

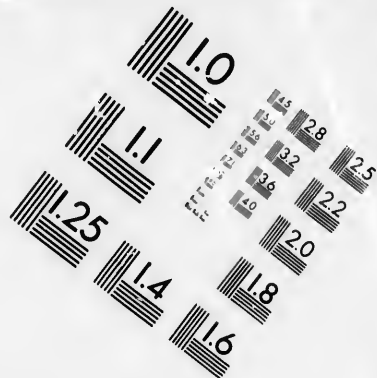
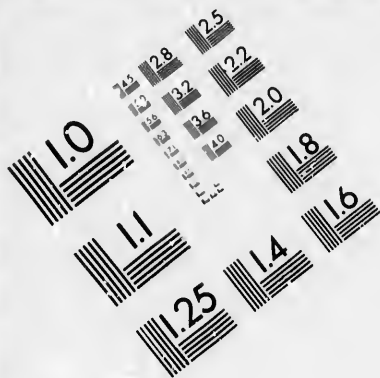
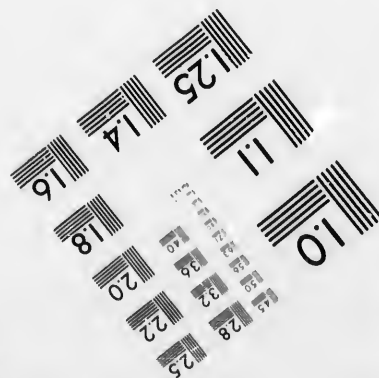
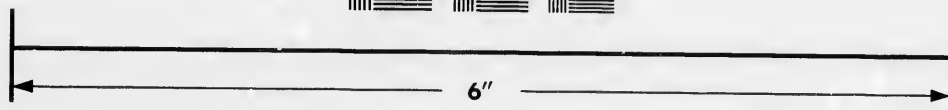
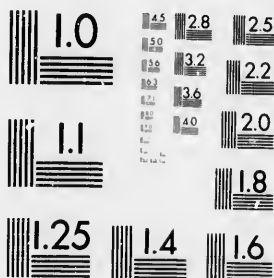


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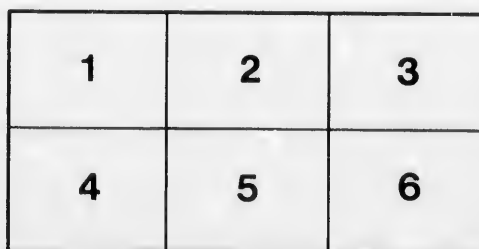
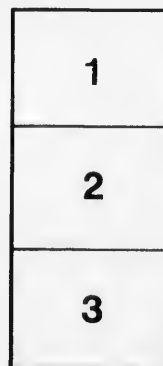
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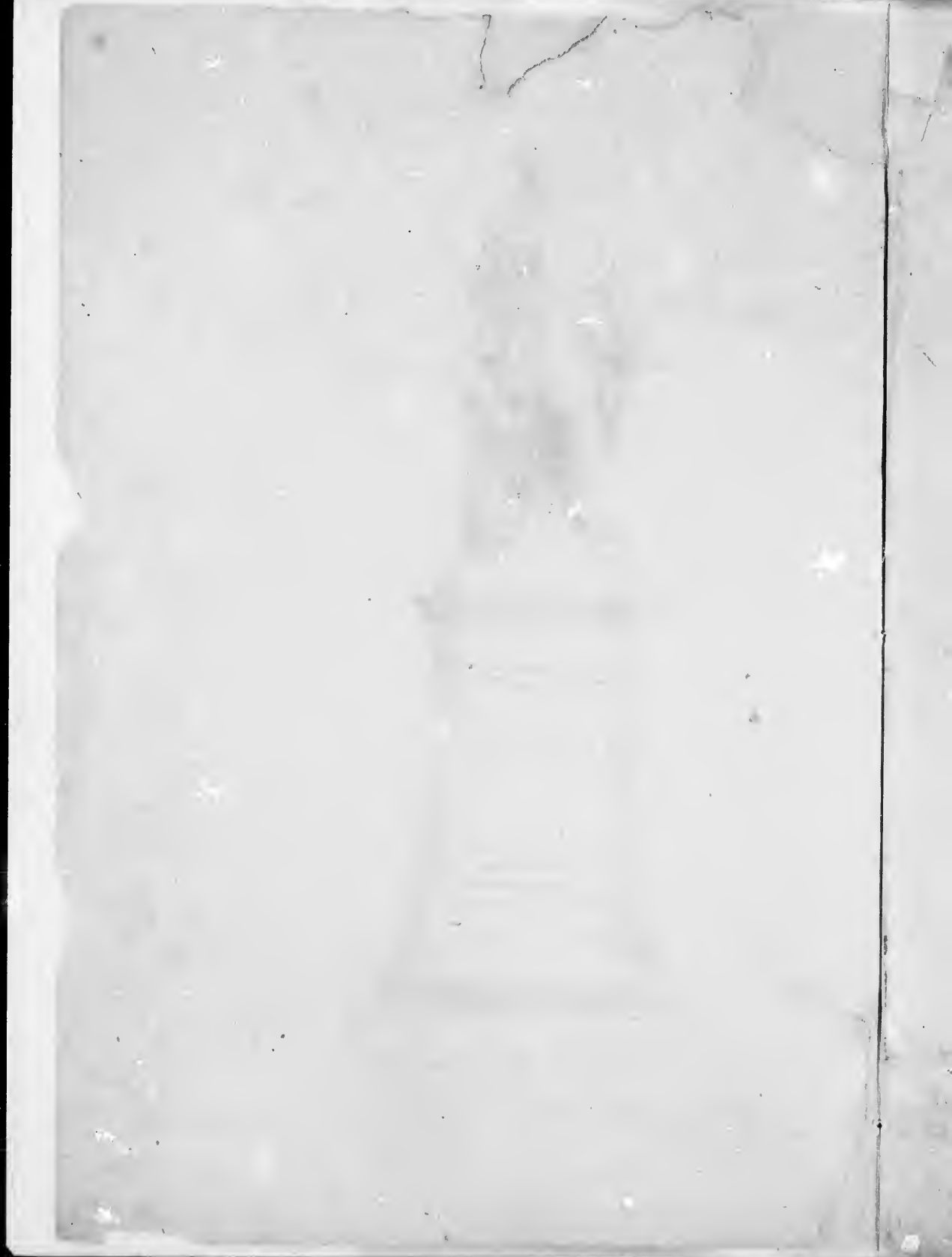
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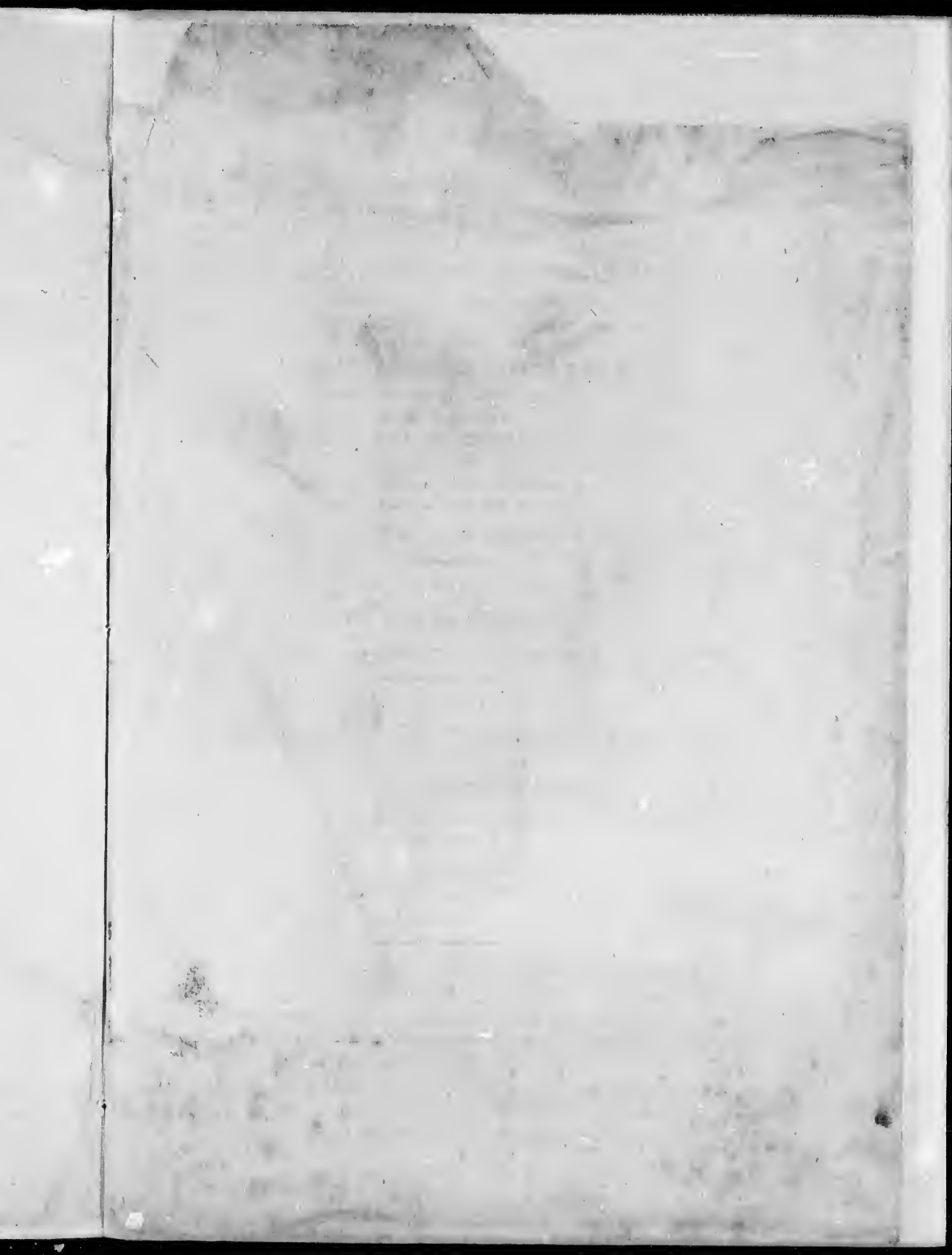
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UNVEILED ON THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY, 1889.





THIS STATUE
IS
ERECTED
AS A MEMORIAL
OF THE GREAT PUBLIC SERVICES OF THE
REV. EGERTON RYERSON, D.D., LL.D.,

SON OF COLONEL JOSEPH RYERSON,
A BRITISH OFFICER WHO SERVED DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION,
AND WHO WAS ONE OF
THE UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS
WHO SETTLED IN THIS PROVINCE

A DISTINGUISHED MINISTER OF THE METHODIST CHURCH,
1825—1882.

HE OBTAINED FOR THAT CHURCH A ROYAL CHARTER IN ENGLAND
FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF

UPPER CANADA ACADEMY AT COBOURG.
1828—1841.

AFTERWARDS

The University of Victoria College.

OF WHICH HE WAS THE FIRST PRESIDENT.

IN FOUNDING
THE SCHOOL SYSTEM OF HIS NATIVE PROVINCE,
AND IN PROMOTING THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF FREE SCHOOLS,

HE DISPLAYED THE RARE GIFTS OF A
FAR-SEEING AND ENLIGHTENED STATESMAN,

AND FOR THIRTY-TWO YEARS WAS
THE ABLE ADMINISTRATOR OF THAT SYSTEM,
1844—1876.

ERECTED BY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM SCHOOL TRUSTEES, INSPECTORS
TEACHERS, PUPILS, AND OTHERS ;

AIDED BY A GRANT FROM THE CITY OF TORONTO AND
THE LEGISLATURE OF ONTARIO.

THE REV. EGERTON RYERSON,

D.D., LL.D.,

FOUNDER OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM OF ONTARIO.

An Historical Retrospect

On the Unveiling of his Statue on the Queen's Birthday, 1889.

By J. GEORGE HODGINS.

To day will long be memorable in the educational history of Ontario—for to-day has been unveiled the first statue ever erected in this Province to one of its own sons.

It will be still more memorable from the fact that that special subject of public interest and national concern which has been signally honoured to-day, is the pre-eminently important one of popular education. These two facts combined give to the celebration and pleasant incidents of the day a peculiar significance, and a special interest.

One of the first indications of a growing national life and a patriotic national spirit is the erection of statues to noble sons who have rendered such valuable services to the State as are recognized and honoured here to-day.

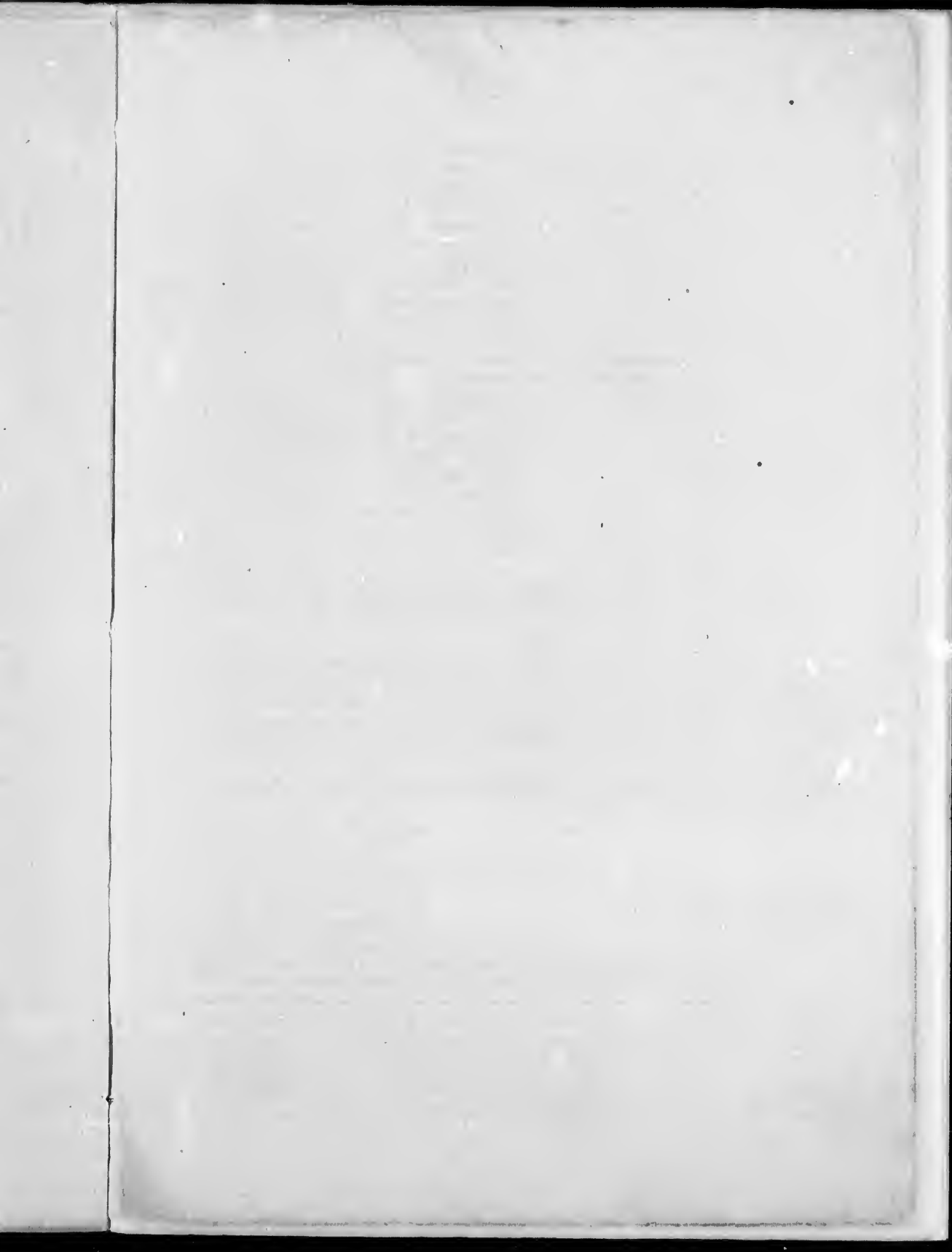
It is a most hopeful sign, as well as an assuring and happy augury for the future of a country, when its patriotism takes the grateful and graceful form of doing honour to those who have aided in laying the foundation of its future greatness and prosperity. This, we all rejoice, has been done by Ontario to-day in the unveiling of the statue of the distinguished Founder of her educational system. She has reared to-day to one of the sons of her soil a noble monument, expressive of grateful acknowledgment for services of the greatest importance and value to her and to the thousands of her sons and daughters yet unborn.

The erection of this statue emphasizes in a striking manner a notable fact, which the mature judgment of the nineteenth century has everywhere endorsed, that :

“Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war.”

1889

(26)



That is, that it is not heroic deeds of valour alone which call forth a nation's gratitude. It further shows us that unswerving devotion to duty in any of the departments of the public service, or professional or private life, which have to do with matters which concern a nation's progress and welfare, is equally recognized, if not more signally honoured, than were deeds of prowess in the days gone by. We have, at all events on this continent, many notable examples of distinguished honour being done to literary men, to men of science and to noted educationists. Any one who has visited the chief city of Massachusetts cannot fail to have seen, on the broad terrace in front of the capitol, a massive bronze statue to Horace Mann, the well-known Founder of the Public School System, not only of Massachusetts, but practically of the New England States. So, in like manner we unveil to-day the statue, not only of the Founder of the School System of Ontario, but of one, the impress of whose hand, and the practical suggestions of whose mature experience, may be recognized in the systems of education of some of the Maritime Provinces, and in those of Manitoba and British Columbia. The first Superintendents of these two Provinces were trained in the schools of Ontario, and are thus the experienced pioneers in the new Provinces of their educational systems. Even the grand old Mother Country has not failed to acknowledge her indebtedness to him whom we honour to-day, for practical suggestions in the solution of the educational problems which confronted her public men during the years reaching from 1860 to 1870.

As to the appropriateness of our erecting a Statue to Egerton Ryerson in Ontario, as was done to Horace Mann, in Massachusetts, I may here quote a reference to the equal value of the labours of these two noted men which was made 25 years ago by that acute observer and experienced educational commissioner, the late well-known and distinguished Bishop Fraser, of Manchester. He said :

"What Education in New England owes to Horace Mann, Education in Canada owes to Egerton Ryerson."

To-day we honor ourselves by seeking to discharge that obligation, at least in part.

There is one circumstance connected with the erection of this statue which, to my mind, gives it a peculiar value and significance. The erection of statues by popular vote, or by the Legislature, gives a quasi, if not a real national character to such erection, but, a statue erected from the proceeds of thousands of small contributions, as in this case, shows that deep down in the hearts of the people of this country there must have been genuine regard for the man whom they thus seek to honour. When a memorial takes such a form as that we may well regard it as more enduring and

precious than either the bronze or marble which constitute the material of its structure.

It devolves upon me, as Chairman of the Committee having charge of this work, and at the kind request of my colleagues,—no less than as the life-long friend and fellow-laborer of him whose deeds and memory we honour to-day—to trace back to their source the origin and underlying principles of our system of education, and to show that these underlying principles and other vital forces were so combined by a master-hand as to form the groundwork, as they have, in their combination, become the charter, of our educational system of to-day.

And here, in this connection, a thought or two strikes me; and each thought contains for us a moral and a lesson.

The first is that educational systems are essentially progressive in their character and purposes, and truly they “never continue in one stay.”

The second is that the earliest sources of what might be called our educational inspiration are now uncertain guides, and, as such, are to-day of doubtful authority.

No one will venture to affirm that even—as it was then considered—the broad and comprehensive scheme of public education sketched by Dr. Ryerson in 1846, should be considered as the acme of our educational achievement of to-day. Nor would any one at all conversant with the condition and progress of education on this continent alone be content to draw his inspiration from, or limit his range of observation to, the New England States as formerly. The examples to be seen, and the experience to be consulted and the systems to be studied, must to-day—so far as the United States is concerned—be sought for in the far-off Western States.

In this matter I speak of what I know; and I speak, therefore, with the more emphasis on this point, because of the primary importance of keeping this Province and the Dominion educationally abreast of the most advanced of the States of the American Union—our near neighbors, and our energetic and actively progressive educational rivals.

As an illustration of these notable facts, I may state that having been selected by the United States Bureau of Education to act as one of seven international educational jurors, at the New Orleans Exhibition of 1885, it was, during six weeks, my duty with others, to examine into, and report upon, the condition and results of the various state systems of education in the Union, and in other countries.

I need not more than state, what you likely anticipate, that France, by her enlightened educational legislation of 1881—providing for manual, or industrial, training in all of her schools—and Germany, by her earlier and more systematized educational



legislation, stand at the head of European States, as does Japan at the head of the whole Eastern World. But, in this connection, the interest to us should be to note the fact that the educational centre in the United States has within the last few years been gradually shifted from the east to the west. As an illustration, I may say that the highest award for the extent, variety and completeness of its educational system in all its details, was unanimously made by the jurors to Minnesota, while Massachusetts and other New England States, with New York, Pennsylvania, etc., were entitled to only second and third class honors. France and Japan justly received first-class honors, while England and other countries (omitting Germany) had to be placed in the second and third class ranks as educating countries.

A revelation of these and other suggestive facts in regard to the progress of education in countries outside of our own, more than ever convinced me of the wisdom of Dr. Ryerson's policy of observation, while head of the Education Department. He laid it down, not so much an educational axiom, as a wise dictum—the result of his educational experience, that—

“There is no department of civil government in which careful preparation, varied study and observation, and independent and uniform action, are so important to success and efficiency, as in founding, maturing and developing a system of public instruction.

He, therefore, wisely devoted a large portion of his time to this “careful preparation,” as well as to “varied study and observation” of systems of Education in Europe and America. And this fact largely accounts for the “success and efficiency” of his efforts in “founding, maturing and developing” our system of public instruction.

When we reflect upon the fact of the immense growth, and the comprehensive character of the educational machinery in operation on this continent alone, and the vast sums expended to keep it in motion, we cannot fail to be profoundly impressed with the serious and grave responsibility which is constantly imposed upon our educational leaders, of being forever on the watch-tower of observation, to note the changes, improvements and advances which are continually taking place in the educational world outside. We are too apt to be content with our own progress, and to measure ourselves by ourselves. In this connection the words recently addressed to the Kingston Board of School Trustees by the Very Rev. Principal Grant, are of special value as an apt illustration of my meaning:—

“During my absence I have studied the school systems of many countries, and have learned lessons that ought to assist me in coming to right conclusions. The world is wider than Canada, or than America. The British Empire itself is wider than this continent, and within its boundaries there are so many educational systems and methods that a man who travels with eyes

and ears open cannot help learning many things that confirm opinions previously held, and suggest improvements on what he may have thought perfect or the necessity of revising his former judgments. He gets new points of view, and that of itself is a great matter."

Our American neighbors became fully alive years ago to the evils of the fluctuating and uncertain character of the prevailing system of educational administration in vogue amongst them. They saw that new and officially untrained men, of merely local experience and knowledge, were constantly being elected to take charge of the administrative department of the schools of a state. Such men were often able educators, but by no means experienced educationists, or masters of systems of education. The American people, shrewd and practical as they are, felt the absolute necessity, therefore, of furnishing such men, and the vast army of their educationists and educators, with full and accurate information on systems and plans of education all over the world. With this object in view, they established a central observatory, or Bureau of Education at Washington. I need hardly say how ably the work of this Bureau was systematized and most efficiently performed under the direction of the Hon. John Eaton, Commissioner of Education. His successive reports and periodical Circulars of Information are mines of educational wealth. Their fulness and comprehensiveness have been a marvel. They have aroused and stimulated educational workers everywhere. They are largely welcomed, and are highly prized in these Provinces and elsewhere, as suggestive, and as invaluable storehouses of information, and of the practical details of education all over the world. They have, therefore, largely supplied the place of personal inquiry and research, and yet have greatly stimulated both.

It was Dr. Ryerson's ideal that sooner or later a similar Bureau would be established by the central government at Ottawa, the object of which would be, not only the supplying of abundant and reliable information to each province on the subject of systems and plans of education, but also, by intercommunication, to secure a general harmony of aim and purpose. And that further, without attempting any interference in local administration, the Bureau would be the means of keeping up an active yet friendly intercolonial rivalry; and thus, on Dominion and national lines, to build up the confederacy, and to stimulate and encourage the efforts made in each province for the promotion of substantial educational progress, combined with efficiency and economy.

It is not my purpose to do more on this occasion than to give a *résumé* of a somewhat elaborate paper (which I have prepared for this occasion), on the early origin and subsequent growth of public education in Ontario. My synopsis of that paper will be chiefly confined to that part—omitting biographical references—which treats of the labors of that distinguished Canadian which Ontario honours to-day in the person of the Rev. Dr. Ryerson.





The educational history of Ontario naturally divides itself into three periods, viz :

1. The early settlement, or United Empire Loyalist period.
2. The period preceding the union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1840.
3. The period since that union, and including the administration of the Education Department by the Rev. Dr. Ryerson, down to 1876.

The first and second periods, I shall touch upon very briefly in this abstract, omitting all but a brief reference to the Colonial Chapter in the history of education on this continent.

During the early settlement period, and that preceding the union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1840, two social forces (which took an educational form later on) were slowly shaping themselves into an antagonistic attitude to each other. This was apparent from the position which the representatives of these forces assumed on the religious, political, and other questions of the day. As yet the question of an educational system for the Province—beyond that of a University and district Grammar Schools—had, down to 1836, taken no definite shape in the public mind. Indeed, such a thing, as we now regard it, was not deemed practical, except by a few leading men who were years in advance of their times.

The first real systematic efforts put forth in America to promote popular education began in New England, and thence spread in all directions. In 1635, the first school was opened in Boston ; and, in 1647, the first legislative enactment in favour of schools was passed in Massachusetts. In 1670, the Governor of Connecticut declared that "one-fourth of the revenue was devoted to schools." Hon. John Eaton, United States Commissioner of Education, in his valuable and comprehensive report for 1875, says :—

"History, with hardly a dissenting voice, accorded to the English colonists of New England the credit of having developed those forms of action, in reference to the education of children, which contained more than any other the distinct features of the systems adopted in this country."

Trained in such an educational school, and animated with the educational zeal of these old colonial times, the "United Empire Loyalists" brought with them into Canada their love for education and their devotion to the sovereign.

The U. E. Loyalists removed to British America in 1783, the year of their exile. Most of them settled in Upper Canada, along the north shore of the Upper St. Lawrence, and the corresponding margin of Lakes Ontario and Erie. They brought with them from the old colonies their educational traditions and their devotion to the flag of the Empire. Those of them who had settled along the Bay of Quinté, united in 1789, in framing a memorial to

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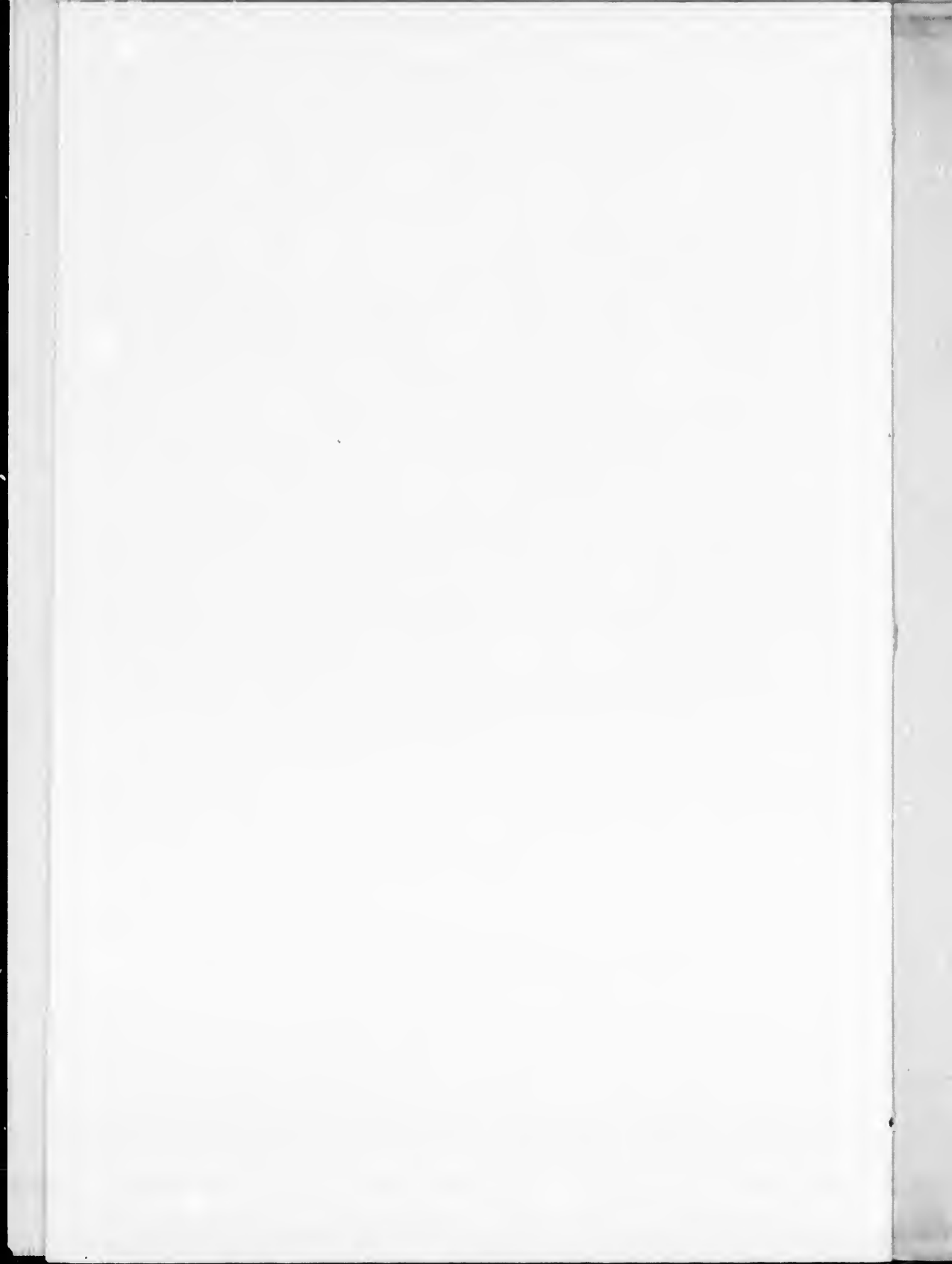
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Governor-General Lord Dorchester (Sir Guy Carleton), in which, lamenting the educational privations which they had endured since their settlement in Canada, they prayed the Governor to establish a "seminary of learning" at Frontenac (Kingston). Their prayer was granted, so far as the setting apart of lands for the support of the seminary was concerned, as well as the support of schools wherever the expatriated colonists had settled, or might settle, in the country.

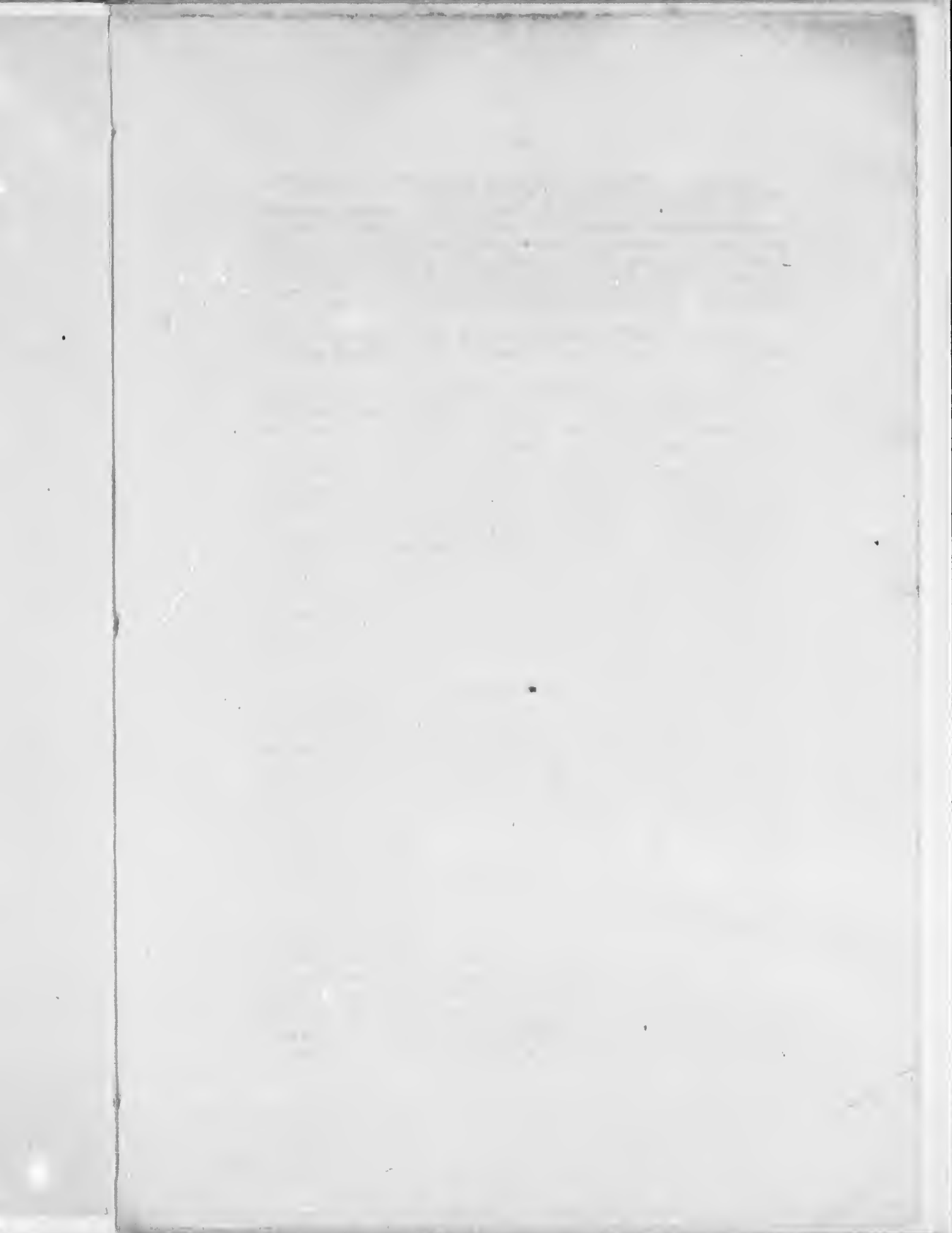
Immediately after the passing of the Constitutional or Quebec Act, of 1791, by which, among other things, Upper Canada was separated from Quebec, the Governor of the new Province (J. Graves Simcoe), sought the co-operation of the Church of England Bishop (Mountain), of Quebec, who had ecclesiastical jurisdiction over both Provinces, in urging upon the Home Government the necessity of providing for a University and for classical schools in Upper Canada. Provision for elementary schools formed no part of this scheme. The British Colonial idea of providing for such schools never crossed the mind of the Governor nor of the Bishop. They were filled with the old-fashioned English ideas of those times—that the systematic education of the masses was unnecessary, as it might tend to revolution, and the upsetting of the established order of things.

As the years passed on, nothing practically was done by the Legislature for the promotion of education until 1809, when a few district grammar schools were established. Subsequently, Rev. Dr. Strachan became a Master of one of these schools, and Rev. George Ryerson and his brother Egerton, Master and Usher of another. Seven years afterwards (in 1816), an attempt was made to establish a system of common schools, and to provide for their maintenance. For the first three years, the parliamentary grant was \$24,000 per annum, but, in 1820 the old-fashioned ideas again asserted themselves, and it was suddenly reduced to \$10,000 a year—closing up schools here and there, all over the province, and inflicting grievous hardship on many worthy, and (in the scornful language of the day, and even of the parliamentary report) many unworthy teachers also.

For 20 years—from 1816 to 1836—spasmodic efforts were made from time to time by progressive and earnest men in the Legislature to establish a system of schools. Enquiries were instituted and reports made, chiefly but not wholly, by the House of Assembly. A vigorous contest was maintained between that body and the Legislative Council on the subject. Bills were passed by the Assembly and rejected by the Council. The contest continued until the Rebellion occurred, and this event turned all men's thoughts into another channel for the time.

As to the state of education in the Province prior to this date, a Report of the House of Assembly, in 1831, states that—





"The Common Schools of this Province are generally in so deplorable a state that they scarcely deserve the name of schools."

"The insufficiency of the school fund to support competent, respectable teachers has degraded common school teaching from a regular business to a mere matter of convenience to transient persons, or common idlers, who often teach school one season and leave it vacant until it accommodates some other like person, whereby the minds of our youth are left without cultivation, or, what is still worse, frequently with vulgar, low-bred, vicious, or intemperate examples before them, in the capacity of monitors," i. e., teachers.

Reports of committees of the House of Assembly in 1832, 1833 and 1835, deplore the continuance of this untoward state of things.

The Legislative Council, which had been the chief obstructive in school legislation of these days, in inviting a conference with the House of Assembly, in 1838, thus explains the reason of its rejection of a School Bill then passed by the House :

"The Legislative Council have to acquaint the House of Assembly that they cannot pass the School Bill [sent up to them] because it proposes to levy an assessment to the extent of 1½d. [3 cents] in the £ [\$4] to support Common Schools ; and as acts have lately passed imposing rates for . . . building jails and court-houses and macadamized roads, the Council fear that the assessment for common schools might be found burthensome." etc.

Thus, because jails, court-houses and roads were considered more important than schools, the last Act for the promotion of education ever passed by the U. C. House of Assembly was rejected by the Legislative Council. Such was the untoward state of affairs when the Legislative Union of Upper and Lower Canada took place in 1840.

Among the important measures passed by the first Parliament of United Canada was one providing for the establishment of a municipal system in Upper Canada, and partly so in Lower Canada. On this system was engrafted a scheme of public education, applicable to the two provinces alike, and a liberal provision was made for its maintenance. Separate Schools were then first established. After two years' trial, it was found that so diverse were the social and other conditions of the two Canadas, that the School Act of 1841 was repealed, and one adapted to each Province was passed in 1843. Separate Schools were continued.

Up to this time, Dr. Ryerson's energies had been engrossed in contending for the civil and religious rights of the people. He had also, ten years before, projected and collected money for the establishment of an academy, or college, for higher education at Cobourg. These early efforts of his, and the after establishment of Victoria College at Cobourg and Queen's College at Kingston as universities in 1840-41, aroused a wide-spread interest in education generally, which bore good fruit afterwards. Dr. Ryerson became President of Victoria University in 1841. In 1844, he was appointed Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada.

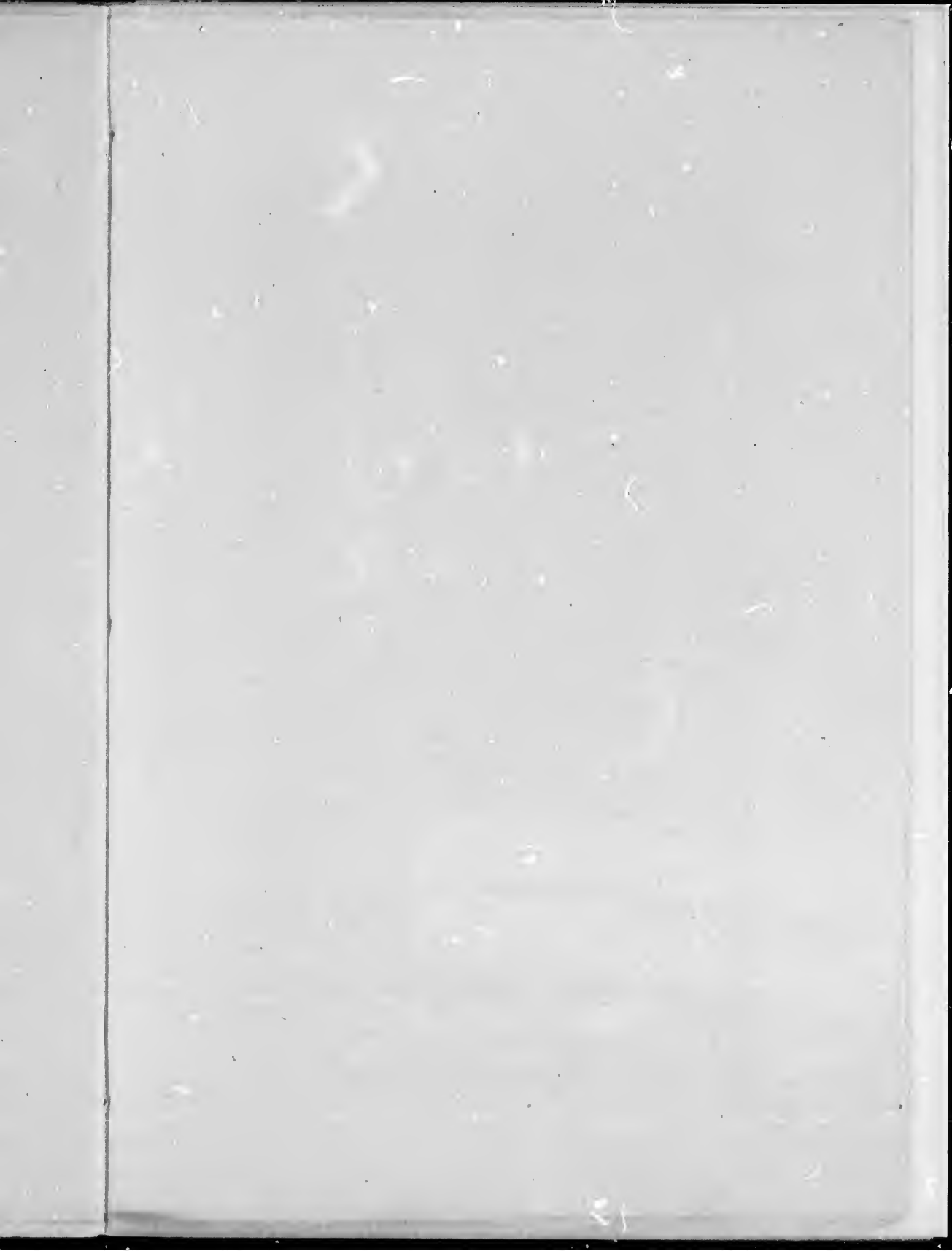
Immediately after his appointment he went to Europe, and remained there and in the United States for over a year, making himself familiar with systems of education in these countries. On his return, he submitted to the Government an elaborate report on a "System of Public Instruction for Upper Canada," which was published in 1846. He also prepared a draft of a School Bill to give effect to the recommendations contained in his report, so far as rural schools were concerned. In the following year he prepared a comprehensive measure in regard to schools in cities, towns, and incorporated villages.

It was not to be expected that so comprehensive a scheme of education as that proposed by Dr. Ryerson would meet with general acceptance. The very reverse was the fact. It was assailed as revolutionary and oppressive. It certainly was revolutionary in the best sense; but not oppressive, for it was largely permissive and wholly tentative. And, for many years the town of Richmond, in the County of Carleton, refused to establish schools under its provisions. The new measures were so far revolutionary that they differed almost wholly from the former projected school acts. The system proposed was composite. Its machinery was adopted chiefly from the State of New York. The principle upon which the schools were to be supported was taken from New England—Normal schools, from Germany, and the uniform series of school books, from Ireland. All were, however, so blended together and harmonized, to meet the requirements and circumstances of the country that they became, in Dr. Ryerson's moulding hands, "racy of the soil."

Up to this time no one but Dr. Ryerson had been able to give a practical turn to the rather crude theories which had been held on the subject of popular education. He, however, had to pay the penalty of all such reformers; but yet he lived to see the fuller details of his system of education worked out on his own lines.

It is needless to say that Dr. Ryerson's scheme was assailed as impracticable. This, I have explained. It was held to be too comprehensive for the country. Even his reference to the compact and systematized plan adopted in Prussia was seized upon as an indication of his covert design to introduce the baneful system of so-called "Prussian despotism." His commendation of "free schools," as a prospective feature of our educational system, was denounced as an attempt to legalize an "outrageous robbery," and as a communistic "war against property."

Several District Councils arrayed themselves in opposition to the new order of things. One of them, in the west, objected to the establishment of a Normal School, and, in a memorial to the Legislature, maintained the desirability of "securing, as heretofore, the services of those whose physical disabilities from age



render this mode of obtaining a livelihood the only one suited to their decaying energies." Contrast the enlightened discussion of such questions to-day with the unenlightened ignorance of that day, and you can form some idea of the magnitude of Dr. Ryerson's labours, not only in laying broad and deep the foundations for his superstructure, but in seeking to overcome the deep-rooted and unreasoning prejudices of those days—days indeed of anxiety and toil and opposition, which I so well remember.

At this time, an administration was in office, some members of which were personally unfavourable to Dr. Ryerson's continuance in office. One of these, a prominent and popular member of the cabinet, induced his colleagues to assent to the passage of a school bill which practically legislated Dr. Ryerson out of office, besides being objectionable in other respects. He at once tendered his resignation. The Hon. Robert Baldwin, Attorney-General, declined to recommend its acceptance. By advice of the Cabinet, the operation of the bill was suspended until a new one, framed by Dr. Ryerson, could be prepared and passed. The result was the passage of the school act of 1850—popular in its character and comprehensive in its provisions. It now forms the broad basis of the present school system of Ontario.

It was fortunate that just at this crisis Canada was favoured with the presence of one of the most able and accomplished of the Queen's Representatives, the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine. It is a gratifying fact that he identified himself personally, as well as officially, with the general education and intellectual improvement of the people of Canada during the whole of his seven years' term of office. He was deeply interested in the success of our system of education, for he at once perceived the great importance to the whole country of the question involved, and which was then so fiercely discussed. The first bill to which His Excellency gave the royal assent, after the removal of the seat of government to Toronto, was the school bill passed in 1850, to which I have referred. He afterwards laid the corner stone of these handsome buildings accompanying the act with one of his most able and eloquent speeches.

In founding the system of public instruction in Upper Canada, Dr. Ryerson wisely laid down certain fundamental principles, which he believed to be essential to the stability and success of that system. These general principles may be thus summarized:—

1. That the machinery of education should be in the hands of the people themselves, and should be managed exclusively through their agency.
2. That the ratepayers should be consulted beforehand, in regard to all school legislation. This he did himself every few years, by means of public meetings and conferences.

3. That the interference of the department, by aid, or otherwise, should only take place when it could most effectively be used to stimulate and assist local effort in this great work.

4. That a thorough and systematic inspection of schools was essential to their vitality and efficiency.

5. That the property of the country should be responsible for, and should contribute towards, the education of the entire youth of the country; and that, as a complement to this, "compulsory education should necessarily be enforced."

These, and other important principles, Dr. Ryerson kept steadily in view during his long administration of the school system of his native Province. He was not able to embody them all at once in his earlier school bills, but he did so in the final legislation on the subject with which he was connected in 1870-1871.

I will now give a brief summary, in chronological order, of the successive steps which Dr. Ryerson took to develop the system of education which he had founded.

In 1850-51, Dr. Ryerson, while in England, made arrangements for establishing a library, a prize book and an apparatus and map depository, in connection with his department.

Another active agency which he employed to diffuse valuable information and to enlighten the public mind in regard to popular education and school law administration was instituted in 1848. This was a monthly journal of education, which was sent free to school trustee corporations, superintendents and inspectors. It did good service during the 30 years of its publication, but was discontinued in 1878.

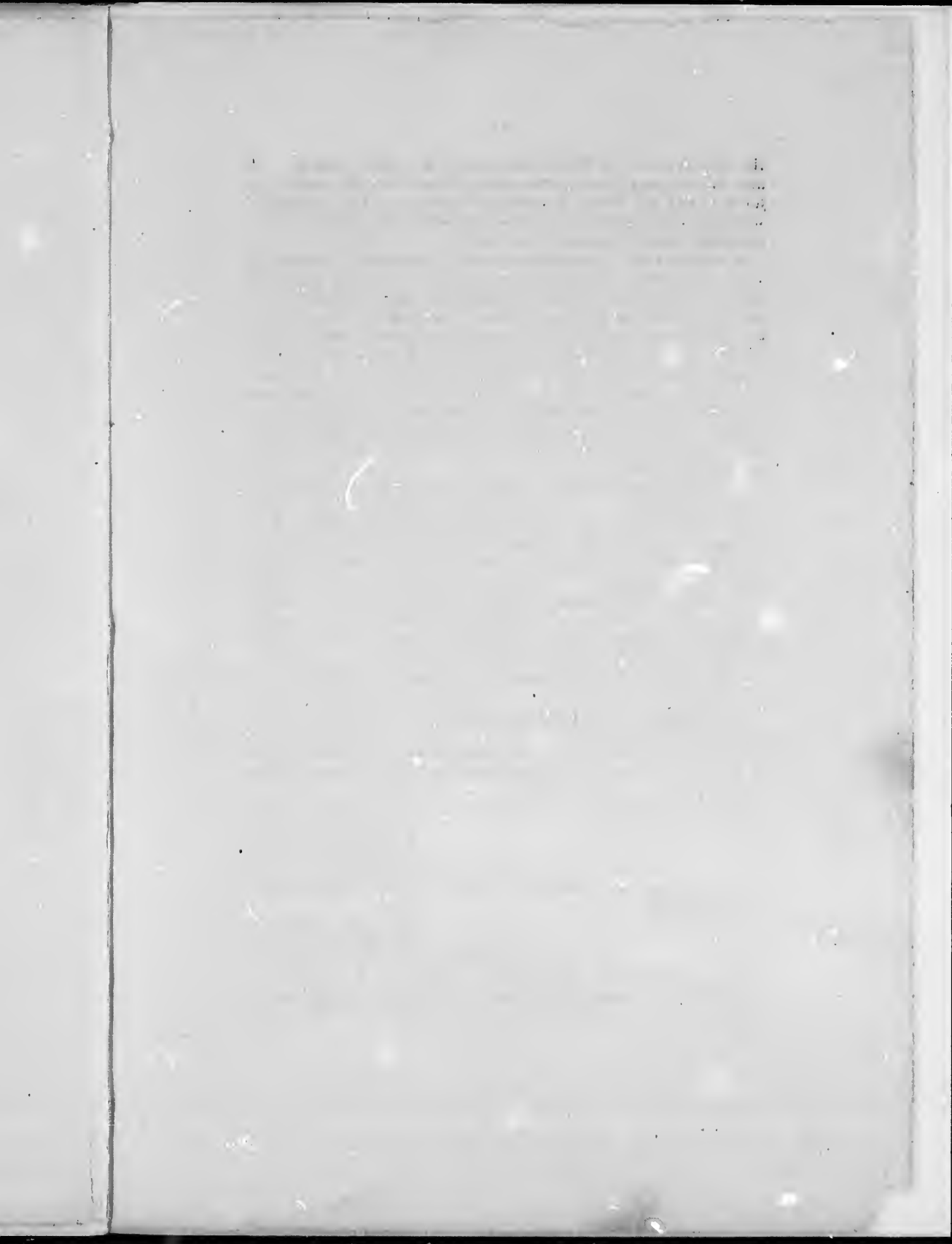
In 1855, meteorological stations were established in connection with 12 county grammar schools—10 following the coast line of the lakes and on large rivers, and 2 entirely inland.

In 1857 Dr. Ryerson made his third educational tour in Europe, where he procured at Antwerp, Brussels, Florence, Rome, Paris, and London, an admirable collection of copies of paintings by the old masters; also statues, busts, etc., besides various articles of a typical character for a projected school of art and design, then contemplated.

In 1858-61, Dr. Ryerson took a leading part in a protracted public discussion before a committee of the House of Assembly in favor of aid to the outlying denominational universities, chiefly, as he stated, in terms of the Hon. Robert Baldwin's liberalized University Act of 1853.

In 1867, Dr. Ryerson made his fourth and final educational tour in Europe and America. On his return he submitted to the Government a highly valuable "Special Report on the Systems and State of Popular Education in the several countries of Europe and the United States of America, with practical suggestions for





the improvement of Public Instruction in Upper Canada." He also made a separate and interesting "Report on the Institutions for the Deaf and Dumb in various countries." A few years afterwards he was gratified at seeing institutions of a similar kind in successful operation in this Province.

For the various objects which he had recommended during the years from 1850 to 1870, liberal grants were made by the Legislature. The policy of the Government during those years was to aid Dr. Ryerson in building up and consolidating the system of public instruction which he had taken such pains to establish. The result was that our school system grew and expanded in every direction, and became firmly fixed in the affections of the people. In this way it came to be regarded with pride as one of the most successful and popular systems of education on the continent. And yet, as I have shown, he was continually suggesting improvements in it, for he always held that there was room, as well as a necessity, for them.

School legislation, chiefly in regard to high schools and matters of detail, took place at intervals during the intervening years, but it was in 1870 and 1874 that the final legislation under Dr. Ryerson's auspices took place. That of 1870 was strikingly progressive, and took a wide range. That of 1874 was largely supplemental and remedial.

The Act of 1870 introduced into our school law for the first time some important principles, which, as yet, had not received legislative sanction. They were chiefly those which related, among others, to the following matters:—

1. Governmental, combined with improved local, inspection of schools.
2. A high and fixed standard of qualifications for inspectors of public schools.
3. The abolition of non-certificated township superintendents of schools, and the substitution therefor of duly licensed county inspectors.
4. The institution of simultaneous and uniform examinations in the several counties for teachers desiring certificates of qualification. This principle was soon extended to other examinations, including competitive examinations in counties, etc.
5. The fixing and rendering uniform of a higher standard of qualification for public and high school teachers.
6. Giving the profession of teaching a fixed legal status, and providing more fully and equitably for the retirement and united support, by the profession and the legislature, of worn out or disabled teachers.
7. The establishment by law of a national system of free schools.

8. Declaring the right by law, as well as the necessity, of every child to attend some school, thus recognizing the principle of, and providing for, "compulsory education."

9. Requiring, by law, that adequate school accommodation, in regard to school-house, playground and site, be provided by the trustees, for all of the resident children of school age in their localities.

10. Prescribing a more systematic and practical course of study for each of the classes in the public schools.

11. Discriminating, by a clearly defined line, the course of study in public and high schools respectively.

12. Providing for the establishment and support of collegiate institutes, or local colleges.

13. Requiring municipalities to maintain high schools and collegiate institutes, equally with the public schools, and as part of the general school system.

14. Providing, at the option of the ratepayers, for the substitution of township boards of education, in place of local trustee boards.

15. Authorizing the establishment of industrial schools.

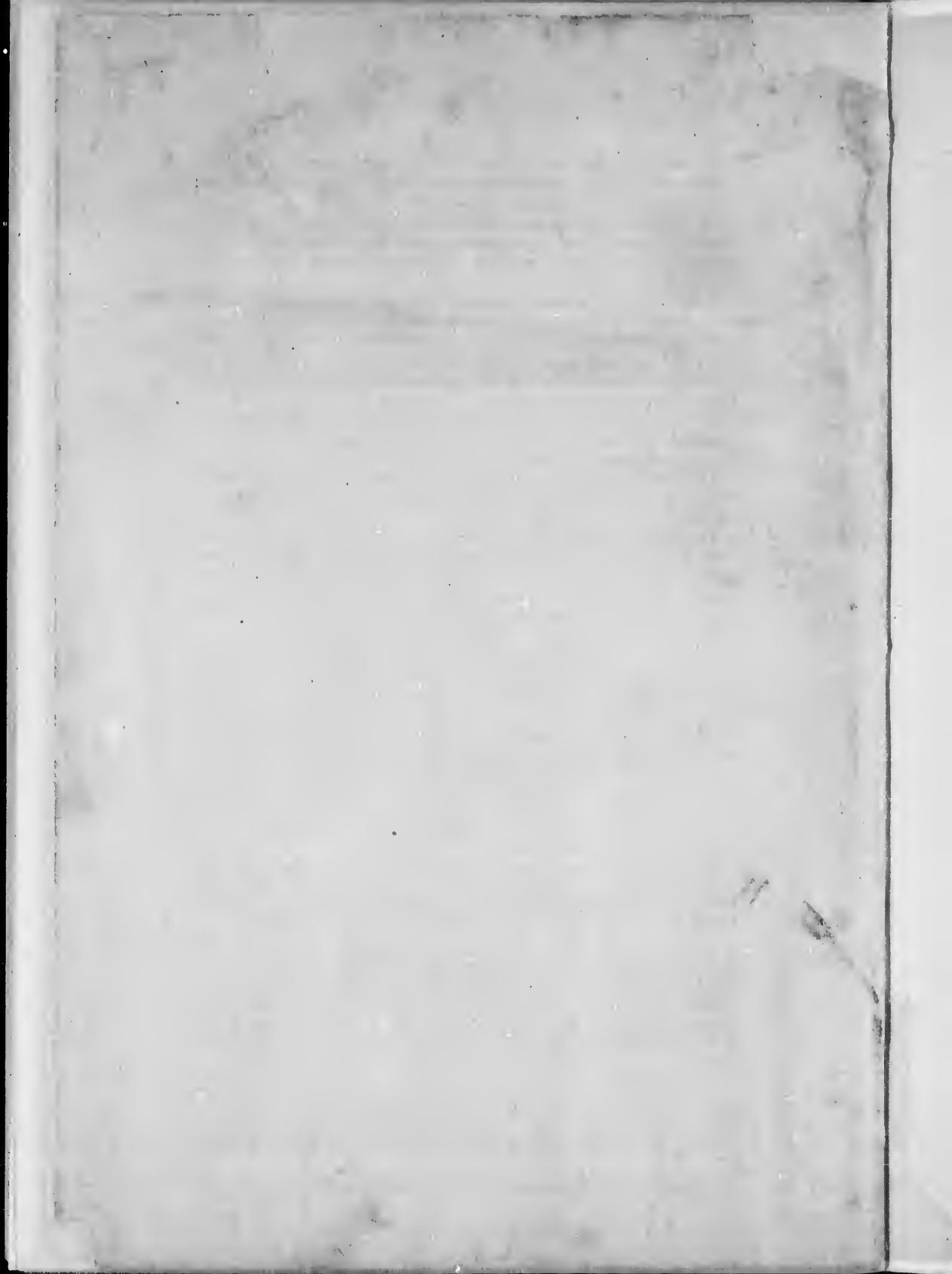
Such were the main features of the comprehensive and progressive School Act passed in 1870. In many respects it revolutionized the existing state of things. It gave a wonderful impetus to the schools, and to every department of the school system—the effects of which we feel to this day.

The last important official act of Dr. Ryerson was to arrange for the educational exhibit of the department at the Centennial Exhibition in 1876. That was most successfully carried out; and, at the close of that exhibition, the following highly gratifying "award" was communicated to the then venerable ex-chief, after he had retired from office. The award was made by the American Centennial Commission, and was to the following effect:—

"AN AWARD."

"For a quite complete and admirably arranged exhibition, illustrating the Ontario system of education, and its excellent results. Also for the efficiency of an administration which has gained for the Ontario department a most honorable distinction among government educational agencies."

This "award" was a great gratification to the retired chief of the department—then in his 73rd year. It amply repaid him, and was, as he said, a most pleasing and unlooked for compensation for his many years of anxious toil and solicitude while endeavouring, to the best of his ability, to lay the foundations of our educational system





In this sketch, I have only given a brief outline of the paper which I have prepared for this occasion, and which will subsequently be published.

I will only add a few figures to show what a great advance our school system made under the administration of Dr. Ryerson :

In 1844, there were 2,706 public school teachers employed. In 1876, there were 6,185. The total expenditure for public schools, in 1844, was only \$275,000. In 1876, it had reached the grand sum of over \$3,000,000 (\$3,006,456), and including the expenditure for high schools, the sum of \$3,538,952. The number of pupils in the public schools in 1844 was 96,576. In 1876 the number was close on 500,000.

Having been intimately concerned in all of the events and educational matters to which I have referred, it may not be out of place for me to add a few words of a personal character in conclusion.

At the end of this year I shall have completed my more than 45 years' service, as chief of the staff of the Education Department of Ontario.

For over 40 years I enjoyed the personal friendship of the distinguished man whose memory we honour here to-day—32 years of which were passed in active and pleasant service under him. How can I, therefore, regard without emotion the events of to-day? They bring vividly to my recollection many memorable incidents and interesting events of our educational past known only to myself. They also deeply impress me with the fleeting and transitory nature of all things human. The Chief and sixteen counsellors, appointed and elected to assist him, have all passed away. His great work remains, however, and his invaluable services to the country we all gratefully recall to-day, while his native land lovingly acknowledges these services in erecting this noble monument to his memory. Truly indeed and faithfully did Egerton Ryerson make good his promise to the people of this Province, when he solemnly pledged himself, on accepting office in 1844—

“To provide for my native country a system of education, and facilities for intellectual improvement, not second to those of any country in the world.”

God grant that the seed sown and the foundations thus laid, with such anxious toil and care—and yet in faith—may prove to be one of our richest heritages, so that in the future, wisdom and knowledge, in the highest and truest sense, may be the stability of our times.



