheat on such evidence as that, in order to punish the teacher?

### OUTRAGEOUS

The examiner stated on oath that he had deprived the pupils of their marks for having violated other rules besides ruling. I, in consequence of that statement, asked Mr. Blair at a teachers' convention at New Westminster when drawing was under discussion, to explain how he could draw 3 pictures (four inches on the longest side) of a chalk box on a page 8 by 10 inches. He replied that he was not there to answer questions about his drawing books. That individual who had deprived the pupils of their marks for having violated his rules, flatly refused to explain how that rule could be carried out.

This is so outrageous (pupils liable to be punished for not carrying out impossible or absurd rules) that it is hard to imagine that the Council knew that they were authorizing such absurd rules or that the pupils would be liable to such a punishment for violating them, when they authorized Blair's Drawing books to be used in the schools. Judge Lampman, however, decided that those rules were binding upon the teachers:

Judge Lampman's investigation proved also that the better a pupil could draw or sketch, the more liable he was to be condemned as a cheat.

### PROOF

Anton Henderson was condemned and punished as a cheat in Drawing. The department's examiner stated on oath that there was ruling in his book although informed that the pupil had made a Statutory declaration that he had



not ruled. That pupil came personally before Judge Lampman and did the work over again in his presence. He could sketch a line so straight that, notwithstanding the sworn evidence to the contrary, he convinced the Judge that he had done no ruling. Judge Lampman accordingly informed the Government that there was "no ruling" in Anton Henderson's book. The Government was thus informed that its education department was found guilty of having condemned, punished and slandered an innocent pupil. A great authority on these matters, says: It is better that a hundred guilty persons should escape punishment than that one innocent person should be punished. This proved that the department's manner of giving marks in Drawing was little less than scandalous.

### CARELESSNESS

It is only reasonable to suppose that the Department would at once take measures to prevent the possibility of again being guilty of such injustice. The Minister of Education's answers to the Legislature in 1910 indicates that it did not.

Q.—"At what high school entrance examination was the practice of giving marks to the pupils for their drawing book work discontinued?"

A.—"The Department cannot give the exact date."

Q.—"For what purpose have the drawing books (handed in at these examinations since that date) been used?"

A.—"To ascertain if the work assigned had been done."

Q.—"Will it be necessary public school pupils hereafter to present the drawing work done in their books at school to the presiding examiner at the entrance examination?"

A.—"That has been the usual practice."

Q.—"Is it the intention of the department to change the usual practice of requiring the pupils to hand in their

drawing books at these examinations?" "If yes, at what date?"

A.—"Answered by the answer given to the previous question."

### **DISCREPANCY**

A public school inspector was asked at the trustees' convention in 1908 as to what use was made of the drawing books handed in by the pupils. He gave a totally different answer to the above. He said marks were given for the book work in certain instances. His answer is likely the correct one: because so far as I am aware he is a truthful person, and it is quite inconceivable that the department could not tell at what entrance examination the practice was discontinued—if it ever had been discontinued.

If the Minister's answer is the truth it shows a peculiar state of affairs. The drawing examiner prepares a set of questions in Drawing, ten in number this year, and the pupils are given two and one-half hours to answer them. The Minister asks the Legislature to believe that the examiner cannot tell from that work whether or not the pupils had been properly taught but must forsooth have the drawing books also.

### **IMPROPER**

In Blair's Drawing books system, a picture is printed in the book and the pupils are instructed that they are to draw or sketch a picture like it; but they must not copy the picture set before them in their books. It surely does not require an educationist to see that such a system is "rotten." A person of good common sense can see that such a system is injurious and improper.

### **USELESS EXPENSE**

Again, why should the department compel the pupils to pay ten cents for a drawing book about half full of Blair's pictures? A drawing book of the same size completely

blank can be got for five cents. That is, a pupil can get about as much and a great deal better practice in drawing for 5 cents in such a book than for 20 cents of Blair's books. Why did the Council of Public Instruction impose such a useless burden upon the people?

### **IGNORANCE OR LYING**

A member of the Legislature and I, on a Friday, asked the Minister of Education to let us see the Drawing books and typewritten evidence taken in the Drawing Investigation. Dr. Young said he did not know whether or not he would let us see them even if they were in the education office; but to call on Monday and he would let us know. When we called on Monday we were told by the Superintendent in the Minister's presence that those papers were not in the education office. The fact is that they were then there. The Superintendent was either **IGNORANT** of what was in his office, and could not find out in three days' search or he **LIED**. The Minister got the benefit of his ignorance or of his lie as the case may be. We did not see the papers, and the Minister did not have to refuse.

When a ruled line on the **TISSUE PAPER** was enough to condemn a pupil as a cheat, are you surprised at the **ANXIETY** of the department lest we should see the **EVIDENCE**?

### **SHOCKING**

The following is taken from the Superintendent of Education's report in B. C. Sess. Papers, 1905, page A65:

"In a province as large as British Columbia it necessarily takes several years for the professional reputation of a teacher to extend throughout the several school districts. In consequence some of our teachers who by **NATURE** and **EDUCATION** are **TOTALLY UNFITTED** for the task of instructing the children of any district, however isolated, are yet enabled after being dismissed by the trustees of one district, to secure an appointment in another

school, if only it is sufficiently remote from their last charge. The names of these BIRDS OF PASSAGE, who by the way are mostly MEN, are well known to the education department and their CERTIFICATES SHOULD BE SUMMARILY CANCELLED. It is UNFAIR to Boards of Trustees to allow them to be VICTIMISED by these INCAPABLES any longer. Besides the cancellation of the certificates of two or three teachers, who through lack of natural aptitude are incapable of improvement would exercise a stimulating influence in the case of others whose want of professional success is due to a deficiency in zeal.

Alexander Robinson."

### DEPLORABLE

Can you imagine any government so remiss in its duty as to allow such a state of affairs to exist—if it believed its superintendent? A government allowing school Boards to be VICTIMISED; not cancelling certificates that its superintendent said should have been SUMMARILY CANCELLED.

Think what it meant to the school children that SUCH teachers should be over them!

Does it not prove that the Government at that date knew that its Superintendent could not be believed?

Does not that cowardly attack on the teachers, particularly on the ladies, prove that he deserves to be held in contempt?

How long will you, the people, of British Columbia permit the children of the public schools to be at the mercy of such an education department?

August 15, 1910.



Thos. R. Cusack, Victoria, B. C.

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