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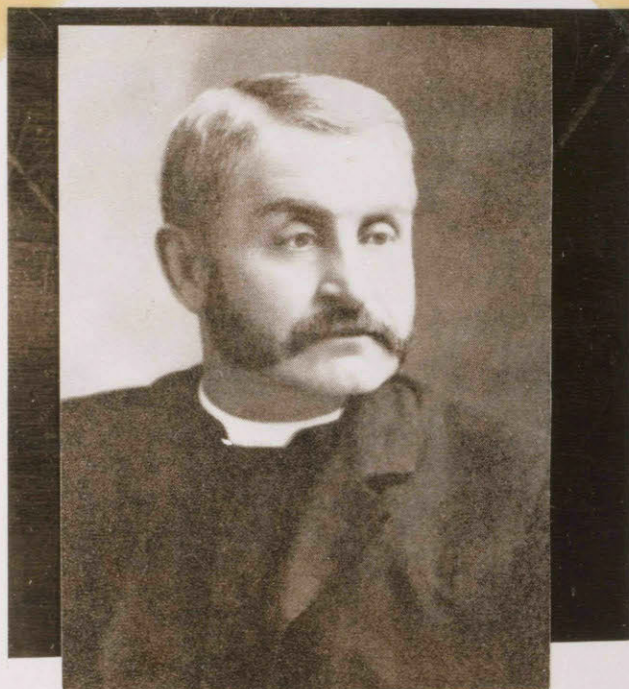


A STUDY OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF
DR. E.I. REXFORD
TO EDUCATION IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
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of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
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Elson I. Rexford.

Canon Elson Irving Rexford, M.A., LL.D., D.C.L., D.D.

(From a photograph taken about 1905)

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P A R T I

INTRODUCTION: DEFINITION OF THE STUDY

The history of education in Canada, either for its own sake or as part of the general social history of the country, is as yet relatively unexplored. There are literally hundreds of topics inviting the research student, although year by year specific studies are being made. Such works as Professor Sissons' definitive examination of Egerton Ryerson's life and letters¹ are, of course, outstanding. But many more modest researches are going forward - particularly at the graduate level in Canadian universities - such as Miss McNaughton's study of education in New Brunswick from 1784 to 1900, or Canon Millman's study of Jacob Mountain,² or the long-term plan at the University of British Columbia to write and document a thorough-going history of education

1 - C.B.Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, His Life and Letters.

2 - Katharine McNaughton, The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900.
University of New Brunswick Master's Thesis, 1946.
T.R.Millman, Jacob Mountain, First Lord Bishop of Quebec.
McGill University Doctor's Thesis, 1943.

in that province. Perhaps one day some scholar may be able to gather together this growing body of material and compile a really comprehensive history of education in Canada.

Meanwhile it is interesting to note that many of the studies are concerned with individual men, leaders in the fields of education. This is all to the good, for sometimes there appears to be a tendency to interpret social history largely in terms of movements and institutions, without any adequate understanding of the personalities behind them.

This thesis is a study of the lifework of Canon Elson Irving Rexford, M.A., LL.D., D.C.L., D.D. It is of interest, then, from the two viewpoints of the history of education and of biography. Beyond that, however, it is concerned with the Province of Quebec, a most fascinating area for the educational historian because of the continuing strivings and evolving patterns of two separate cultures, one French-Catholic and the other English-Protestant, to maintain their identity and separate schools. Moreover, Rexford was actively engaged in education in this province for no fewer than sixty-eight years from his first appointment as an assistant master in Montreal in 1868. His years of service thus span practically the whole of that period in which Canada was coming of age as a nation. And it is still possible to talk to his sons, and to other men who knew him and worked with him. His work is sufficiently near in point of time to permit considerable first-hand investigation, while yet removed a little

from that which is immediately contemporary, and which therefore is extremely difficult to consider with any degree of detachment. It is said that the passage of many decades allows for the development of a more accurate historical perspective. Unfortunately, sometimes it also results in the burying or destruction of part of the evidence. Perhaps, in this respect, 1948-49 is a most opportune time to study the lifework of Rexford.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study proposes to consider the following questions:

- (a) What was the nature and extent of Rexford's contribution to education in the Province of Quebec?
- (b) To what extent was Rexford a product of his times, and conversely to what extent did he help to shape those times?

Question (b) raises the age-old philosophical problem as to whether man does shape his own destiny, or is simply a child of that destiny. It is far from the purpose of this thesis to consider that problem. But it is not enough merely to record chronologically the events of Rexford's life: his appointments, actions, dictums. Rather will the attempt be made to consider them against the changing background of educational thought and ideals before which Rexford worked. The value of the study should not be simply the biographical one, although that has its place; rather the historical one

as well: the additional light which may be cast upon the course of educational development in this province during nearly seven decades from Confederation.

METHOD

The study has been in process for about a year, and has divided itself into four stages:

- (1) A preparatory survey of the field, leading to the blocking out of the major areas in which Rexford worked:
 - (a) His education, and early teaching days in Montreal schools.
 - (b) English Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction, May 1882--September 1891.
 - (c) Rector of the High School of Montreal, September 1891--December 1903.
 - (d) Principal of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College, January 1904--May 1928.
 - (e) Member (and for a time Chairman) of the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction, October 1891--September 1936.
 - (f) Dean of Theology, Khaki University, 1918-19.
 - (g) Boards of Religious Education of the Church of England in Canada.
- (2) The second stage consisted of the collection of evidence bearing on each of the areas listed above. The following were the main avenues which presented themselves:
 - (a) Rexford's writings. These are relatively few in number. Notable are an unpublished history of

high school education in Montreal , and a detailed monograph entitled "A Rexford Family", as well as his volume on school law in Quebec, and the pamphlet on the Jewish population and the Protestant schools of Montreal. In addition there are several speeches, magazine and newspaper articles, and his annual reports in his various appointments. Orrin B. Rexford, the Doctor's son, has also made available certain MS. notes and speeches of his father's, as well as certain annotated volumes from his father's library. Unfortunately Rexford appears to have kept no diaries, and available correspondence is rather meagre.

- (b) The records of the Montreal Protestant School Board and of the High School of Montreal.
- (c) The Provincial Archives, and the fyles of the Department of Education at Quebec, including the correspondence and minutes of the Protestant Committee.
- (d) The records and library of the Diocesan College, and the Diocesan Archives in Montreal and Quebec.
- (e) A mass of newspaper articles concerning Rexford's work, or the work of the institutions with which he was associated.
- (f) The records of the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers, and of the Dominion Education Association (now the Canadian Education Association).
- (g) Men who knew Rexford personally, and/or were associated with him in some phase or other of his work. Heading the list is his son, Orrin B. Rexford, who has been most co-operative. Others include Dr. W.P.Percival, Director of Protestant Education in Quebec; Dr. O.W.Howard, recently retired professor at the Diocesan College; Dean Sinclair Laird of the School for Teachers at Macdonald College, one-time colleague of Rexford's on the Protestant Committee, together with Mr. Howard Murray; Mr. A.R.McBain, formerly of the High School of Montreal; Canon R.A.Hiltz of the General Board of Religious Education of the Church of England in Canada; and Dr. D.L. Ritchie, retired Principal of the United Theological College in Montreal. These men and others have not only filled in some of the gaps in the written data as to time, place and attitudes, but have also supplied something of the warm human touch which appears to have been ever-present in the man, but

which rarely finds its way into minutes and other formal records.

(3) and (4) The third stage of the study consisted of checking, assessing and collating the material gathered, leading up to stage four, the actual writing stage, in accordance with the plan outlined below.

OUTLINE

From the evidence, as will be seen in subsequent pages of this thesis, Rexford's chief contributions to education in Quebec were in two fields: firstly, administration - especially as a founder, organizer and systematizer; and secondly, religious education - both in the schools and through the churches. Accordingly the main body of the thesis is divided into two parts (Parts III and IV) to correspond to these two main fields of contribution. Part II is a discussion of Rexford's family background, education, and early days as a teacher, pointing to the career to follow. The final Part seeks to sum up, point up and evaluate his achievements and philosophy.

The title of this thesis is "A Study of the Contributions of Dr. E.I. Rexford to Education in the Province of Quebec". The word study was selected advisedly. In the first instance it implies a certain modesty of approach. It has

been possible only to hint at many problems in this essay. That is true, for example, of some aspects of Rexford's work in the Church of England, which has been treated somewhat sketchily inasmuch as it deals with a wider area than the Province of Quebec and because of the conviction that it is a subject of sufficient scope to constitute a separate thesis. Sources for further study have, however, been indicated wherever possible.

On the other hand the word study also appears in the title to suggest that an attempt has been made to interpret and assess Rexford's work. This appears largely in the concluding Part V; although a certain amount is done throughout the "fact-finding" Parts as well, both unconsciously by virtue of the very evidence adduced, and consciously inasmuch as the changing background of contemporary educational ideas and ideals is sketched in as the work progresses.

P A R T I I

THE YOUNG SCHOOLMASTER

Family Background

The year 1850 was a bright one for Orrin Rexford and his wife Eliza Dimond. Married in the fall of 1848, they had taken over the Rexford Farm at South Bolton (or Rexford's Corners). The land was good and well-developed: parts of it had been cleared for fifty years. Buildings were adequate. The modest cottage stood on a height, commanding a view to the east of the Missisquoi Valley and the mountains beyond, with the narrow road winding its way for four miles to Lake Memphremagog. True, there was not much money, and the twenty-five-year-old couple had undertaken to provide for Orrin's parents and unmarried sister. But the herds of dairy and beef cattle were growing, the feed crops were promising; and on June 17, 1850, a son was born: Elson Irving Rexford.

The Rexfords were well-known in the area.¹ Following the American Revolutionary War they had been caught in the

1 - Vide Appendix A, The Rexford Family Tree.

tide of Loyalist emigration from Connecticut.¹ Isaac Rexford, Elson's great-grandfather, had paused for a time at Addison, Vermont, before entering the woods of Lower Canada, with four brothers, beginning in March, 1794. The ice had not yet broken on the waterways, so that it was possible to drive an ox-team bearing necessary supplies. After a seven-day trip from Frelighsburg (a distance of about thirty-five miles), camp was made on the eastern shores of Memphremagog, near the present village of Georgeville. These "shrewd and hardy farmers" had found the good soil they were seeking "....on hardwood hills facing the sun."² They began the business of clearing homesteads, and of raising goodly families; and within a few years the Rexfords had so spread throughout the area that in 1832 Whiting Rexford, Elson's grandfather, had been able to sell his original homestead to one brother, while purchasing the South Bolton farm on the other side of the lake from another brother!

Elson's mother, Eliza Dimond, also sprang from New England stock. She was the eighth child of John Dimond, who

- 1 - Rexford himself uses the phrase "the Rexford Loyalists" (A Rexford Family, 1794-1902, p.2). In view of their comparatively late arrival in Lower Canada, However (1794), it might be reasonable to suggest Professor Lower's classification of "post-Loyalist". It is estimated that in 1813 80% of the English-speaking residents of the two Canadas were of American birth, of which three-quarters were post-Loyalists or non-Loyalists: plain New England men "....who had no prejudice against British land grants." Vide A.R.M. Lower: Immigration and Settlement in Canada, 1812-1820; pp.37ff.; and H.F. Angus, editor: Canada and Her Great Neighbour; p.42.
- 2 - W.H. Siebert: American Loyalists in the Eastern Seigneuries and Townships of Quebec; p.17.

had come to Lower Canada with his father Reuben about 1800 from Ipping, New Hampshire. They had homesteaded near Brome Lake, and in 1818 had moved to Knowlton Landing.

Orrin and Eliza Rexford were a capable young couple: hardy, self-reliant, God-fearing. It is well that they were, too; for when Elson was three years old and his sister only a few months, Orrin was "....taken seriously ill with an affection of the knee which practically incapacitated him and made it impossible for him to take any part in the practical duties of farm life, and the burden.....therefore fell very heavily upon his wife."¹ There were lean times ahead. Orrin remained a partial cripple to the end of his days, and expenses piled up for hired help and medical attention, especially since Eliza was rarely without some invalid relative from one side of the family or another to nurse in her home.

Rexford wrote of his father:

For more than forty years Father....fought bravely against the almost impossible conditions of conducting farming operations under continued ill-health with frequent periods of serious illness....The courage and perseverance which he manifested in using whatever physical strength he had is worthy of all praise. He had very high ideals of life and conduct and a great horror of debt....

While Father was quick-tempered and generally in physical discomfort, he never allowed himself to be betrayed into the use of objectionable language....He

1 - Elson I. Rexford, A Rexford Family, 1794-1902; p.7.

did not use tobacco nor intoxicants....While he was reserved in his religious experiences, Sunday observance and Church attendance were prominent features of his family life.¹

Rexford also had the greatest of respect for his mother. He speaks of her strong religious convictions, her sense of duty, and spirit of self-sacrifice and service; of her keen judgment of character, which led him to consult her many times in later years; of her sympathetic but firm handling of the children: even as adults they seldom disregarded her expressed wishes.² Certainly in the earlier years especially she must have been what her Yankee neighbours would have called "a good manager". Housekeeper, nurse, mother, farmer - yet with time left over for church work and even teaching.

Education

Convictions of the supreme importance of education came honestly to Rexford: through his post-Loyalist forbears. Of these Yankee immigrants' views on education Stephen Leacock says, ".....They came with their Thanksgiving dinners of Massachusetts, half-appetite, half-religion, originating in a turkey-feed with the Indians in 1630; and with their spellers and their spelling bees. They spoke of their 'dooty'

1 - Ibid; p.18.

2 - Ibid; pp. 23f.

and they 'reckoned' and 'guessed' and 'calculated'."1

Dr. G.W. Parmelee, who succeeded Rexford as English Secretary of the Department, says less picturesquely but perhaps more scientifically:

Of the old Puritan stock, most of them were animated by high ideals in regard to education and had been trained to self-government. They left fairly good schools behind them, and coming into the forest they adhered to the principles so well illustrated by the Massachusetts law of 1847, which in quaint language ordered that every township "after the Lord had increased them to fifty householders" should provide a schoolmaster "to teach all such children as resort to him to write and read."....
....An outstanding feature of the struggles of these men to hew out homes for themselves was the sacrifices they made for education. Probably few of them could have given economic reasons for the faith that was in them, but they undoubtedly had the conviction that education was a necessity of life....."2

The New England immigrants had brought with them a firm belief in public education and also an established tradition of local control and responsibility on the part of residents of a given district. New England had taken the lead in the provision of popular education. Naturally enough, men who believed that the Bible was the source of authority also thought that every man should have sufficient intellectual training to read the word of God - both for his own sake, and for that of the community.³

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- 1 - Stephen Leacock: Canada, the Foundations of Its Future; p.116.
 - 2 - G.W.Parmelee: "English Education in Quebec"; Shortt and Doughty: Canada and Its Provinces; Vol.16, p.456.
 - 3 - For a lucid account of these traditions vide George H. Martin: The Evolution of the Massachusetts Public School System; pp.8ff.

In the Eastern Townships the New Englanders had set up local schools similar to those they had known at home; nor had the district schools changed in practice very much by the 1850's when young Elson was ready to attend, despite the School Acts of 1846 and 1851. The procedure was simple. Some leading man would convene a meeting of his neighbours; they would choose a site for the school, construct it, engage a teacher (the chief qualifications seemed to be some knowledge of the three R's and the ability to stand "the supreme test of the classroom") who "boarded around" with the families of his pupils. Schools generally operated for two four-month terms each year. Often a young woman taught the summer term, but it usually required the firm hand of a man to "keep" the winter term, when the boys and young men were free to attend.

In view of his father's illness, the growing boy Elson had more than the usual number of chores to do about the farm. In fact in later years he looked back gratefully to the foundations of industry and physical vigour which had been laid of necessity on the farm at South Bolton. His farm work was never allowed to interfere with his schooling, however. We are told that before her marriage his mother had "equipped herself for teaching in the elementary schools"¹ (presumably had been granted an Elementary Diploma by a board

1 - Elson I. Rexford, op. cit.; p.6.

of examiners under the Act of 1846). Moreover the first schoolhouse in the South Bolton district had been erected on Rexford property a stone's throw from the house; and when no other suitable teacher could be obtained, Eliza Rexford herself took charge.¹

For his superior schooling Elson was packed off for a week or more at a time to relatives at Knowlton, to attend a term at West Brome School where there was a "good teacher", another term at Mansonville, and then Knowlton Academy. During the winter of 1855-56 he was able to study at home, for a Reverend Mr. Fessendon, a McGill graduate, made the Rexford home his headquarters while in South Bolton, and in return gave Elson private tuition.

By the summer of 1866 he had completed his superior schooling, and with some promise. He was also well on his way to becoming a first-rate farmer. He had received good instruction from his father, who had ideas on the value of fertilizer and rotation of crops rather advanced for the time.

1 - Reverend E.M. Taylor, for years Inspector of Schools in various of the Eastern Townships, writes in a personal letter: "For two winter terms, along with her eldest son [Elson] and only daughter I attended a school taught by Mrs. Rexford. I well remember how my father's uncle, who was the "School Manager", came to our home with the welcome news that he had persuaded Mrs. Orrin Rexford to teach the large school, which was known as the Rexford Corner School. My parents decided I should go to that school, although it was not in our township." Quoted by Elson I. Rexford, op.cit.; p.22.

Dairy and beef cattle remained the chief products of the farm, although some years special attention had been given to the breeding of horses or sheep. The sixteen-year-old was not tall, but was well filled out for his age, and he already felt that deep affection for his Brome County surroundings which was to remain and grow to the end of his days.

It might have been expected that Elson would remain at home to take over the farm, as had his father before him. His father was still partially crippled; his mother had had to work very hard, nursing, taking in any possible summer boarders. As it was, ends could not always be made to meet. Surely enough sacrifice had been made already in sending the boy and his sister away fro superior schooling. Moreover in 1866 a second son, Orrin, was born.

Yet in the fall of that year Elson was sent to the McGill Normal School in Montreal. It must have been with mixed feelings that he went, although books and the city were calling, and two or three of his cousins had already taken the normal school course with distinction and some subsequent financial reward. He writes: ".....The determination of Father and Mother to make the best possible provision for their children won out....."¹ Twenty-five years later he had cause to remember the sacrifices his parents had made for his education when he had to face a similar problem in

1 - Elson I. Rexford, op. cit.; p.11.

connection with his own children.¹

Having taken his Elementary Diploma in June of 1867, Elson returned to the Normal School the following year for the Model School Diploma, standing first in the class and winning the Prince of Wales Medal for general proficiency. His first appointment was as an assistant teacher in the Panet Street School of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners of Montreal. Apparently he did well, for he was re-engaged ^{for} the session of 1869-70 as head teacher of the same school at a salary of \$900., which equalled the salaries of some better qualified and more experienced masters at the High School of Montreal.²

By the spring of 1870 sister Eva was also teaching in Montreal, and Orrin and Eliza Rexford sold the South Bolton farm to move to a large house on Montreal's St. Antoine Street near Seigneurs, where Eliza took in boarders. Most of them were students at McGill College³, which perhaps had something to do with Elson's decision to stop teaching and enter the

1 - Vide infra p. 74.

2 - For the session 1870-71, the first year in which the High School of Montreal came under the Protestant Board, salaries for the eight members of the teaching staff totalled \$7400. Vide Table on p.70 of Report of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners, City of Montreal, 1847-1871.

3 - One of the boarders was the Reverend E.M.Taylor.

Arts Course at McGill in 1871. His growing interest in the church was probably another factor in this decision, and it might be well to go back here to consider this matter.

THE CHURCH

At the middle of the last century the Methodists and Baptists seem to have been strongest among the various Protestant denominations in the Memphremagog area.¹

(Grandmother Rexford's brother, John A. Packard, had been a leading local Methodist lay preacher.)² In the South Bolton district services were usually held in the Rexford Corner School. Eliza Rexford was a very devout woman, and whenever a church service was held -- regardless of the denomination -- every member of her family was expected to attend.³

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- 1 - Cyrus Thomas, Contributions to the History of the Eastern Townships; pp. 367ff. His chart on p. 376 places the Wesleyan Methodists and the New Connection Methodists first and second in point of membership, far in advance of the others. The Church of England is a poor fifth to these, the Baptists and the Presbyterians.
 - 2 - Elson I. Rexford, op. cit.; p.4.
 - 3 - Ibid; p.10. This situation still exists in some rural areas of Quebec today: the family may attend the United Church in the morning and the Church of England in the afternoon. One might suspect that church attendance under such circumstances is valued as a social gathering as much as for a religious experience.

In 1849 the first Church of England travelling missionary had sung service in the school; and about ten years later when an Anglican church was opened at Mansonville the Reverend John Godden gradually extended his ministrations up the Missisquoi Valley to South Bolton.¹ "My Father and Mother became deeply interested in the teachings of the Anglican Church," says Rexford.²

I remember my Mother's careful study of Wesley's sermons, and Kip's "Double Witness of the Church"; and as a result of her readings, when the new Anglican Church was erected at South Bolton in 1860, my Father and Mother connected themselves with that congregation.....This eventually led to my Mother's confirmation in 1865, and to my Father's confirmation in 1890.

Thus during the impressionable adolescent period, Elson was brought up in the Church of England by an actively Christian mother. Moreover, his final superior school tutor was an Anglican clergyman; and of all the visiting ministers who stayed at the Rexford home when in the South Bolton area, he was most impressed by Bishop Fulford, the first Anglican Bishop of Montreal.³ Then too the ministry was a noble calling, and closely allied to the teaching profession. It was a natural step for the

1 - Rexford named his fifth son after John Godden.

2 - Elson I. Rexford, op. cit.; p.10.

3 - Ibid.

ambitious young schoolmaster to enter McGill to study Arts, and later Theology.

Rexford was graduated in Arts in May 1876, with first class honours in Mental and Moral Philosophy; and in December of the same year he was awarded the Licentiate'ship in Sacred Theology (L.S.T.) of the three-year-old Montreal Diocesan Theological College. Ordained Deacon by Bishop Oxenden, he was given charge of St. Luke's Church, Montreal, the following January. Early on, however, ".....a knee failed",¹ and he was obliged to use crutches for two years. As a result he was unable to move about his parish freely enough, and ".....he was forced to return to the less demanding work of teaching," to use Dr. Gammell's words.²

Rexford's parish church days were over almost before they had begun. Of course he maintained an active connection with the Church,³ and the stamp of his theological training is evident time and again throughout his future career; nevertheless, his primary attention was to be focused for twenty-five years upon the public schools of the Province, rather than upon his Church. It is interesting to speculate

1 - Elson I. Rexford, op.cit.; p.13. Little information has come to light concerning the exact nature of this knee "failure". His son Orrin says, "In later years it would bother him only when carrying a trunk three times the weight of what I could manage."

2 - Isaac Gammell: History of the High School of Montreal; p.22.

3 - Vide Infra p.163.

upon the probable changes in his career had that knee not failed when it did.

In February of 1878 Rexford was appointed a junior master in the High School of Montreal. His chief subject was mathematics, which he appears to have taught easily and well. Discipline in his classes was outstanding at a time when the High School seems to have earned a reputation for rather slack discipline.¹ Perhaps this fact, as much as any other, resulted in Dr. Howe, the fifty-nine-year-old headmaster of thirty years' standing, requesting that the appointment of Assistant Headmaster be created, and that Rexford be freed from a few teaching periods a week to fill it. In the fall of 1879 the arrangement was completed. The twenty-nine-year-old Arts and Theology graduate, solidly built, of keen eye, reddish hair and clipped beard, and with only five years of teaching experience, was named Assistant Headmaster of the High School of Montreal.

1 - Vide infra p. 80.

P A R T III

REXFORD THE FOUNDER, ORGANIZER, SYSTEMATIZER

"Never become discouraged, especially with serious difficulties."¹

"Do not be afraid of new ideas, new methods. They may not all be adopted, but each may contain some good to be utilized."²

The Assistant Headmastership of the High School of Montreal was Rexford's first administrative appointment, and it was as an administrator that he made many of his more important contributions to education in Quebec: as an administrator in the special sense of founder, organizer, and systematizer. The routine of day to day administration seems to have bored him. That is not to deny his unusually healthy respect for the importance of detail. It was he, for example, who felt it necessary to introduce a motion at the Teachers' Convention of 1894 that specimens of pupils' work for the educational exhibit at the annual conventions should be on paper of regulation 8" by 10" size;³ he kept detailed scrap

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- 1 - Elson I. Rexford, "Some Points for Young Teachers", The Educational Record, Vol.XIV No.4, April 1894; p.155.
 - 2 - Elson I. Rexford, "Notes", The Educational Record, Vol.V No.9, September 1885; p.233.
 - 3 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 31st Annual Convention, 1894.

books of activities at the High School of Montreal throughout his tenure as Rector, including such items as a circular concerning the disposal of small ends of chalk; the standardized forms he introduced for inspectors' reports came in three separate sizes, depending upon the size of the school being inspected, and Rexford insisted that the correct size be used.¹

His chief interest in administration, however, was in starting the wheels turning in the right direction and on solid ground. At that point the challenge seems to have diminished somewhat for him. He was ready to have somebody else carry on, while he applied his efforts to some new situation. This accounts, in part, for his willingness to leave one post of responsibility and move on to another.

1 - Provincial Archives, Quebec; Dossier 407/91.

English Secretary
of the Department of Public Instruction

Rexford's first important appointment was that of English Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction. It seems fair to say that during his ten years at Quebec he defined in practice the scope and meaning of a central authority within the Protestant schools of the Province. The legal basis for the system was largely there when he assumed office: much of his work consisted of organizing the actual functioning of the schools to bring it into line with approved practice.

The post of English Secretary was a responsible one in 1882, as indeed it still is. The Department of Public Instruction had been created under the Act of 1841, with a Superintendent of Public Instruction¹ assisted by two Joint Secretaries (by custom one French and one English), ranking as Deputy Ministers since 1869. In his work of supervising all schools of the Province, the Superintendent had been aided since 1860 by a Council of Public Instruction, consisting of men of standing appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor. In 1869 the

1 - Immediately following Confederation Quebec had a Minister of Public Instruction; but in 1874 Sir Charles E.B. de Boucherville, then the Minister, determined ".....to re-establish the office of the Superintendent, and this completely separated from politics....." See W.P.Percival, Across the Years; p.119.

Council had been reorganized as two separate Committees, one Roman Catholic and one Protestant; and since 1876 each Committee had acted independently of the whole Council in matters relating only to schools of its own faith. Since the Roman Catholics outnumbered the Protestants in Quebec by six to one,¹ the Superintendent was almost bound to be a Roman Catholic; but while there was nothing in law to state that one of the Joint Secretaries should be English and Protestant, such was almost equally bound to be the case, now that the Protestant Committee was virtually an independent body, and had the power to recommend the choice of officials affecting Protestant schools. Moreover, in practice the way was open for the English Secretary to assume more and more executive responsibility for the English Protestant schools, responsibility which was nominally that of the Superintendent. Indeed, the Roman Catholic Superintendent came to lean heavily on Rexford in this respect.²

Why was the young Assistant Headmaster of the High School of Montreal selected for this important post of English Secretary? Surely many men already in positions of greater trust than he would have jumped at the opportunity.

1 - In 1881 Roman Catholics in Quebec numbered 1,170,718, Protestants 181,969. Cf. Canada: Statistical Abstract and Record for the Year 1886; p.45.

2 - Vide infra p.51.

His appointment appears to have grown out of his active interest in the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers (P.A.P.T.). Dr. (later Sir) William Dawson, Principal of McGill, had fathered the P.A.P.T. in 1863, in part as a means of furthering the professional interests of graduates of the fledgling McGill Normal School. Incorporated within it were the two earlier (1858) Eastern Townships Teachers Associations of St. Francis and Bedford Districts.¹ During the next thirty years the P.A.P.T. grew remarkably, both in numbers and prestige. For a time it included in its membership many teachers at the university level, and indeed the annual convention programme listed a "university" section as well as elementary, academy, teaching of mathematics, and other such sections. Sir William Dawson served three terms as President (1863-64, 1864-65, and 1871-72). Many clergymen also were members, and several even held office in the Association: such as the Reverend Dr. John Jenkins, who was president in 1875-76, and the Reverend Dr. J.H. George, Principal of the Congregational Theological College, who was president in 1900-1901. Other public figures who served as president (and active service it was, too - not merely "figure-heading") include Senator the Honorable J.S. Sanborn, the Honorable Sydney Fisher, M.P., and Mr. Justice W.W. Lynch. The Provincial

1 - For an account of the first Eastern Townships teachers' associations see H.L. Rennie, History of Education in the Eastern Townships; pp. 90ff. For early history of the P.A.P.T. see Minute Books of that Association in its Montreal office; also A.R. McBain, "P.A.P.T., 1864 and After", in the Teachers' Magazine for June, 1924; pp. 14ff.

Premier attended several conventions, and there appears to have been little difficulty in persuading members of the Legislature to be platform guests.¹ Newspapers throughout the Province devoted full columns to detailed reports of the proceedings of convention. Dr. William Peterson, who succeeded Dawson as McGill's Principal, was president of the P.A.P.T. in 1910-11; but by that time the roster of the Association was showing signs of narrowing down to its original and present membership composed almost entirely of active elementary and secondary school teachers and executives. Perhaps one reason was to be found in the growing preoccupation of the P.A.P.T. with such "school" questions as teachers' salaries and pensions, and teaching and management techniques at the school level. Perhaps, too, the rift between school and university teachers reflects a change in the outlook of the secondary schools, away from college preparation alone.

In any case, Rexford's name first appears on the P.A.P.T. membership rolls in 1869; and in the summer of 1878, in reply to the usual circular asking those who might wish to read a paper at the fall convention to communicate with the secretary, the Assistant Headmaster at the High, never bashful, submitted the outline of a paper entitled "A Few Thoughts on Our District School System".

1 - As late as October, 1909, all English-speaking members of the Quebec Legislature were gathered on a single convention platform. The Educational Record, Vol. XXIX, No. 12, December, 1909; p. 410.

The paper was duly read at the 15th Convention in Bedford, October 24, 1878; and great was the stir in its wake. Although all Rexford's teaching experience had been in Montreal's city schools, yet he had never lost touch with the small ungraded district school in his beloved Townships. His "Few Thoughts on the System" add up to a scathing attack upon the schools and the ways in which they were being mis-managed. The complete paper is reproduced at Appendix B, both because it marks a milestone in Rexford's career, and also for the light it throws upon Quebec's rural district schools at the time Rexford became English Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction.

He began by suggesting that the schools were hopelessly old-fashioned. If a second Rip Van Winkle were to awake in the Eastern Townships he would find the old red school house the only unchanged object after twenty years of rapid change in other respects. A teacher still had to face a variety of textbooks - even for each subject in each grade, since the choice of text still rested with the parent. This meant in practice that not only did the teacher have to teach all the grades for which pupils presented themselves, but also several courses in each subject in each grade! Rexford's solution called for the inspectors to standardize texts within their inspectorates, enlisting the aid of parents by means of public meetings.

Rexford next questioned the division of the school

year into two four-month terms, each during the extremes of weather; also teachers' salaries, and the custom of "changing" the teacher every term. Fully half the term was wasted by the teacher in getting to know his or her pupils - especially in the general absence of all written records. The introduction of written examinations, perhaps even external examinations, was long overdue.

We often hear it said that teachers hold a most responsible position, yet it seems to me that teachers of these schools are the most irresponsible class of workers that can be found in the country. Their engagement in the great majority of cases consists merely of a verbal agreement. They are not usually engaged for any period recognized by law. They take charge of a school: no one knows anything of the state of the school or the attainment of the pupils. They carry on their work for four months without any regulations or standard of attainment to guide them. At the close of the term they quietly leave their work. There is no test of work done, no test of progress, no taking stock. No one knows whether the pupils have made fair progress or whether they are in the same position or in a worse position than at the beginning of the term; and no one inquires. The teacher leaves the school never to return; another teacher takes the work at the beginning of another term and works on in the same irresponsible manner. Is it not true then that the teachers in district schools hold most responsible positions and yet are responsible practically to no one for the manner in which they discharge their duties?¹

Of course there had been inspectors since the Act of 1851. But Rexford was not satisfied with their work either.

It may be thought that I have overstated this case, as there are inspectors who look after the teacher's work. I submit, however, that the present mode of inspection

1 - Appendix B; p. xi.

has practically no effect upon the teachers nor upon the schools. The inspector visits a school for one or two hours during a term. He records his visit in the register kept in the school for that purpose. But if you read between the lines you will find this statement; "I left the school just as I found it, without making any effort to improve it." I maintain that such a plan of inspection has no beneficial influence upon pupil or teacher. I have great faith in the office of the school inspector. I believe that it is by means of these officers that the present unsatisfactory state of our district schools can best be improved. But they must take a broader view of their responsibilities before they can do this. For I feel bound to say that after looking over the past ten years of the history of our district schools I can see no practical results from the present system of inspection.¹

The Honorable G  d  on Ouimet, Superintendent of Public Instruction, was not present at the meeting at which Rexford's paper was read, although Dr. H.H.Miles, his English Secretary, was. After somewhat heated discussion, the following motion was carried:

That the thanks of the Convention are due and are hereby given to the Rev. E.I.Rexford for his very able paper on "District Schools", and that in our opinion it is highly important to teachers, pupils and parents that the grievances therein contained be removed as speedily as possible; and we rejoice in the fact, brought out in the discussion, that the Council of Public Instruction has already taken the initiative in the matters of textbooks and salaries.²

Reaction to the forceful paper by the red-haired South Bolton man was both immediate and wide-spread. It certainly brought his name to the fore in educational

1 - Appendix B; p. xii.

2 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 15th Annual Convention, 1878.

circles in Quebec. When it was suggested that he had exaggerated the case, and that doubtless as a city teacher his knowledge of the situation was faulty, Rexford spent the summer vacation of 1879, having borrowed his father's horse and buggy,¹ driving about the Eastern Townships collecting signed statements to document his charges. And at the next P.A.P.T. convention, in Quebec City, October 1879, this time in the presence of Superintendent Ouimet, he repeated his previous arguments under the title, "A Plea for Reform in Elementary Education in the Eastern Townships".²

Rexford continued his active interest in the P.A.P.T. throughout the year, and at the 1880 convention, for the third successive year, he was one of the featured speakers. This time his paper was entitled "Examinations of Teachers". It resulted in a motion of Rexford's being carried, to the effect that:

".....the present system of examination of teachers by local boards is so unsatisfactory that some immediate change is necessary for the well-being of our schools; and that this unsatisfactory state of things would be removed and the best interests of our schools promoted by the appointment of a central examining board with a high standard of examination."³

- 1 - In 1872, after less than three years in Montreal, Rexford's father and mother had moved back to Knowlton Landing to the "Coolidge Farm", in order to take care of Grandma Coolidge, who had largely brought up Eliza Dimond. Whenever possible Rexford and his family spent their summers at Knowlton, both at the farm, and later at the village cottage. Elson I. Rexford: A Rexford Family, 1794-1902; pp.12-14.
- 2 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 16th Annual Convention, 1879.
- 3 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 17th Annual Convention, 1880.

At the same convention Rexford was the prime mover of various changes and consolidations in the P.A.P.T. constitution; and when the election ballots had been counted, he had won the appointment of secretary of the Association. He was re-elected for the year 1881-82, although at first he asked to be excused due to pressure of other duties.

Some of those duties were with the Montreal Local Association of Teachers, of which he was president at the time. At least one series of events in this connection also brought him before the public -- and the official -- eye. At a meeting in December, 1881, Rexford delivered to the Montreal Association an address entitled "The Normal School Curriculum", in which he criticized adversely the purely professional aspects of that curriculum, and the courses in English. Discussion of the talk was held over until the next meeting. Now the Montreal Local Association held its meetings in the McGill Normal School; and the following meeting was met with this communication from the Normal School Committee of McGill University:

That the Committee earnestly deprecates any discussion of matters, related to the curriculum of the Normal School or its management, by an Association connected with the School and meeting in its Building, but would place no obstacle in the way of any proposals made in regular form to the Corporation of the University for improvements in the Normal School, should such be practicable. The Committee therefore deems it to be inexpedient that such discussion should take place in

the Building of the Normal School.¹

Accordingly Rexford adjourned the meeting to the Senior School of the Montreal Protestant Board of School Commissioners; and a resolution was there passed, with the support of Dr. Fred W. Kelley of the High School of Montreal staff (who on many occasions proved himself a staunch supporter of Rexford), that ".....the curriculum of the Normal School requires revision, and that the Corporation of McGill University be respectfully requested to take steps in this direction."¹ The incident was given considerable notice in the press.

Meanwhile, the P.A.P.T. convention in October 1880 had appointed a special committee under Professor W.H.Hicks, Principal of the McGill Normal School, as chairman, and Rexford as secretary. The purpose of the committee was to investigate the Teachers' Pension Act of 1880.² The Act had originated with the Roman Catholic teachers, and had been carried through the Legislature without reference to or knowledge of the Protestant teachers. The P.A.P.T. committee was to study the Act, and take whatever action it deemed necessary.

Such action took the form of a brief to members of

- 1 - The Educational Record, Vol.II No.1, January 1882; p.42.
- 2 - 43-44 Vict. c.22; An Act to establish a pension and benevolent fund in favour of officers of primary instruction.

of the Legislature, seeking amendments to the Act, particularly since the scheme as it stood did not appear to be actuarially sound.¹ All members of the Legislature were circularized, and Hicks and Rexford made several trips

- 1 - The following were the objections as listed in the brief:

First That the privileges which the Pension Act proposes to accord very much exceed in value the proposed stoppage of 2 per cent even when account is taken of the subsidies to be granted from the Education Funds and from the Provincial Chest.

Second That the inadequacy of the provision made by the law is unnecessarily increased by the proposed perpetual capitalization of a large part of the income of the Pension Fund.

Third That those who pay up back stoppages obtain an unfair advantage over those whose stoppages date from the time the Act comes into force.

Fourth That after the delay of five years granted by the Act, the stoppages upon teachers' salaries, which are subject to unlimited reduction in the interests of the Pension Fund, will require to be largely increased in order to meet the demands of the said fund, and will become a serious burden to your petitioners.

Fifth That the law exacts from female teachers as large a percentage of their salaries as from male teachers, whilst according to them advantages notably less.

Sixth That the inducements which the Act offers to teachers to retire at an early age are too great.

to Quebec City to press the teachers' case with various Members. Finally amendments were introduced, by the Honorable Dr. Church in the Assembly and the Honorable James Ferrier in the Council, although it was not until the session of 1885 that they were finally carried.¹ However, this vigorous lobbying at Quebec served to bring Rexford's name once again to the fore in Protestant educational circles. It is interesting to note that he, as an ordained clergyman, was not himself eligible for a teacher's pension.

Dr. Henry H. Miles, English Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction, was also a member of the P.A.P.T. Pensions Committee. In the Montreal Gazette for March 9, 1881, Miles published a letter commenting on the Act in rather unfortunate terms:

I write on behalf of the Protestant Teachers of the Province, whom I have represented as well as....I have been permitted by superior authority to do..... Practically, the claims and interests of Protestants will always be at the mercy of a Roman Catholic official, and we know from experience what the result is sure to be.....

Miles signed the letter "Protestant Secretary of the Department and Council of Public Instruction". He publicly retracted this signature in favour of "A Member of the

1 - 48 Vict. c.31. Stoppages were limited to 4%, and pensions to one-fiftieth of retiring salary for each year of service.

Committee of the P.A.P.T.";¹ but the hornets were already about his ears.

Superintendent Ouimet wrote to him March 12th:

"Vous avez commis un acte d'insubordination et de déloyauté qui m'oblige de vous suspendre de vos fonctions... jusqu'à le Gouvernement ait pris action en cette affaire."² Perhaps Ouimet exaggerated Dr. Miles' misdemeanour. Certainly he was not pleased with his work in general.³ In any case, at a meeting of the Executive Council March 23rd, Miles was retired to pension. It is indicative of the good sense and fundamental desire for co-operation on the part of the authorities that reason given for his retirement was simply ".....that he is now past sixty years of age and has not the vigour requisite to enable him to discharge effectively his duties."⁴ A clerk of the Crown Law Department was delegated to assist the Superintendent on the English side pending the

- 1 - The Montreal Gazette, March 13, 1881.
- 2 - Provincial Archives, Quebec; Dossier 355/81.
- 3 - Letter from Ouimet to the Honorable W.W.Lynch (then Solicitor-General), March 12, 1881: ".... [Miles' action] m'autorise à demander l'action énergique et immédiate du Gouvernement en pourvoyant au remplacement de cet officiel qui ne vient jamais à son bureau et ne rend aucun service au Département." Provincial Archives, Quebec; Dossier 355/81.
- 4 - Provincial Archives, Quebec; Dossier 355/81.

appointment of a new English Secretary.

The vacancy was there; and together with it a feeling that a vigorous young man was needed, one who would do something to answer the growing criticisms from teachers and public alike. Rexford was young, and had certainly shown himself to be vigorous in pointing out the short-comings of the Protestant school system, and had even suggested some remedies; he was a man of the cloth; he had the confidence of the teachers, by virtue of his work in the teachers' associations; he was familiar with both the Montreal and the rural school situation; he spoke French almost as well as English; he had made a good impression on his lobbying visits to Quebec. The Honorable W.W.Lynch, the Solicitor-General, knew him personally, and his family background.¹

By Order-in-Council dated May 12, 1882, Rexford was appointed English Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction. Was it merely a printer's error, or does the fact that the Order-in-Council referred to him as "Elison J. Rexford" indicate that he was not, as yet, really well-known?

1 - In an address at the High School of Montreal December 22, 1903, to honour Rexford on the occasion of his leaving the High, Lynch referred to himself as "...one who had, while he was in a Government position, offered [Rexford] the position of secretary of the educational department of the Province of Quebec." The Montreal Daily Witness, December 23, 1903.

Rexford would have made a good military commander. He never backed away from a controversy, nor was he afraid to come to a decision and act upon it; and usually he took pains to make a fair appreciation of the situation before acting. He wanted to be sure of his facts first.¹

He spent most of the summer of 1882 reading himself into the facts of his new responsibilities as English Secretary. There was much work to do. In effect, every school - or at best every school municipality under its Board of Commissioners or Trustees - was at the time a law unto itself. There was no compulsory - nor even recommended - course of study, no general adherence to a series of prescribed texts. External examinations were unknown, many schools not employing written examinations of any type. Standards of teaching and of certification of teachers were generally low. There were but few superior (secondary) schools, and no inspection provided for those few. There was no collected body of regulations for the guidance of inspectors, pupils, teachers.

To make matters more difficult, there seems to have been a good deal of disorganization in the Secretary's office. There were no special statistics kept for Protestant schools.

1 - J.C.Sutherland, Provincial Inspector-General of Protestant Schools, on the occasion of Rexford's retirement from the Diocesan College, dwelt on his habit of studying a question closely. The Educational Record, Vol.XLVI, No.2, April-June, 1928; p.71.

Records were, in fact, so incomplete, and the payment of government grants from the Common School Fund so haphazard, that as late as August 18, 1883, after vainly trying to reconcile the statistical returns of his inspectors with other records, Rexford had to write them as follows:¹

I have the honour to request you to furnish at your earliest convenience information upon the following points connected with the school corporations whose schools are subject to your inspection, namely

- 1) Give the names of the dissentient corporations subject to your inspection.
- 2) Give the names of the school corporations some of whose schools are examined by you and some by another inspector.

Replies indicate that there seemed to be considerable misunderstanding among school boards even at that late date, and by at least one of the inspectors (McGrath), as to the important distinction between Commissioners (where the corporation operated schools of the faith of the majority of the people) and Trustees (under the dissentient clauses): an important distinction because of its effect on local taxation for school purposes.²

1 - Provincial Archives, Quebec; Dossier 923/83.

2 - For instance, under 9 Vict. c.27 s.26, it was the duty of the Commissioners to assess taxes, and to pay over a fair share to the Trustees. See also The Educational Record, Vol.III No.10, October, 1883; p.226, where Rexford outlines the school law on dissent.

Of course the Montreal schools were better organized. There a superintendent had been appointed ten years previously, and Rexford must have been familiar with the growing centralization in the Montreal schools inasmuch as he had been preparing a McGill Master's thesis on the history of Protestant secondary education in Montreal.¹ Moreover, there was the example of Egerton Ryerson in Ontario before him. And the Protestant Committee was by no means idle. In 1880 they had even come to grips with the text-book problem. The difficulty was that their decisions were not always carried down to local boards, nor was the Secretary's office sufficiently well organized to see that those regulations which were circulated were actually carried out.

Rexford's immediate plan of attack on all these problems called for:

- (a) More efficient organization of the English Secretary's office, and of the work of the inspectors.
- (b) Immediate preparation and adoption of a province-wide course of study, beginning with the elementary schools.

1 - The thesis was not finally presented until May, 1903. No copy of that MS. is now available. However, an expansion of it appears in Part II of Rexford's The High School of Montreal, 1800-1932. An interesting commentary on the insistence of schoolmasters on "running their own show" appears at pp. 62f. About 1857 Dr. Howe, the Headmaster of the High School (called "Rector" at that time and later), had drawn up ".....a series of Fifteen Rules to guide the masters in deciding questions of discipline, promotion and prizes in the school. It is

- (c) Public relations work among the public generally, and school board members in particular.¹

The Course of Study for Elementary Schools (at that time Grades I to IV) was ready by Christmas of 1882, ".....in order to promote the symmetrical and successful training of the children of the district schools, to assist the teachers in the organization and improvement of the schools, and to render the work of inspection more uniform and effective."²

(continued from previous page)....evident that these rules represent an honest effort on the part of the Rector to secure system and uniformity in the discipline of the schools, and to provide a scheme by means of which he could exercise some supervision over the general order of the school, although his school time was almost wholly occupied with teaching....The scheme was not well received.....and opposition[to it]at length engaged the attention of the High School Committee [of McGill University], and each master was asked to submit in writing his objection to this scheme of Fifteen Rules. The representations submitted form interesting reading in the light of the accepted practices in large schools today. They consist largely of appeals for the right of each master to use such discipline and scheme of marks as he thought desirable, without regard to the methods followed by other masters. The scheme was continued in operation for a few years, and then abandoned by general consent."

- 1 - See Rexford's remarks to the P.A.P.T. Convention of 1883, as reported by the Montreal Gazette, October 21, 1883.
- 2 - Proceedings of Conference of Protestant School Inspectors, January 4, 1883, as reported in The Educational Record, Vol.III No.1, February, 1883; pp.3ff.

Nothing very startling is to be found in the content of that course of study.¹ It was long overdue in the light of educational practice elsewhere, although a similar step was not taken for the Roman Catholic schools of the Province until 1888.² An interesting side-light is that the Protestant Committee did not at first consider that the authorization of such a course of study was part of its function. However, Rexford succeeded in having it "authorized" by the Roman Catholic Superintendent of Public Instruction, and "approved" by the Protestant Committee, while being "unanimously recommended" for the district schools by the Protestant inspectors.³

- 1 - The Course of Study for Elementary Schools is reproduced in full, with Rexford's comments, at p.74 of Thé Educational Record for April, 1883 (Vol.III No.2), and p.134 of the issue for June, 1883 (Vol.III.No.3). On pp.230ff. of the issue for October of the same year (Vol.III No.5) Rexford writes on "School Time-Tables", detailing suggested breakdowns of the course of study for use in an ungraded school.
- 2 - Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1887-88; p.XXV. It is interesting to note the discussion which preceded the adoption of a provincial course of study for Roman Catholic schools. The Superintendent devotes fifteen pages of his report for 1886-87 to this question. The opposition was largely clerical, as summed up by the Bishop of St. Hyacinthe: "In compelling the teachers to follow a course of study the department of public instruction will take a great step in the direction of establishing a false principle, the control of the State over education." (Superintendent's Report for 1886-87; p.XI.) Rexford had no such argument to face with his course of study. The Protestant churches did not exercise so direct a control over the Protestant schools as did the Roman Catholics over theirs.
- 3 - Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1882-83; pp. XX f. Also Rexford's own speech in reply to the award of the Order of Scholastic Merit, as reported in the Montreal Daily Star for June 5, 1931.

Rexford introduced this first course of study to the first conference of Protestant school inspectors ever to be held in the Province: January 4, 1883. Superintendent Ouimet chaired the meeting, Rexford was its guiding light. Additional items on the agenda included:¹ the school year and its division into terms; length of teachers' engagements; boarding around; school apparatus ("Each district school should be provided with at least a good black-board and chalk, a map of the Dominion, a map of the Western Hemisphere and a map of the Eastern Hemisphere"); and prizes for efficient teachers (Rexford gave several book prizes himself).²

Rexford's next step was to leave his new wife in Quebec City (he had married Louisa Norris of Montreal September 13, 1882, the day of his parents' wedding anniversary), and spend the first quarter of 1883 travelling about rural Quebec interviewing members of school boards. He was firmly convinced of the importance of work of this type.³ ~~It is interesting to draw attention to a note in his~~

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- 1 - Proceedings of Conference of Protestant School Inspectors, January 4, 1883, as reported in The Educational Record, Vol.III No.1, February, 1883; pp. 3ff.
 - 2 - Report of Inspector James McGregor for the year ending June, 1883. Included in Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1882-83; pp.75-78.
 - 3 - Rexford was still at these meetings with local groups in 1891. They led, in fact, to a series of Educational Campaigns (vide infra p.132). The following is from the Sherbrooke News for April 24, 1891:
Barnston. The first of a series of educational conferences was held at Barnston on the 21st inst. in ...

(continued from previous page)...the town hall. There was a large attendance of the leading people of the district with a good representation of the ladies. Barnston seems to have awakened to the fact that it was out of line, and lying low in the educational system of the Province. Hence the conference with Mr. Rexford and the determination of those enlivened to the danger of educational torpor, to do something to regain the lost status. Inspector Thomson occupied the chair and Mr. Rexford in his lucid, happy and hale manner showed the exact position of the municipality and the requirements of the Council of Public Instruction. The great obstacle seemed to be the disinclination of the people to do away with the "boarding around" system which every other municipality in the Province has abandoned. Among other information obtained in Mr. Rexford's address was the following: that \$1652. is lying at the credit of the municipality if immediate steps be taken to comply with the regulations of the educational department, and that about the same sum might have been earned by the superior school during the last six years, - making together an actual loss of \$3300. sustained in that time by the action of those who maintained the present system of "boarding around" - besides it seems that an action of damages may be raised against the school commissioners for the loss incurred by illegal proceedings. A unanimous resolution was passed pledging the meeting to use all lawful action to make the necessary reform in educational matters and a committee was appointed to carry out this object.

handwriting in the files of the Department of Education,
as follows:

No system of public instruction can be carried into operation in Canada and become general in the esteem, feelings and exertions of the people without it being explained and spread out before them in each District of the Province and in many cases again and again.

This quotation is from a letter of Egerton Ryerson's,¹ showing again Rexford's respect for the aims and accomplishments of that great organizer of schools in Ontario.

This particular series of interviews was designed primarily to support the school inspectors in preparing a favourable reception for a circular to all boards of Commissioners and Trustees, prepared by Rexford and issued by the Superintendent under the date April 3, 1883. Since the circular is a comprehensive one, and Rexford's first official attempt to lay down regulations for the conduct of rural schools, it is reproduced in full as Appendix C.

- 1 - The quotation is to be found in the Provincial Archives, Quebec; Dossier 302/84. The Ryerson letter from which it appears to have been taken was written from Paris, March 31, 1845, to the Reverend Alexander McNabb, Acting Principal of Victoria College. It is reproduced by C.B.Sissons, op. cit., Vol.II p.88, and reads in part as follows: "I see clearly that no system of public instruction can be carried into operation in Canada and become general in the esteem, feelings and exertions of the People without it being explained & spread out before them in each District of the Province & in many cases again & again. That task must be performed by myself & will necessarily occupy no inconsiderable portion of my time during the next two or three years, perhaps more." How did Rexford happen upon the letter or the quotation? Perhaps through Dr. S.P. Robins, Principal of the McGill Normal School, friend and former teacher of Rexford, and protege of Ryerson. Vide O.B.Rexford, Teacher Training in the Province of Quebec; p.93.

The circular begins by demanding that the custom of requiring teachers to "board around" from home to home, rather than providing a permanent boarding place for them, be ceased as of January 1, 1884, on pain of forfeiture of the government grant.¹ It goes on to demand uniformity in the matter of textbooks within each school municipality; argues in favour of the continuous school year in place of two divided four-month terms, and urges the engagement of teachers for the full year. It urges the adoption of the new course of study for elementary schools. It also announces a series of teachers' meetings:

As the great majority of the teachers of the Elementary Schools of the Province have received no professional training, I have directed the Inspectors to hold, at least once a year, a meeting of teachers in each county, for the purpose of considering the difficulties, defects and desirable improvements of the schools of the county, and also for the purpose of illustrating by means of Papers, Model Lessons, etc., the best methods of teaching and organizing elementary schools. As the object of these meetings is to make the teachers more efficient and therefore more valuable to the municipality, it is the duty of the School Commissioners to encourage their teachers to attend these meetings and to do all they can to promote their success.²

The circular concludes with a plea for close reading by teachers and Board members alike of The Educational Record, the monthly publication of the Department, free to all schools,

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- 1 - For one teacher's experiences in "boarding around" see Cyrus Thomas, The Frontier Schoolmaster: The Autobiography of a Teacher; Chapters I and XIV.
 - 2 - The circular appears at pp. XIIIff. of Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1882-83.

first issued a year before Rexford's appointment. It had replaced the Journal of Education, published on a subscription basis from 1857 to 1879, and was designed to circulate all official information from the Protestant Committee and the Department of Public Instruction, together with ".....original and selected articles upon the practical work of the school room." Dr. George Weir, Secretary of the Protestant Committee, was the first editor. Rexford was so convinced of the usefulness of the publication, and had so much to say in it, that in January 1884 he was appointed editor, although from January 1887 pressure of work forced him to delegate "editorial oversight" to Dr. J.M. Harper, his Inspector of Superior Schools.

Meanwhile, a mass of office work also occupied the English Secretary. Superintendent Ouimet, in his Report for 1883-84,¹ saw fit to include a table showing a total of 23,038 letters and 5093 circulars moving in or out of his Department during the year, comprising ".....decisions to be given in questions at issue between commissioners and rate-payers or teachers, investigations, visits.....complaints..... reports to be made, statistics to compile.....general business....." - and all this with a staff of only six clerks, besides his two joint secretaries. There is no breakdown to show how much of this was Rexford's work, of course;

 1 - Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1883-84; pp.XII.

but certainly he was very busy trying to regularize procedures, and persuade school boards to submit necessary returns.

A sample correspondence¹ is that with John S. Hall, Secretary-Treasurer of the Board of Trustees for the Village of Verdun. He wrote to the Department as a result of a circular received from Inspector McGregor. Rexford replied (March 19-20?), 1884:

John S. Hall, Jr.,
131 St. James St.,
Montreal.

Sir:

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th inst. and to inform you that I am glad to know there is a school in operation in the Municipality of Verdun. Although several letters have been sent to the Secretary-Treasurer asking for the usual semi-annual report no report has been received for the past three or four years and the Government grant which is over thirty dollars a year has been lost to the Municipality. It is greatly to be regretted that a Municipality so favourably situated and under the care of intelligent men should take rank among the worst Municipalities of the Province in reference to the elementary provisions of the School Law. I enclose herewith copies of the Course of Study and a copy of the Semi-Annual Report which I hope you will find time to fill up.

I remain, etc.

To this Hall replied March 27. Apparently all was not well in Rexford's office - the forms which Rexford mentioned were

1 - Provincial Archives, Quebec; Dossier 846/83. Mr. Hall later served as Provincial Treasurer in the Taillon government of 1892-94. He also played a leading part in the passage of the B.A. Bill of 1890. (Vide infra p. 71)

not enclosed.¹ Moreover the mail service was so poor, Verdun having no post office of its own, that Hall states it often took months to receive a letter addressed to Verdun, through some neighbouring post office, if at all. He requests that future correspondence be sent to his city address to avoid further misunderstanding.

In all his work Rexford appears to have enjoyed the firm support of Superintendent Ouimet. The latter had fully realized the unsatisfactory state of affairs administratively speaking on the English side of the Department just prior to Rexford's appointment, and was delighted to find the new Secretary a man of action who could be depended upon to pursue a policy vigorously. Ouimet was particularly proud of Rexford's efforts to bring local schools into line with regulations for qualification for annual grants from the Common School Fund, paralleling earlier and contemporary efforts on the Roman Catholic side.²

- 1 - A sidelight on the office organization of the day is not without interest. The Provincial Archives contain many fyle copies of letters blocked out in Rexford's own hand (indicating the fyle number as well), the mailed copy presumably having been copied out by a clerk and signed by Rexford. By 1890 the "letter book" system was in use, whereby letters were written in special ink for reproduction by means of a gelatine tray. Fyle copies were impressed upon the indexed tissue pages of a bound letter book. It was not until 1895 that typed letters began to appear in the letter books.
- 2 - Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1884-85, p.XV, draws attention to the decreasing number of warnings and notices re stoppages of grants which had to be sent out.

These grants were apportioned strictly according to school population, however; and in some cases the resulting amount was so small that there was difficulty in persuading school boards to apply for it. It was for this reason that teachers' pension stoppages were recovered from local boards, rather than deducted from the annual government grant.

Throughout Rexford's ten years as English Secretary of the Department, Ouimet delegated to him more and more of his responsibilities and prerogatives in matters relating to Protestant education. The Circular of April 3, 1883, went out over the Superintendent's signature; by 1890 Rexford was issuing them on his own authority.¹ Since the Rexford regime, although the English Secretary is still the deputy of the Superintendent, by custom and in practice the Superintendents have given their English Secretary a free hand on the Protestant side, and ".....have supported them with their authority on all occasions. In fact, without evasion of their legal responsibilities, they have, as far as possible, treated their English Secretaries as though they were of equal rank with themselves."² Finally, in 1924 the English Secretary was formally recognized as Director of Protestant Education.³ He remains a Deputy Minister, however; and

 1 - For example, a Circular of Directions dated September 2, 1890, covering a new course of study for superior schools, and listing authorized textbooks.

2 - G.W.Parmelee, "English Education in Québec"; Shortt and Doughty, Canada and Its Provinces, Vol.XVI; p.495.

3 - 14 Geo.V c.33.

Dr. W.P.Percival, the present Director, states that he still prepares certain documents as a matter of form for the signature of the Superintendent.

By the Act of 1869 the Minister of Public Instruction (Superintendent) had been made a member of both Committees of the Council of Public Instruction, but with the right to vote only in that of the religious faith to which he belonged. It was during Rexford's term of office that the Roman Catholic Superintendent began absenting himself entirely from the meetings of the Protestant Committee, sending the English Secretary to represent him as early as February, 1883. This custom reached the Minutes of the Protestant Committee, meeting November 29, 1918:

The Secretary had been asked by the Superintendent [the Honorable Cyrille F. Delage] to say that it was impossible for him to attend the meeting of the Committee today, and that he thought it was perhaps best to follow the example of his predecessors in office, and to be present at the meetings of the Protestant Committee only when questions of general importance arose, or when there is reason for supposing that he can be of special service in the deliberations of the meeting.

The Protestant Committee replied that he would be welcome any time, and could be "....a useful link between the two Committees which, although working under different regulations, have the same public interest in view."

One other circumstance which made Rexford's work easier was his appointment in 1886 as Secretary of the Protestant

Committee. Five years previously Superintendent Ouimet had complained that the Secretary of the Protestant Committee was not an office-holder in his Department,¹ resulting in a number of delays and inconveniences; The Superintendent had not even ready access to the files of the Committee. On the resignation of aging Dr. George Weir in May, 1886, Rexford was requested to act as interim Secretary, which appointment was confirmed later in the year.² Rexford's successor as Secretary of the two organizations wrote as follows:³

Notwithstanding the fact that the committee had a secretary of its own, the business of this body naturally gravitated to the department and was done by the English Secretary to such an extent that in 1886 Rexford was made secretary of the committee. This dual position has been occupied by his successor as well, and although it has sometimes been a delicate matter to act loyally towards the government and the committee at the same time, administration has been more direct, consistent and harmonious because of this arrangement.

Other observers have suggested that the movement toward the uniting of the two secretaryships in one man may have been "accelerated by the efficiency of a departmental secretary".⁴

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- 1 - Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1880-81; pp. IX f.
 - 2 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, May 26, 1886 and November 24, 1886.
 - 3 - G.W.Parmelee, op. cit.; p.494.
 - 4 - W.A.F.Hepburn, Report of the Quebec Education Survey, 1938; p.26.

The arrangement is a logical one, since the English Secretary must report regularly to the Protestant Committee, as well as carry into effect the policies it lays down. His presence as Secretary also gives him a voice in discussion on the formulation of those policies.

Returning to the course of study, it should be stated that the one for elementary schools was given further currency through reproduction in the new School Register which Rexford circulated in the fall of 1883;¹ also that a circular from the Superintendent dated November 15, 1883, made its adoption compulsory on pain of forfeiture of the government grant.

Meanwhile the Protestant Committee, meeting September 26, 1883, had asked a special committee, including Rexford, to go ahead with a similar course of study for model schools and academies. Rexford already had this drawn up. It was authorized by the Protestant Committee December 6, 1883, and may be seen at pp. 12 f. of The Educational Record for January, 1884 (Vol.IV No.1). Rexford had prepared the way for it through the P.A.P.T. (of which he was one of the three vice-presidents at the time) by taking the teachers into his confidence, and discussing the "proposed" course of study with them at their Convention of October, 1883.

1 - Inspector Hubbard's interim report: The Educational Record, Vol.IV No.1, January, 1884; p.25.

Thus by 1884 there was a standardized course of study for all Protestant schools of the Province, considerable leeway being allowed to the Montreal schools. Two years later, after the appointment of a special Inspector of Superior Schools (Dr. J.M. Harper), Rexford also brought to completion his scheme for external examination of all superior schools. In March 1887 he writes with pride¹ of what had been accomplished towards classification of pupils and standardization of courses in the Protestant schools:

- (a) Schools were regularly classified as Elementary (Grades I to IV), and Superior. The latter were either Model Schools (Grades I to III, Grade I being identical to Grade IV Elementary), or Academies (Grades I to III, Grade I being identical to Grade III Model School).
- (b) There was a semi-annual inspection of all elementary schools, and an annual inspection of superior schools under a regular Inspector of Superior Schools.
- (c) An annual simultaneous written examination was to be introduced that June in all Protestant superior schools, to be conducted by local deputy examiners (mainly clergymen acting without fee), and corrected by the Inspector of Superior Schools. By 1896 the Protestant Committee found it necessary to name six assistants for Dr. Harper in this onerous yearly task.
- (d) Arrangements had been completed with the universities in the Province to grant their certificate and the Associate in Arts diploma to successful students in the Grade III Academy examinations.

Quoting Rexford verbatim:

These are the main points of the new regulations. This arrangement completes the gradation of our Protestant

1 - The Educational Record, Vol. VII No. 4, March, 1887; pp. 102f.

educational institutions from the lowest grades of the elementary school to the graduating class of the university.....This scheme must commend itself to every friend of education.....The head teacher of each school should join with those interested in the school in facilitating the work of the scheme, We must be prepared for friction and for mistakes in connection with the first examination, which will not occur in subsequent years. If the teachers of the schools will study carefully the regulations for the examinations and the instructions to deputy-examiners and pupils, and then prepare their pupils for a strict observance of these..... then the success of the examinations will be secured.

It is interesting to note that apparently the new scheme of provincial examinations carried into effect with comparatively few difficulties. No detailed report has been kept of the first examinations in 1887. Dr. J.M.Harper, Inspector of Superior Schools, however, says in his "Report on June Examinations, 1888":¹ The fact that over fifty per cent has been made by every pupil presented for examination, and that nearly half the number of schools have been able to have all their pupils pass without a single failure, shows that a fair mean has been reached in preparing the papers." His tabulated report shows that of 600 candidates presented by academies, 103 failed; and of 592 presented by model schools, 76 failed, But these figures do not indicate that there had been an additional enrolment in academies of 540 and in model schools of 669 who had not been presented for examination.² This was

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- 1 - The Educational Record, Vol.VIII, No.9, September,1888; pp.269ff.
 - 2 - Figures for enrolment in academies and model schools, in other than elementary grades, are given as 1104 and 1261 respectively at p.179 of the Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1887-88.

probably due in part to the prevailing low level of average attendance. In any case, it is in contrast to Ontario, where so few candidates passed the central examinations (234 of 1676 in 1876, for example), that Ryerson had resorted to "payment by results", in an effort to ".....induce the public to provide the means for additional teachers and apparatus, and teachers to recognize the urgency of conforming to the official programme of studies."¹

Rexford continued his active interest in examinations and the curriculum throughout his life. Another consideration which he also regarded as basic to any good school or school system was adequate training for teachers.

He recognized from the first that one of the difficulties besetting Protestant education in Quebec was that so many of the rural teachers were inadequately trained - if, indeed, they had had any professional training at all. Accordingly, he encouraged in-service training for professional improvement by every means at his disposal.

One of his first instructions to his inspectors was to hold meetings of teachers in their districts at least once a year for the study of teaching techniques.² The report of

1 - Walter N. Bell, The Development of the Ontario High School; p.127 and p.140.

2 - Vide supra p. 45.

usually dour Inspector McLaughlin for 1883-84 states:

Teachers' meetings were held in each of the counties of this District [Bedford] during the first week of June, 1884. At each of these meetings Mr. Rexford was present, and gave addresses on subjects connected with the teacher's work. The addresses and discussions at these meetings are productive of much good, both in the way of instructing teachers as to the best methods, and of inciting them to study methods for themselves and to prepare to teach the several subjects more efficiently.¹

Rexford addressed similar meetings in St. Francis District that year and again in 1885, on the subject of "Scripture History, and the Importance of Giving It More Attention".

The Educational Record was also used as a medium of instruction. Scarcely an issue appeared without an article on the teaching of one subject or another. Often practical lesson plans were included, as in the case of excerpts from Alexander M. Gow's Primer of Politeness, published monthly throughout 1884, ".....forming the most complete and useful manual of simple lessons on Morals that has come to my notice".² The Record also carried the text of an address of Rexford's to the McGill Normal School Teachers' Association on "Teachers' Reading Circles".³ The idea had originated in

- 1 - Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1883-84; p.92.
- 2 - Rexford's comment, from "Books for Teachers"; The Educational Record, Vol.III No.6, December, 1883; p.320. He also recommends Francis W. Parker's Talks on Teaching.
- 3 - The Educational Record, Vol.VI No.11, November, 1886; pp. 225-263.

Ohio, comprising courses in professional and general reading organized by teachers' associations. "Who cannot spare twenty minutes a day?" asked Rexford. Circles were subsequently organized by the Quebec City Association of Teachers, as well as by the McGill Association. Subjects of the Quebec group for one winter were Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" and Fletcher's "Lectures on Teaching".¹

The most important part of Rexford's programme for in-service training of teachers, however, was the Teachers' Normal Institutes: five-day summer sessions in residence for practising teachers. The idea was not new. Close at hand it had proven successful in Ontario, as well as in New England under Horace Mann. Rexford went ahead, with the help of Dr. S.P. Robins, Principal of the McGill Normal School, to organize two such institutes for July, 1884. The first was at Durham Ladies' College, with a registration of eighty; the other at St. Francis College, Richmond, with a registration of fifty. These proved so valuable that the Protestant Committee recommended the shortening of the Normal School year to nine months, to allow faculty members to assist with the Normal Institutes.

Three or four such institutes were held each year in various parts of the Province until 1895.² In 1886 the

1 - Ibid. Vol. VIII No. 1, January, 1888; p. 40.

2 - Institutes were not held in 1892, due to the Montreal meeting of the Dominion Education Association. Vide infra p. 123.

practice of granting annual certificates was inaugurated; from 1887 questions were published in the Record, which candidates were required to answer satisfactorily before the certificate was awarded. In 1890, Rexford wrote:¹

Teachers' Normal Institutesnow form a recognized part of the school system of the Province, having for their object the professional improvement of the teacher.....about one-third of the teachers of elementary schools being brought under their influence each year.

The school inspectors report that they find a marked improvement in the work of those teachers who have been in attendance at the Institutes.....In some Municipalities commissioners have made it compulsory for their teachers to attend.....

Rexford himself regularly presided at one or more of the institutes. Subjects of his classes included "Scripture History, and Methods of Teaching It" (1885); "Spelling Through Reading" (1889); "Teaching of Reading" (1892); "Teaching of Geography" (1894). What he also offered over and over again, however, was some variation of "School Organization and Discipline". His Bible for these courses was Joseph Baldwin's The Art of School Management,² which he prescribed for prior study and discussion at the institutes from 1888. This book had been designed to assist the rural teacher "struggling up

1 - The Educational Record, Vol.X No.6-7, June-July, 1890; pp.203f.

2 - Baldwin was then President of the Missouri State Normal School. A Canadian edition of The Art of School Management had been published in Toronto in 1886, as authorized by the Ontario Minister of Education. The fly-leaf carried the inscription, "Adopted for use in the Schools and Homes of Canada by R. Dawson, Head Master, High School, Weston".

alone", and had been adopted for use in normal schools in Ontario. It is divided into the following sections:

- I - Educational Instrumentalities and School Hygiene.
- II - School Organization and Classification.
- III - School Government and Educative Punishments.
- IV - Course of Study and Programmes.
- V - Class Management and Methods of Teaching.
- VI - Examination, Marking, Records, Promotion and Gradation.

Appendices: Public School Act, and Regulations of the Education Department, Ontario. Forms of Prayer.

School Management is defined on p.9:

School Management is the art of so directing school affairs as to produce System and Order, and thus to secure Efficiency. This art is sometimes called school economy, school discipline, or school government; but such titles are far too narrow, for School Management not only includes these subjects, but embraces, besides, all that pertains directly or indirectly to the successful education of children. Hence it has to deal with all the machinery of education as well as with the pupils to be educated, with the school house and its surroundings, the furniture and equipment of the class-rooms, the subjects of study and the best means of studying, the rules of the school and the laws on which they are based, the relations of the teacher to his pupils, to his trustees, to the community, and to himself.

.....All true education is self-education, and the best method of education is that which guides, controls and assists the unconscious process of self-education that begins with the infant in his cradle; so, too, the ideal method of school management is that which judiciously develops the power of self-government inherent in the child, and thus makes the pupil himself the unconscious instrument of his own self-control.

It was obvious, however, that even the best programme of in-service training for teachers could not entirely regain ground lost through wholesale certification of unqualified candidates. The Act of 1846 had established a system whereby local boards of examiners reviewed the qualifications, moral and scholastic, of prospective teachers, and recommended them for certification by the Protestant Committee (at first by the Department of Public Instruction).¹ The McGill Normal School had been established eleven years later, but more teachers were always needed than could be persuaded to attend. The system of local examination, substantially unchanged, was still in effect when Rexford became English Secretary, although in 1877 the Protestant Committee had moved to bolster the low standards of some local boards of examiners by printing and circulating annually the examination papers to be used by local boards.²

In his paper on "Examination of Teachers" before the P.A.P.T. convention of 1880, Rexford had pointed out some of the evils of the procedure of the time:³

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- 1 - Orrin B. Rexford, Teacher Training in the Province of Quebec; pp.71-76.
 - 2 - Regulations for examination for teachers' diplomas of the time are set forth in The Educational Record, Vol.II No.2, February, 1882; pp.45ff.
 - 3 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 17th Annual Convention, 1880. Also as reported in The Educational Record, Vol.I No.2, February, 1881; pp.81-85.

The questions are prepared at Quebec and forwarded to local examining boards in different parts of the Province, under seal with instructions that they are to be opened only in the presence of candidates assembled for the examination. These boards, consisting largely of lawyers, doctors and others, who have had no experience in teaching, or in conducting examinations, evaluate the answers and forward the results to headquarters with the recommendation that diplomas be granted to certain applicants. In accordance with the recommendation the diplomas are issued.....The secretary or manager of a school chooses his teacher and then asks her to qualify. The diploma is regarded simply as an instrument to protect him from the results of engaging unauthorized teachers. The idea that the diploma distinguishes between the worthy and the unworthy is never present to his mind.

Rexford went on to suggest that in some cases local boards allowed candidates to break off "....for lunch, and to consult their tutor or other authorities with regard to answers to questions on the examination." Moreover, since papers were corrected and assessed locally, standards varied widely from district to district.

Rexford's solution called for the appointment of a central examining board which would demand a uniformly high level of achievement, ".....a change similar to the one..... already adopted in Ontario". The inspectors could conduct written examinations in local centres, and hear candidates' reading. The papers would then be assessed by a board composed of five members: one from one of the universities for classics, the second from the other for mathematics; the third for French, the fourth for English, history and geography, the last for the art of teaching. From the moment of his appointment as English Secretary Rexford pushed his plan

for a central board of examiners. Opposition centred about the expense of paying the examiners, and unwillingness to offend local authorities. Then too the idea could hardly appeal to the Roman Catholic majority of the Province, since they believed (and still do) that a man or woman in clerical orders, trained to teach by a Roman Catholic institution, should be considered adequately qualified without undergoing any further examination. A sub-committee of the Protestant Committee investigated, and brought in a report¹ urging a scheme substantially the same as that outlined above, the local boards to remain to conduct the viva voce examination and moral inquiries, the central examiners to be paid out of candidates' fees. But when representations were made to the government, the reply was, "The Treasurer was of the opinion the scheme would meet with opposition in the Legislature, and that the Government would not meddle with alterations in the School Laws in its first session."²

The Protestant Committee stood behind Rexford on this matter, however, and little by little progress was made. Six inspectors' reports for 1883-84 drew attention to the unsatisfactory state of teacher qualification, and Rexford seized upon their statements for publicity purposes.³ In

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, December 6, 1883.

2 - Ibid. March 5, 1884.

3 - The Educational Record, Vol.V No.4, April, 1885; p.99.

December 1885 the Protestant Committee decreed that henceforth only elementary diplomas would be granted on recommendation of local boards of examiners (except boards in Montreal, Quebec and Sherbrooke), and at the same time established a second-class elementary diploma, valid for one year only.¹ (Two grades of academy diploma had previously been established: a first-class academy diploma requiring a university degree as well as normal school training.)²

In October 1886 the Protestant Committee issued new instructions to local boards, further curtailing their powers by requiring a probationary period of teaching as well as the customary examination before a first-class diploma could be granted.³

Finally the Statutes as revised in 1888 (Articles 1955-1969; 51-52 Vict. c.26) abolished the local boards in favour of the central board of examiners which Rexford had been seeking. He himself was appointed secretary of the board. Its first minute book,⁴ in his firm hand, legible yet by

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- 1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, November 25, 1885. Superintendent Ouimet recommended similar action to the Roman Catholic Committee in his Report for 1885-86; p.XII.
 - 2 - This met with some opposition, since it was impossible at the time for women to obtain a university degree within the Province. The first McGill degree to a woman was not awarded until 1888.
 - 3 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, October 6, 1886. Regulations approved by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council November 8, 1886.
 - 4 - This book is in the possession of Dr. W.P. Percival.

no means the ornate copperplate of the day, records some of the difficulties met in conducting the first qualifying examination under the new plan in June of 1889; nothing, though, which could not ".....be provided for in future examinations".

The general revision of the Quebec Statutes, as assented to in 1888, made few real changes in the spirit of the school law.¹ It merely consolidated previous acts and amendment acts (including the amendment act of that year), and also included certain regulations which had previously been passed by Order-in-Council at the request of one or the other of the two Committees. In addition to the enabling articles for the appointment of a Central Board of Examiners , the following points are noted:

- (a) Teachers to be engaged for the full school year, "except in special cases approved by the Superintendent". (Art.2027)
- (b) Two or more school municipalities might unite to maintain a model school or academy.(Art.2065-67)
- (c) Commissioners and Trustees made responsible that only authorized course of study and textbooks used (Art. 2026, ss. 3 and 4)
- (d) Duties of the Joint Secretaries defined, including service as secretaries of the Council of Public Instruction. (Art 1884, 1897, 1902)

Sub-committees of both the Catholic and Protestant Committees had been at work for some time prior to 1888 on

1 - Revised Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1888. Articles 1860-2288 deal with Public Instruction.

suggested revisions of the school law. Indeed the question had arisen periodically since 1880 in educational circles. A special meeting of the whole Council of Public Instruction, the first for eight years, was assembled April 18, 1888, to discuss the proposed revisions. The two Committees collided head-on over a Protestant Committee demand that the word Protestant, for school purposes, be defined as "all persons not possessing the Roman Catholic faith". The reasons behind this demand were to be found in the school taxation structure, which provided that non-Catholic, non-Protestant taxpayers would pay school taxes into a "neutral" panel, unless they specifically elected one of the others. The revenue in this panel, together with school taxes on incorporated companies, was then divided between Roman Catholic and Protestant school authorities in proportion to their population. The Protestant Committee held that in practice practically all non-Catholic, non-Protestant parents elected to send their children to Protestant schools, and that therefore their taxes should be paid in full into the Protestant, or "non-Roman Catholic", panel.¹ The Protestant Committee was forced to withdraw its proposal, however, when His Eminence Cardinal Taschereau threatened to propose an amendment calling for the distribution

1 - This situation was a complicated one. It came into the open at the time due to the increasing numbers of Jewish pupils in Montreal. For a discussion of the whole question see Minutes of the Protestant Committee, May 14-15, 1889; Minutes of the Council of Public Instruction, April 18-20, 1888; Elson I Rexford, The Jewish Population and the Protestant Schools, especially pp. 14f.; Harold Ross: The Jew in the Educational System Of the Province of Quebec. Also vide infra pp. 186f.

of normal school grants strictly according to population, rather than as then arranged whereby the Protestants, with only one-sixth of the population, received one-third of the grants. Such an amendment would have meant the closing of the McGill Normal School.

Rexford took a serious view of the incident.¹ When he attempted to draft minutes of the meeting with his French confrere, Paul de Cazes, they were unable to agree, and a second meeting of the whole Council of Public Instruction had to be called. It ratified de Caze's version on division, all Roman Catholics voting on the one side and all Protestants on the other. An appeal was made to the Premier with the same result. On all other occasions cordial relations appear to have existed between Rexford and his French-Catholic colleagues.

As soon as the Revised Statutes were ready the Articles on Public Instruction were circulated by the Department to all school boards, under the title "The Code of Public Instruction".² The English version also included a consolidation and rewriting of the Regulations of the Protestant Committee.

- 1 - Elson I. Rexford, op.cit.; p.16. Contention centred about a resolution of Cardinal Taschereau's which the Protestants claimed was never carried: "That it is not expedient that any amendment be made in the law concerning public instruction, with regard to the mutual relations of the two Committees of the Council of Public Instruction, nor concerning the collection and distribution of funds furnished by the Government or raised by virtue of this law." (Minutes of the Council, May 15, 1889).
- 2 - Distributed in March, 1889. The Educational Record, Vol. IX No. 4, April, 1889; p. 125.

This was the work of Rexford, and represented a genuine gain. Prior to that time the regulations of the Protestant Committee could be found only as scattered through correspondence, circulars, and various issues of the Journal of Education or The Educational Record. Rexford collected them, revised them, and methodically classified them for the ready guidance of local boards and teachers.

There were nine chapters to the Regulations as adopted by the Protestant Committee and sanctioned by Order-in-Council dated November 30, 1888 (thereby given the force of law):

1. Regulations concerning school inspectors.
2. Regulations concerning examination of candidates for teachers' diplomas.
3. Regulations concerning classification of schools [including course of study].
4. Regulations concerning normal schools.
5. Regulations concerning duties of school commissioners and trustees.
6. Regulations concerning teachers.
7. Regulations concerning pupils.
8. Regulations concerning appeals to the Committee.
9. Regulations concerning the authorization of textbooks.

Many of these matters were covered by school law, of course. The Regulations were simply the detailed plan for application of the law. For the first time interested persons were provided with a handbook on school law and procedure for the Protestant schools of Quebec. In his Annual Report for 1888-89 Superintendent Ouimet notes a general improvement in the local administration of the schools, which he attributes

to the circulation of "The Code of Public Instruction".¹

A comparative study of Rexford's Regulations and earlier regulations of the Ontario Education Department shows that, as might be expected, Rexford made use of the proven Ontario formula. He did not follow the Ontario regulations slavishly: his are organized on a different plan, and contain many clauses which would be unnecessary in Ontario with its one system of common schools instead of Quebec's two. But the spirit is the same, and often similar wording appears on minor points:

Quebec Regulations (1888)

Ontario Regulations (1885)²

Sec. 9 (8) on duties of school inspectors:

"To give such advice to the teacher as may be deemed necessary."

Sec. 51 (9)

"To give such advice to teachers as may be deemed necessary."

Sec. 125

"The school house shall, when possible, be placed at least thirty feet from the public highway."

Sec. 9

"The school house shall be placed at least thirty feet from the public highway."

Sec. 129

"The heating apparatus shall be so placed as to give a uniform temperature of sixty-five degrees, determined by a thermometer, in the room during school hours."

Sec. 13

"The heating apparatus should be so placed as to keep a uniform temperature throughout the room, of at least sixty-seven degrees during the whole day."

1 - Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1888-89; pp. XVI f.

2 - Regulations Relating to the Education Department and the Public and High Schools, Province of Ontario, 1885. Quoted as an appendix by Joseph Baldwin, The Art of School Management.

Sec. 140

"The seats and desks shall be fastened to the floor in rows.....and a space [left] from three to five feet wide, between the teacher's platform and the front desks."

Sec. 18

"The seats and desks shall be fastened to the floor in rows.....and a space, from three to five feet wide, between the teacher's platform and the front desks."

By the time the Code was published, Rexford had become something of an authority on school law in Quebec. He had delivered a course of lectures on school law and organization to students at the McGill Normal School for three sessions beginning 1884-85; and he was shortly to publish his Manual of School Law and Regulations, which was authorized as a text at the McGill Normal School.¹

Two other highly contentious issues arose during Rexford's term as English Secretary of the Department: the Jesuits' Estates Settlement Act,² and the question of control of entrance to studies in the professions, especially legal and medical: whether it was to lie with the universities, or with the professional associations.³ The Protestant Committee

1 - Elson I Rexford, Manual of School Law and Regulations..... for the Use of Candidates for Teachers' Diplomas. No copy of the first edition has been found. The revised edition is readily available, published by Renouf in Montreal in 1895. It contains a brief history of education in Quebec, appropriate selections from the Statutes and Regulations of the Protestant Committee, together with an "Outline of School Organization".

2 - The Jesuits' Estates Settlement Act, 1888 (51-52 Vict. c.13) was a closing chapter in the one-hundred-and-thirty-year-old controversy over the disposition of the extensive Jesuits' properties seized at the time of the

(continued from previous page)...British conquest of New France. Under 2 Wm. IV c.41 the revenues from the Estates had been set aside for educational purposes. An Act of 1856 (20 Vict. c.54) had established a Superior Education Fund, consisting of the Jesuits' revenues made up to \$88,000. annually from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, for apportionment between the two Committees of the Council of Public Instruction for support of superior education (including universities). The Settlement Act of 1888 authorized the Government to dispose of the Estates, on payment of \$400,000 to the Catholic Committee and \$60,000. to the Protestant, while the Government gave assurances that the full sum of \$88,000. would be voted annually for superior education from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

The Protestant Committee, supported by such ad hoc organizations as "The Citizens Committee of Montreal" and the "Equal Rights Association" (see Provincial Archives, Dossier 940/89), objected on the grounds that the spirit of the original settlement was being violated, the Superior Education Fund jeopardized since it now stood entirely at the pleasure of the Government, and that too many conditions were attached to the \$60,000. settlement in any case. Further details may be found in a report adopted by the Protestant Committee as drafted by the acting chairman, R.W.Heneker, then Chancellor of Bishops (Minutes, May 14, 1889); also in 53 Vict. c.31, An Act respecting the Superior Education Revenue and Investment Funds.

- 3 - There is room for a detailed study of the whole evolving complex relationships between the universities and the professional associations in Canada. In the 1880's in Quebec there was some feeling that the growing professional associations were assuming too much authority at the expense of the universities. The Bar Act of 1886 (49-50 Vict. c.34) brought the matter to a head, when it permitted the General Council of the Bar Association to supercede the Lieutenant-Governor in "...inquiring into and requiring to be altered from time to time the requirements of the law courses at the universities...", as well as authorizing the General Council to hold an examination for "Admission to Study" with a practising advocate, instead of accepting the universities' bachelor degree as previously. The Protestant Committee, led by Sir William Dawson, Principal of McGill, considered this a serious inroad upon the authority and integrity of the universities. In his annual University Lecture for 1887 (text appears in the Montreal Gazette for November 19, 1887), he said: "In effect, the tendency of recent legislation in this province has been

was decidedly vocal on both questions, which therefore actively involved the Secretary as well. He appears to have been less keenly interested in these questions, however, than in others which were more intimately related to his schools. There were enough others to speak for the universities. Rexford preferred to focus his efforts on the struggling rural schools.

From the inspectors' reports we learn that the course of study was being followed reasonably closely. The records contain no instance of government grants being withheld on grounds of deviation from the course of study. A considerable body of opinion in Quebec as elsewhere, however, held that curriculums of the time were gravely overloaded. In his Presidential Address to the P.A.P.T. in 1890, "Our Education, Past and Present",¹ Rexford felt it

(continued from preceding page)...to destroy the guarantees of the minority by conferring powers not possessed by the legislature itself on irresponsible professional boards." (Cf. the present controversy between the faculty of Toronto's Osgoode Hall and the Ontario Bar Association. The Saturday Night, February 8, 1949).

The Protestant Committee conducted an active lobby (see Minutes for March 30, 1887). In February 1889 the Honorable W.W.Lynch carried a bill through the Assembly proposing recognition of the B.A. for entry to study for medical, legal and notarial professions, only to have it defeated in the Legislative Council. Finally compromises and working arrangements were made, and a non-partisan B.A.Bill (53 Vict. c.45) was introduced in 1890 by Messrs. Lynch and Hall, and carried. The Honorable Mr. Hall subsequently presented to the Redpath Library a mass of material he had collected in preparing the Bill.

¹ - Text appears in the Montreal Gazette, October 17, 1890.

necessary to answer the critics:

One or two remarks, however, upon the general principles upon which the course of study is based may not be out of place, and first as to our course for elementary schools. The fundamental parts are reading, spelling, writing and arithmetic, together with Scripture and moral teaching. In addition to this there is a little singing to act as a tonic for the school, a little drawing to keep little hands usefully employed, and occasional oral lessons during the week upon the use of English, upon geography, upon Canadian history, upon useful knowledge and upon physiology and hygiene. This covers the whole course with the exception of the optional subject of French, and yet many who glance at the course and find it divided into thirteen sections are shocked at the ignorance and stupidity of men who would overload the minds of children. It never occurs to them to examine how this course is to be applied, nor to reflect how a child is trained in the school of nature. They could soon discover (1) that it was never intended that a child should cover the whole thirteen departments of work in one day, and (2) that the child in nature's school carries on his investigations in more than twice thirteen subjects side by side, and that the motto of early childhood is multa non multum - a little of many things, not much of any one thing. The course of study imposed upon young children by nature is far more extended and far more varied than our own, and children thrive and make rapid progress in nature's school. The variety of subjects presented for examination by nature is the very life of the child, and the younger he is the more rapidly he passes from subject to subject, and the sooner he wearies in the consideration of a single subject. A child has been likened to a narrow-necked bottle - you can pour in only a little at a time. If you exceed the proper amount it flows over and is lost. You can teach only so much reading and arithmetic in a day. The remainder of the time must be filled in with something light and interesting.....We require to attract the attention of a child by throwing interest and variety into our teaching; we must therefore frequently change our subject.

Another problem which was still worrying Rexford was the large number of rural schools (75%) which did not offer the optional subject of French:

The average salary in these schools is less than fifteen dollars a month, and the average time that the schools are in operation during the year is not more than the minimum of eight months required by law. In order to qualify one's self to teach the subject of oral French in these schools, in addition to other requirements a teacher must take an extended course in some good institution, involving a considerable expenditure of time and money, not warranted by a prospective salary of \$120. per annum. Just here lies the solution of this whole difficulty: as long as these schools are unable to offer more than \$120. a year for a teacher, this and other defects must continue in our elementary schools. To impose these conditions at present would simply close the schools. We have the machinery to prepare teachers thoroughly qualified to do this work; we have candidates who would gladly prepare themselves if the remuneration were satisfactory. As soon as the means is placed at the disposal of these schools to enable them to pay twenty or twenty-five dollars a month for their teachers, it will be an easy matter to secure the teaching of French in all our schools, and to improve them in many other respects.

But by 1891, after nine years as English Secretary of the Department, Rexford had accomplished a good deal. Of course much remained to be done, and in fairness it should be stated that much of what had been accomplished was "in the air" in any case, and might well have resulted even if Rexford had not been English Secretary. Nevertheless there were now 1019 Protestant schools¹, with 1465 teachers and an average attendance of 24,397 pupils, instead of 734 schools with an -----

1 - Figures for 1891 are compiled from the Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1890-91, pp.viii-ix. Figures for 1881 are not accurate, inasmuch as separate statistics on Protestant and Catholic schools were not regularly kept before Rexford's time. Figures quoted have been compiled from the "Grand Statistical Table" at pp.142-161 of the Report of the Superintendent for 1880-81, by totalling numbers of schools and average attendance in the following inspectorates, with which the English Secretary seemed chiefly to deal: Fothergill, Hubbard, Lyster, McLaughlin, Magrath and Thompson. Some of these schools would be Roman Catholic; however, that number would probably be more than cancelled out by Protestant Schools reported by Roman Catholic inspectors. Even approximate figures as to Protestant teachers in 1881 are not available.

average attendance of 12,491. The schools were uniformly classified, and were following a standard course of study using authorized textbooks. The serving teachers were somewhat better qualified, and certainly aspiring teachers were more carefully screened before certification. The Regulations of the Protestant Committee, along with the School Law, had been revised and codified for easy reference. In short, a "system" had been set in operation, under inspection and provincial examinations, with the English Secretary at Quebec the recognized centre of activities, exercising a measure of control over the whole; although the cities, because of their financial independence, and the idea that they were perhaps large enough to look after themselves, remained somewhat apart -- in education as in other concerns.

Meanwhile, Rexford's family was growing. Two boys were already attending school in Quebec City, and a daughter was ready to begin the next fall. Protestant schools in Montreal were far superior to those in Quebec City at the time.¹ Probably it was this fact, together with a feeling that a task had been accomplished in the Department of Public Instruction, that persuaded Rexford to seek the post of Rector of the High School of Montreal, which at the time was sadly in need of a strong executive head.

1 - A.G.Penny: Moulding Our Tomorrows; pp. 35, 52; also W.P.Percival, Across the Years; pp.88-90.

It was not without regret that Rexford left Quebec in time to open the new term at the High School of Montreal in September, 1891, although he was to return almost immediately as a member of the Protestant Committee.¹ He had built the English Secretaryship into a key position; moreover he had successfully managed close and sometimes difficult relations with the predominant Roman Catholic side of the Department. A warm testimonial to Rexford was read at the time of his departure by M. Paul de Cazes, his French co-secretary. The press, French and English alike, noted his resignation editorially and congratulated him upon his successes.

The Protestant Committee carried unanimously a motion of Sir William Dawson's:

That the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction, having received the resignation of their Secretary, the Rev. E.I. Rexford, appointed to be Rector of the High School in Montreal, and regretting the unavoidable severance of his connection with the Department of Public Instruction, do record their high estimation of his organizing and administrative skill, and of the energy, the tact and zeal which have characterized its exercise; and do assure him of their appreciation of the effective service rendered by an officer whose diligence in the preparation of business and prompt execution of the Committee's decisions have contributed not a little to the advance in efficiency observable in the Protestant Schools of the Province.²

The impromptu celebration in Rexford's honour which

1 - Vide infra p.129.

2 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, May 22, 1891.

took place after that meeting would indicate that the resolution was not merely a formal gesture in keeping with the etiquette of the day.

Six men applied formally to the Protestant Committee for recommendation as Rexford's successor, including Professor G.W.Parmelee of the McGill Normal School, Dr. J.M. Harper, Inspector of Superior Schools, and Dr. A.W.Kneeland, then Headmaster of the Panet Street School in Montreal and member of the Protestant Committee.¹ It was an important post, and one which paid well, too. At the time of his resignation Rexford was receiving \$2400. a year as English Secretary, an additional \$300. as Secretary of the Protestant Committee, plus varying allowances as Secretary of the Central Board of Examiners and executive of the Pension Commission.²

Thirty-one-year-old Parmelee received the recommendation and appointment, apparently with the blessing of Rexford. Certainly they were to work in close harmony for many years.

1 - Provincial Archives, Quebec; Dossier 742/91.

2 - Quebec Public Accounts, 1890-91; also Provincial Archives, Quebec; Dossier 606/82, and Minutes of the Protestant Committee, September 21, 1887.

Rector of the High School
of Montreal

On the east side of University Street, between Sherbrooke and Milton, stands a large yellow-brick building with broad court and three-storey Grecian columns flanking the imposing entrance. The late Stephen Leacock used to say that the whole effect is impressive enough for an intelligent visitor to this French-Canadian city to remark, "Aha.....A Roman Catholic institution, no doubt!" Actually, it is the fifth home of the High School of Montreal, and the High School for Girls, with twenty-five hundred students long since overflowing its hundred classroom units to other high schools throughout the city.

When Rexford assumed his duties as Rector in September of 1891, the High School was without a home for its three-hundred-odd pupils to call their own. Nevertheless, it proudly traced its history back to 1799, claiming direct descent from Alexander Skakel's Classical and Mathematical School on Little St. James Street. That school had been attached to the Government Grammar School (The Royal Grammar School, established 1816 by the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning), which in turn was absorbed by the High School of Montreal, founded in 1843 as a business enterprise by a number

of men who, although public-spirited, also hoped to make money from children's school fees. Their hopes blighted by the trying financial times of the early 1850's, the High School went into bankruptcy, and it would have had to close its doors but for the tenacity of Dr. Henry Aspinwall Howe and two of his masters who carried on without regular salary. Finally McGill generously opened its slender purse and the High School was operated as a Department of the University for seventeen years, until the Act of 1869 increased the revenues of the Montreal Protestant Board of School Commissioners sufficiently for them to take over the school on a sound financial basis. The title of Rector was abolished temporarily, and the school reorganized into a Preparatory Department, a Classical Department, and a new Commercial Department. In 1875 public opinion forced the establishment of a High School for Girls, and shortly afterwards the two schools were moved to a stone building on Peel Street where the Mount Royal Hotel now stands.¹ This was the school in which Rexford had taught for three years before going to Quebec.

1 - An "Old Boy" describes the organization of the school in those days as follows, writing at p.37 in the High School Magazine for 1917:

The High School of thirty-five years ago was a fine building of Montreal limestone consistent of three storeys and a basement. The basement contained playrooms and furnace rooms, and the ground floor was taken up with the Boys' High. The second floor was occupied by the girls, while on the third floor were the Art Rooms, the Chemistry Laboratory and an Assembly Hall, which, by the way, was seldom used. The school was of a

The late 'Seventies and the 'Eighties were turbulent years for the High School. The city was growing rapidly, processes of industrialization were going on apace. There was a new spirit of utilitarianism abroad, oftentimes presented under the name of democracy. Parents were wondering whether a boy's education should not be more practical. Yet the aristocratic tradition dies hard: especially when the High was so intimately related to McGill, not only traditionally, but also in point of the university "Associate in Arts" examinations which marked successful high school graduation.

Thus many were the serious disputes over broadening the old classical course of study at the High. The Commercial Department was dropped, reinstated, dropped again. Various compromises were attempted, including German, Science and Extra Mathematics as an alternative to Latin and Greek in the upper forms - or even in addition to them, until the

(Continued from preceding page)

...peculiar construction, being in the form of a semi-circle, with the six classrooms on each floor arranged around the outside of the curve. The seats were arranged in tiers and were of the same kind as in the present Chemistry lecture room. The windows were all at the back of the rooms, and at the front, behind the master's desk, were double doors which opened into a large central room with regular desks, seating about sixty pupils. At the back of this large room was the Rector's desk, on a raised platform. Each morning all the doors were opened and the school was like a big assembly hall, every boy being able to see and hear Dr. Howe quite well as he conducted the exercises. Then the doors were closed, and each class went on with its regular work in its own room. Classes requiring desks...moved in rotation to the central room.....Cloakrooms were under the raised seats at the back of the classrooms, and winding stairs led down to them and then on to the basement.

press of the day was flooded with letters complaining that the high school course was too heavy. In 1882 nine hundred and thirty-seven members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science met in Montreal under the presidency of Sir William Dawson, and two years later the British Association also held its convention in Montreal, at which time some strong statements were made concerning the relative value of the classics and science in the high school course. Feelings were running so high that Dr. Howe saw fit to comment in his Annual Report for that year (although one of his own specialties was mathematics): ".....the critics were personally indebted to the classics for their mental equipment.....Some men will slap their mothers for no other reason than that they like their wives better."¹

Matters finally came to a head with the opening of the fall term in 1890. The Board had sounded out contemporary practice by circularizing various American and Ontario secondary schools, and over the strong objections of Dr. Howe ("I shall never agree to it!")² had determined to offer Latin and Greek as optional subjects only, and that only in the upper forms. By this time the High School Question, as it was popularly called, was a public issue. Dr. Fred W. Kelley, the Assistant Headmaster, opposed Dr. Howe's views. Gammell says:

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- 1 - Annual Report of the Headmaster of the High School of Montreal; MS.; records of the High School of Montreal.
 - 2 - ¹⁸⁹¹⁻⁹⁴Minutes of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners, meeting November 5, 1890.

The staff gave their allegiance to one or the other; the pupils saw and followed suit. The poor condition of the building was thrown into the controversy. Two teachers were dismissed by the Board.....The issue was joined in the press, and in the homes of the pupils. The appalling outcome was that on Friday, November 28th, shortly after closing hour, fire was discovered under the classrooms, and the building was totally destroyed. The resignation followed of the seventy-two year old administrator who had guided the school for forty-three years.¹

Dr. Howe's resignation was to take effect at the end of the school year. Meanwhile, the classes were spread among various elementary schools pending erection of a new high school building. There were over twenty applicants for the Headship. The Montreal Herald for March 21, 1891, under the caption "Who Will Be Their Choice?" lists the following:

Dr. F.W. Kelley, Assistant Headmaster
 Rev. Elson I. Rexford, English Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction
 Mr. J.W. Tricker, one of the junior masters
 Dr. Anderson, of Prince of Wales College, Charlottetown
 Mr. Howard Murray, M.A., Classical Master at Halifax Academy and lecturer at Dalhousie
 Mr. E.L. Currie, Classical Master at Trinity College School, Port Hope.

The appointment fell to Rexford - and at \$3000. a year, although Howe had had but \$2200.² His record as an administrator was good, he was familiar with the Montreal situation. Again, "The School Board wished to preserve an impartial attitude, and, avoiding the appearance of partisanship....to appoint a head of the school independent of factions, one of

- 1 - Isaac Gammell: History of the High School of Montreal; p.20.
- 2 - \$3000. in his final year "in consideration of long services". See Howe's letter to the editor of the Daily Witness, dated April 17, 1891.

rank and influence in the educational world, who would attract the loyalty of the community to the reorganized school."¹

What stand did Rexford take in the matter of broadening the old classical curriculum? He seems to have held opinions between the two extremes - perhaps a little to the left of centre. He was concerned that the schools should provide some practical training: manual and domestic arts in the elementary schools, science in the superior schools, development of the "physical" as well as the "intellectual" powers. Thus at the first meeting of the Protestant Committee which he attended as a member (November 20, 1892), he gave notice of a motion "...to provide a Science or Modern Course in the Protestant Superior Schools"; he continually urged the study of agriculture in rural schools; he was proud of the sloyd and sewing programme he introduced in the Preparatory Department of the High Schools of Montreal. Yet, as will be seen in Part IV, he insisted that the keystone in any teaching programme must be religious and moral instruction - this in the face of the popular movement away from religion in the schools; and he had some fears that the "practical" turn in education could be carried too far:

The final end of education is the making of men and women. The secondary kind which does not reach the

1 - Isaac Gammell, op.cit.; p.25.

absolute goal is the kind that only leads the man or woman to make something else. We are not educators to make legal practitioners, or tailors or blacksmiths, but we are educators to make men fit to be anything that they may be called upon to be; and although that is not the short road to technical education, it is the sure road; and though it is not the short road to national prosperity, it will be found to be the sure road.¹

In any case, under its new Rector the High School offered Classics, Science, and Commercial options in the three senior forms.

Orrin B. Rexford has a copy of the Report of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners for Montreal, 1886-89, including "Regulations for City Schools", with some rather interesting pencilled notes and comments in his father's handwriting relative to various conditions he set in accepting the Rectorship:

I should like to have some arrangement made by which in the natural course of things I should be present by right and not merely by courtesy when these matters [appointments and ceremonials, course of study, and general regulations concerning control and regulation of the staff] are discussed and determined.

To meet the peculiar circumstances of the H.S., a Standing H.S. Committee should be appointed by the Board, composed say of Chairman, two members, Superintendent, and Headmaster, charged with supervision and management of all matters concerning the High School, subject to approval of the Board.

1. That the Headmaster should be entitled to free tuition for his children in the High School. [Previously only 50%, 100% in elementary schools.]
2. That the Headmaster be at liberty to proceed with his examinations for ordination and to take Sunday duty.

1 - From speech delivered by Rexford before the Dominion Education Association's first Meeting; Montreal, July 8, 1892.

3. That the position of Headmaster of the Royal Grammar School be recognized and the appointment by Order-in-Council be secured if necessary.
4. That in the organization of the school the Headmaster shall not be responsible for any particular subject or class but shall be at liberty to devote his whole time to the supervision and general direction of the work of the several classes, taking such teaching as he may think desirable.
5. That in order to secure efficient work thirty-five be considered the normal number for each class.
6. That in the Junior Classes the Headmaster may indicate method to be followed and important points to be taken up in teaching different subjects laid down; the limit tables, and that the teaching staff should be so constituted that the assistant masters should regard the instructions and suggestions of the Headmaster as imperative.

A special meeting of the Board was held May 1, 1891, at which these points in principle were all acceded to, at which these points in principle were all acceded to,

Rexford being admitted to conference with the Board. Detail of some of the resulting resolutions:¹

7. (a) That the office of Assistant Headmaster of the High School be abolished at the close of the present school year, and that Dr. Kelley be offered the English mastership.
- (c) That in order to give the Headmaster a voice in the general management of the High School, in the appointment and removal of members of the staff, and in the preparation of the course of study, the High School be placed under a special committee consisting of the members of the Board, the Headmaster of the School, and the Superintendent, and that all matters affecting the interest or management of the school be referred to this Committee before being dealt with by the Board; that monthly meetings be held at the call of the Superintendent, four members to form a quorum, one of whom must be the Headmaster.²

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners for the City of Montreal; May 1, 1891.

These changes resulted in a good deal of freedom for the Rector, especially since by 1893 it was he who called the meetings of the High School Committee. Regulations as amended and published in 1896 state: "In the discharge of his duties as head of the two High Schools the Rector is directly responsible to the High School Committee, from which he receives his instructions, and to which he must report at least quarterly."¹ Thus Rexford by-passed E.W.Arthy, the veteran Superintendent of Schools, although the two got along very well together, with Arthy's office being located in the new High School down the hall from the Rector's. It should also be noted that previously both the Headmaster and his Assistant had taught practically full-time. The new Rector was freed from all regular teaching, although frequently he did take classes, either to keep in touch with them, or as a matter of convenience in the absence of one of the regular masters.

Rexford's early reports as Rector provide a picture of school conditions at the time together with an outline of his plans to meet them. His first report was made verbally to the High School Committee at the end of his first half-year.²

- 1 - Regulations of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners for the City of Montreal, 1896; p.14.
- 2 - The MS. of this report, dated February 17, 1892, is in the possession of Orrin B. Rexford.
- 2 (from preceding page) Members of the first High School Committee were: Rev.D.H.MacVicar, Chairman of the Board; Archdeacon^{Lew} Evans; Aldermen Wilson and Thompson; Rev.W.I. Shaw; Miss H.C.Fuller, Lady Principal of the High School for Girls; the Superintendent; and the Rector. (Isaac Gammell, op.cit.; p.27). There had been a High School Committee previously, when the school was under McGill University. In those days the Rector was not a Committee member, however.

Classes were spread among Metcalfe and Berthelet Street Schools and the Fraser Institute, pending the completion of the new building on Peel Street. The teaching staff of twenty had been thoroughly reorganized: ten were new in September, and only one (Dr. Kelley) dated back to Rexford's previous engagement at the High School.

The report shows discipline and school spirit as Rexford's chief preoccupations. No fewer than four of its eight sections deal with discipline. He had staggered the closing hour at the various schools, so that he could be present personally to supervise dismissal. He notes improvement:

I feel confident that it will soon be possible to conduct our school without resorting to corporal punishment at all. Up to the present time there has been no case of discipline calling for the serious attention of the Headmaster. Our greatest difficulty is with a few capable boys who persistently neglect their lessons.

He goes on to discuss the regular teachers' meetings he had instituted (and which he considered valuable enough to continue monthly throughout his tenure as Rector, in later years holding most meetings in two sections, for masters of the junior and senior forms respectively):

All matters concerning the internal management, arrangements and discipline of the school come up for full discussion at these meetings, and the conclusions reached are put in force by the whole staff. I have found this a very effective way of securing the co-operation of all members of the staff in support of minor changes and arrangements.....

As for school spirit, Rexford was a strong believer in assemblies, which he had already commenced despite the difficulties of gathering the various classes in one building. A magic lantern had been obtained; a High School Lecture Course was projected, from men prominent in "...our Commercial, Literary and Scientific circles". Rexford states that he was paying particular attention to the younger boys, since they would grow up with the school. (When he was appointed Rector the Preparatory Department had ceased to be a separate entity and had been made a part of the High School). He reported a start made in physical culture according to the "Ling System of Gymnastics", which had impressed him on visits to American schools. There were daily ten-minutedrills in each room up to Second Form, Major W.B.T.Macaulay (one of his young masters and former cadet instructor, whom he recommended to Y.M.C.A. summer school) took the preparatory classes twice a week on the gym floor, and the senior classes once a week.

This report to the High School Committee is the business-like report of an administrator, not the more general document for public consumption which was read each June as the Rector's Annual Report. Indeed, the latter was aimed in part at attracting parents to send their children to the school. (For instance, Rexford's first Annual Report (June 1892)

includes the following paragraph:¹

This is the first year that the classes known as the Preparatory School have been included in the High School so as to form one school under one head. The work of this school has received my special attention during the year and the results of the year's work are creditable alike to the very efficient staff of lady teachers in charge of the work and to the pupils. No pupil who has been in regular attendance upon these classes throughout the year has failed to earn his promotion. This should satisfy the parents of the children in attendance and commend the school to those who desire for their boys a thorough preparatory training.

It is interesting to note, too, the emphasis throughout this Report - as always - which Rexford placed on moral training. "A school that fails to develop sound moral character in its pupils fails, I hold, at the most important point of its work."

The new high school building, of thirty-two classroom units, was ready by the fall of 1892. The High School for Girls took most of the South wing, the boys the North. Iron-spiked gates - much joked about whenever "old boys" meet - separated boys and girls where the corridors converged on the administrative offices of the school board in the centre section.²

The centre section also included a spacious gymnasium,

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- 1 - Annual Report of the High School of Montreal for the Year 1891-92. MS. These reports were not regularly published until 1896, although many are available in the records of the school board and in the press. Orrin B. Rexford has the original of this report which is reproduced at Appendix D.
 - 2 - See C.J. Binmore, The Protestant Board of School Commissioners of the City of Montreal, An Historical Sketch; unpublished MS. in the school board files, by a veteran secretary-treasurer of the board.

and Rexford pushed Major Macaulay's athletic programme, not only because he considered physical development important (the school motto was Corpori, Menti, Moribus), but also as a means of developing school spirit. He also organized an Athletic Association for outdoor activities, and the First Annual Track and Field Games were held at the M.A.A.A. grounds in October, 1892. The following year Rexford offered a trophy as a track and field aggregate award: the same Rector's Trophy which is still up for annual competition.¹

In 1895 Charles B. Powter, a Springfield College graduate in physical training, was appointed as the High's first full-time "P.T." master. One of the difficulties then - as now - was lack of adequate playing fields. From 1894 to 1897 Rexford secured the Shamrock Grounds for his boys (now Atwater Park). The M.A.A.A. grounds were also available occasionally, until that association opened its own boys' department in 1897. Finally Rexford, Powter and Kelley located a reasonably-priced farm which they considered suitable for High School Athletic Grounds, despite its location in the wilds of what is now residential Notre Dame de Grace. With the help of C.J. Binmore, the sympathetic secretary-treasurer of the school board, the three men persuaded the board to buy part of the property just before the turn of the Century,

1 - It is interesting to note that the aggregate winner at the First Annual Games was Walter G. Mitchell, later Provincial Treasurer, and successor to Rexford as Chairman of the Protestant Committee.

the Westmount Athletic Association taking the rest. Sherbrooke Street West and Monkland Avenue were opened up shortly afterwards, and the school board sold part of the property for building lots. Finally trams were established on Girouard; and by 1905 - although Rexford was no longer Rector to enjoy the fruits of his labours - the High School Grounds (on what is now Royal Avenue, opposite Lower Canada College) were fenced, levelled, and in use, with a club-room erected; and the sale of building lots had netted the board a profit of \$29,000. on the whole transaction!¹

But football, lacrosse and track and field were not the only extra-curricular activities in the school programme. An old boy relates an amusing anecdote concerning the school orchestra.² It seems that their chief difficulty was finding a place to practise. They tried one of the classrooms, but the girls complained that the noise interfered with their studies. They tried the basement, but the caretaker complained that the fires would not draw. "Finally," he says, "we gave a concert, and practised on the public!"

With the opening of the new building two kindergartens were added, the first of their kind in Montreal. Gammell

1 - Isaac Gammell, op.cit.; pp.38f.

2 - "V.A." in the High School Magazine, June, 1916; p.21.

credits Rexford with this move,¹ which may not be entirely accurate inasmuch as there had been talk of kindergarten for at least two or three years.² Certainly Rexford was a firm believer in the kindergarten movement, and gave the new classes every support. On several occasions he quoted passages from the writings of Froebel. He had the following illuminated by an art class, and hung on his office wall:³

Play is the natural, the appropriate business and occupation of the child left to his own resources. Through play, involving associateship and combined action, he begins to recognize moral relations, to feel that he cannot live for himself alone, and that he is a member of a community, whose rights he must acknowledge if his own are to be acknowledged.....

Play, spontaneous play, is the education of little children.....Play, however, is a random, desultory education. It lays the essential basis, but it does not raise the superstructure. It requires to be organized for this purpose, but so organized that the superstructure shall be strictly related and conformed to the original lines of the foundation.

The reorganized High School offered, then, Kindergarten, First and Second Prep Classes, and the Six Forms of the high school course. In 1896 Rexford added a Transition Class to the preparatory course, since his introduction of sloyd for boys and sewing for girls , and music for both had overcrowded

1 - Isaac Gammell, op.cit.; p.34.

2 - See letters to the editor, the Montreal Daily Witness, May 9, 1889.

3 - See Rector's Memoranda of Former Years, one of Rexford's scrap books, now in the records of the High School. Rexford also quoted Froebel at a meeting of the Protestant Committee, September 27, 1897; and before the P.A.P.T. 32nd Annual Convention, 1895.

the timetables. Two years later still another year was added to the preparatory course, and the heavy work of the Sixth Form was spread over two years; all adding up to the present eleven years plus kindergarten before graduation.¹

In February of 1896 Miss Maria E. Findlay, Headmistress of the High School for Girls, resigned. Rexford's responsibilities were extended to include both schools, with a First Assistant appointed on the girls' side. Commenting on the change, Rexford recalls a recent visit to the schools of Boston and Brooklyn, where he had found headmasters in charge of girls' schools; moreover, no house was really large enough for two families.² Mr. A.R.McBain, a retired master who has a history of the High School of Montreal in process of publication, states that Rexford was given the girls' school as well simply because he was a sound administrator who had readily straightened away the difficulties besetting the boys' school.³ However, the two schools continued to function more or less independently, with separate accounts, assemblies, teachers' meetings, parents' days and the like, and on Rexford's retirement in 1903 the High School for Girls was restored to a Lady Principal.⁴

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- 1 - Annual Reports of the High School of Montreal, 1896-97, 1898-99.
 - 2 - Prospectus, The High School for Girls, 1896-97; p.23.
 - 3 - Conversation with the writer. Mr. McBain's book is scheduled for publication by Garden City Press about June, 1949. In it he has edited the work of Rexford (to 1892) and Gammell (to 1932), and added a section of his own to bring the history up to the present.
 - 4 - Miss L.M.Henry, Monograph on the High School for Girls, 1875-1930; pp. 10-12.

It has been mentioned that Rexford was a methodical man. The fact is further attested by a series of scrap books which he kept concerning the day-to-day functioning of the school, variously entitled "Working Notes", "Memoranda", or simply by the year concerned. Eight of these are preserved in the records of the High School. They contain a mass of routine notices: Instructions for Preparation of Teachers' Statistical Reports; Examination Schedules; Memorandum for Janitor's Work; Time of Teachers' Arrival at School; Financial Statement of Teachers' Magazine Fund; assembly programmes; The Disposal of Ends of Chalk; Instructions for "Teachers on Guard" and "Detention Room"; Instructions for Pupil on Telephone Duty; Instructions on the Keeping of Class Diaries (1900-1901); yearly records of the number of games won and fouls made by each boy on the gym floor. Also included are copies of Rexford's Memorandum for Pupils - "standing orders" to be read and explained to each class at least once a month (1900); and his Memorandum for the Information of Parents (1903), which was sent to parents of all pupils, enjoining more attention to homework, reminding that fees were payable quarterly in advance, and warning that the school could accept no responsibility for pupils' bicycles.

Several items are reproduced below as a matter of interest:

(a) Notice to Teachers concerning the first "Public Day"

(1894) includes the following:

Teachers will remember that the object of the Public Day is to exhibit methods of teaching rather than knowledge of the pupils....Warn pupils about being quiet at recess and prompt in answering the bell.

- (b) Rexford demanded considerable memory work from his pupils, and had separate marks allotted for it on reports in the junior classes:

| <u>Memory Work (First Term)</u> | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <u>Third Year</u> | |
| The Lord's Prayer | Song of the Angels |
| Old 100th | The Songs of Our Fathers |
| Psalm XXIII | Christ the Lord Is Risen Again |
| God Save the King | The Burial of Moses |
| Britannia, Queen of the Ocean | Wreck of the Royal George |
| <u>Fourth Year</u> | |
| The Commandments | The Daisy |
| God Save the King | The Soldier's Dream |
| Lead Kindly Light | The Wind in a Frolic |
| Psalm of Life | The Valley Brook |
| The Brook | |

- (c) It was customary for the school board to vote about \$1400 yearly to provide book prizes in the various schools. In 1898 Rexford obtained permission to use the High Schools' allotment from this fund for the provision of classroom libraries. The following report, in Dr. Kelley's handwriting, covers purchases by the Sixth Form in 1902:

| <u>VI Form Library, 1902</u> | |
|--|------|
| <u>Books Bought</u> | |
| The World's English Poets (4 vols) | 4.00 |
| Cuthbert's and Chute's Physics | 1.00 |
| Potter's Outline of History of Eng. Language | 1.25 |
| Tennyson's Poems | 1.75 |
| Burns | 1.00 |

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Keats, Shelley, Coleridge, Dryden (Albion Editions) | 3.00 |
| Goldsmith's Works in 1 vol. | 1.75 |
| Lamb's Essays of Elia | .60 |
| Ruskin's Sesame and Lilies | .50 |
| Saddler's Intro. to the Writings of Ruskin | .50 |
| Burke's Speeches | .75 |
| Smith's Student's Gibbon | 1.25 |
| | <hr/> 17.35 |

Which leaves, I think, \$20. for wall decoration. In decoration we would be glad to have the busts of Milton and Scott restored to us, and pictures of Tennyson and other great writers added.

F.W.K.

- (d) Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee was roundly celebrated in 1897: the schools closed early to attend a "...mammoth city-wide rally with flag and medal given to each student." Rexford's notice enjoins teachers of all grades to:

.....give special attention to instructing their classes on such subjects as:- "The Principal Events of H.M.Reign", "The Extent of the Empire", "The Growth of Its Commerce", "The Army and the Navy", and especially "The Moral and Other Benefits of British Rule".

There were many patriotic demonstrations in the High during the year 1899-1900 as well, marking successes in the South African War. Rexford wrote, "Possibly routine school work suffered, but in the breasts of these youthful citizens an enduring loyalty to Empire was strengthened."

- (e) Composition Work [October 23, 1902]

The checking of the specimens of compositions from the several classes is not working very smoothly as I have not been able to find time to check the work so as to return the specimens promptly.

(f)

Notes for Singing Classes [1896]

- 1) Girls to be divided into singers and non-singers by regular tests.
- 2) Marks to be assigned as follows: $\frac{1}{2}$ for singing alone, $\frac{1}{2}$ for written tests in theory. Non-singers are to have their marks in theory doubled.
- 3) No discredits to be given for failure to sing.
- 4) Those failing to sing alone are to be tried by themselves at recess and if they fail here they are to be reported to the Rector.

(g)

[November 12, 1901]

Class teachers of the Third Forms will read the Epistle to the Philippians at the opening exercises twice during the year.

Rexford was a man of average height, rather stocky and solidly-built. Habitually there was a kindly light in his eye; he liked a joke. Yet he demanded strict discipline from his students, and could be very stern indeed on occasion. When aroused he lived up to the promise of his red hair. On one occasion the kindergarten room had been too cold for some time. Rexford went down to charge the Janitor with it. The Janitor did not relish visitors below decks -- especially irate ones. "Dad came home with a black eye," says Orrin B. Rexford. But the new Janitor made sure the kindergarten room was kept warm!

By 1903, after eleven years of what Gammell calls "The Rexford Regime",¹ the High Schools of Montreal had prospered. The population of the city itself had increased phenomenally: from 254,278 in 1891 to 325,653 in 1901.² School population had more than kept pace: from 788 to 1593 in the two High Schools.³ The school course had been lengthened to eleven years, plus kindergarten. The programme of studies had been broadened in answer to the demand for more "practical" education - with sloyd and sewing added in the junior grades, more science in the senior. The notion was beginning to appear that a high school course should be not merely a preparation for college, but also a general terminal education for the increasing number of students with neither the inclination nor the desire to attend university. Physical training had assumed new importance, and from 1902 every student in the Fourth Form (boys) or Eighth Year (girls) had been given a medical examination. Extra-curricular activities had blossomed.

In all of this the Rector had been involved. Indeed, one of his teachers writes:⁴

If the Rector had one fault as an administrator at the High,

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- 1 - Isaac Gammell, op.cit.; section heading.
 - 2 - Canada Year Book, 1947; p.103.
 - 3 - Report of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners For Montreal, 1890-91; p.22; Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1903-04; p.217.
 - 4 - Letter from a teacher who served under Rexford. Name is withheld by request.

perhaps it was that he sometimes insisted on doing too much himself, instead of delegating authority. Mind, it was always done efficiently, and with the aim of maintaining close touch with all the activities of his schools.....And he did have the schools so organized that they could run smoothly without him when other activities frequently necessitated his absence. His advice to me as a nervous young teacher facing a one-room rural school for the first time was precisely that: to so arrange my school that it could carry on for short intervals without me. He called that man who allowed himself to become so tied to necessary routine that he had no time for broader activities an extremely poor administrator.

Rexford certainly found time for other activities. He remained active in the P.A.P.T., and was one of the most energetic in the early stages of the Dominion Education Association (now the Canadian Education Association); he was anything but a passive member of the Protestant Committee; he completed his Master's thesis at McGill and was awarded the Master of Arts degree at the spring convocation of 1903; moreover he became a leading figure in the Church of England in Canada, especially in the Sunday School field. These activities are considered in detail later.

In 1903 the principalship of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College became vacant. A group of churchmen suggested to Rexford that he should put forward his name for the appointment. After some hesitation he did. The post carried greater dignity than the Rectorship, of course; nor would he be neglecting his beloved child in the community: rather would he be training leaders of children instead of the children themselves. Again, even at that time rate of

recruitment for the ministry in Canada was far from satisfactory. The post would offer a challenge, whereas the High Schools were well on their feet.

Yet Rexford was a shrewd man. He must have realized that it would be far from easy for him at first -- fifty-three years of age, twenty-seven years after he himself had graduated from McGill; steeped in the ways and discipline of the school rather than the university; more a practical man of action than an intellectual - it would be far from easy for him to take over as Principal of the College, and John Duncan Professor of Dogmatic Theology to boot. Perhaps these are some of the reasons which made the decision a difficult one for him.¹ The final decision may well have been affected by another very practical consideration, however. He was going on fifty-four, a time when most men are beginning to think of slippers. Doubtless he had little thought of retirement himself (his youngest daughter was less than a year old), but he could hardly expect to continue with the school board for more than ten or fifteen more years at most; and as an ordained clergyman he was not eligible for pension through the Department of Education. Thus the Diocesan College offered greater security.

Rexford's close friend, the Very Reverend Dean Lewis Evans, who had been a member of the first High School Committee,

1 - Mr. A.R.McBain and Dr. O.W.Howard, among others, have suggested that Rexford was somewhat reluctant at first to make the move to the Diocesan College.

was chairman of both the school board and the Diocesan College Board of Governors at the time.¹ Archbishop Bond also seems to have been favourably disposed towards the appointment of Rexford. When negotiations with a previous choice broke down, the post was offered to him, despite criticism in some church circles to the effect that the Church of England should not allow control of the High Schools to slip from its grasp!²

Although Rexford had made enemies at the High School, as would any strong-minded man, yet on the whole he was very well-regarded. On December 23, 1903, teachers, pupils, school board members and representatives of the city and province gathered to bid the Rector farewell. Illuminated addresses were presented from both school board and teachers and pupils.³ A purse was given to Rexford, toward adding to his personal library; a luncheon was tendered him; and Sir William Peterson announced that at the spring convocation McGill would confer upon the new principal of the Diocesan College the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.⁴

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- 1 - His son, Professor Norton N. Evans, addressed an assembly at the High School of Montreal shortly after Rexford's death on "The Late Canon Elson I. Rexford". Text of his address was published in several periodicals; including the P.A.P.T. Teachers Magazine for December, 1936; pp. 7f.
 - 2 - This criticism even reached the press. See articles in the Montreal Daily Star for July 3 and 17, 1903.

(continued from previous page)

- 3 - These are now hanging in the halls of the High School of Montreal, together with a testimonial address from the teaching staff on Rexford's completion of ten years as Rector. Texts are reproduced in full in Mr. A.R.McBain's forthcoming book.
- 4 - The Montreal Daily Witness for December 23, 1903, states: "Finally Dr. Peterson, remarking that nobody in this country was counted any good unless he had "Dr." to his name, observed that McGill intended to confer upon Mr. Rexford the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. At this time there was immense cheering....."

Principal of the
Montreal Diocesan Theological College

Founded by Bishop Oxenden in 1873, the Montreal Diocesan Theological College was affiliated with McGill University seven years later.¹ It had no power to grant degrees although from 1874 it had awarded a Testamur (variously designated as Licentiate of Sacred Theology (L.S.T.) and Licentiate of Theology (L.Th.)); and from 1891 the Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada had conferred degrees upon graduates of the Montreal college and of other colleges without degree-conferring powers. A spacious new University Street building, the gift of Mr. A.F. Gault, and still in use, was formally opened in 1896. When Rexford took up his duties as principal the first of January, 1904, twenty-nine men were registered as students at the college - either in Theology, or in pre-Theology in co-operation with McGill's Faculty of Arts.²

There were comparatively few fireworks in the course of Rexford's twenty-five years at the college. Perhaps one

- 1 - For a brief history and vital statistics of the college see The Yearbook of the Church of England in Canada, 1930; p.114.
- 2 - Report of the Principal of the Diocesan College to Convocation, April 29, 1904; as reported in the Montreal Daily Star for the following day.

would not expect them in such a connection. His staff was remarkably stable: Reverend Professors G. Abott-Smith, M.A., D.D., LL.D., and O.W.Howard, B.A., D.D., had been there before Rexford, and remained after his retirement. He personally taught courses in Systematic Theology (especially the Doctrine of the Trinity and the Person and Work of Christ), and in Religious Education, which will be discussed in Part IV.

From the point of view of administration, three matters stand out:

- (a) Supply of candidates for the ministry.
- (b) Inter-denominational co-operation.
- (c) Powers of the college to grant degrees.

Supply of Candidates for the Ministry

Rexford regarded this as his own personal responsibility. Indeed, Dr. Howard considers Rexford's work in recruiting men for the church to be one of his major contributions.¹ He never tired of airing the question: in annual reports, at public meetings, in his sermons, at the annual Synods. Dr. Howard remembers him saying, "If the Church finds the money, I'll find the students." "Through prayer and systematic efforts of Church leaders, lay and clerical, it can be done," he said.²

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- 1 - In conversation, and also in article entitled "Canon Rexford" in the Montreal Churchman, November, 1936; p.5.
 - 2 - Principal's report to Synod, 1927; Proceedings of the 68th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1927; p.115.

Again, "Our experience.....justifies the conviction that there is ample material available among our young men in the Diocese.....but we must go after it in the same systematic and common-sense way in which we attack other problems of the Church."¹

In his Principal's Annual Report for 1915² Rexford outlines the various steps taken to assist in securing an adequate supply of candidates:

- (1) He personally interviewed any men reported through the parishes as possible condidates, and conducted a prayer circle among them.
- (2) The college saw to it that no candidate was turned away through lack of funds.
- (3) A special effort was made to meet all cases. For instance, preparatory classes were offered for those who did not already possess college-entrance qualifications; night classes were held for those who felt they were not yet ready for full-time work.

It was up-hill going, nevertheless. Registration fell so low during the War years (only eight in attendance in 1918-19) that the temporary closing of the college was

- 1 - Rexford's last Principal's Report; Proceedings of the 69th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1928; p.112.
- 2 - From 1915 on these annual reports were printed in the Proceedings of the Diocesan Synod. This report occupies pp. 160-165 of the Proceedings for 1915.

seriously discussed. With the War over, however, and possibly in part as a reflection of the "Forward Movement", a nation-wide Anglican revival, registration was restored to a more normal fifteen the following year, and to twenty-three by 1923-24. The Fiftieth Anniversary Report of the College (1923) states: "The College has trained about 150 men: including 14 Bachelors of Divinity, 5 Doctors of Divinity, 2 Bishops, 1 Dean, 1 Principal of a University, 1 of a Theological College, and 1 Dean of a Divinity School."¹

Inter-Denominational Co-Operation

In 1912 an arrangement was completed to set up a joint board of governors and joint faculty for the four theological colleges affiliated with McGill -- Methodist, Congregational, Presbyterian and Diocesan. It was done with the object of preventing unnecessary duplication in non-doctrinal courses, leading to economy of operation while enriching the curriculum and probably raising the standards of instruction. The idea originated with the dissenting denominations, who were considering a wider organic union at the time. Despite considerable opposition in the Synod, backed by Bishop Farthing Rexford entered enthusiastically

1 - Proceedings of the 64th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1923; p.108.

into the plan:

I look upon this as the beginning of a new era in our church life.....I regard it as the very foundation of a practical working union [among the churches].....In this scheme we are careful to point out that what we are doing is simply co-operating. There is no federation and no amalgamation. No college loses its individuality or autonomy. But all the same we are coming together in a manner that is unique. We are trying an experiment fraught with immense possibilities -- an experiment which will be watched with the greatest interest throughout the whole Protestant world.¹

Rexford, of course, was a "low churchman". And probably one of his reasons for welcoming the joint programme lay in the fact that it was a logical step toward his dream of paralleling the theology course with a four-year degree course in religious education.²

- In 1915 the joint board purchased a building for joint lectures, naming it Divinity Hall. From 1918 it organized inter-denominational summer schools for clergymen at Macdonald College, arranged sabbatical leave for members of the joint faculty who wished to further their studies,

1 - Rexford, commenting on the co-operative scheme, as quoted in the Montreal Daily Star, September 18, 1912. The scheme grew out of suggestions from laymen during financial campaigns on behalf of the various colleges. Messrs. W.M.Birks and John R. Ross took up and followed through the suggestions, becoming chairman and secretary respectively of the joint board of governors. The first approach to the Diocesan College was through Mr. George Drummond, a lay member of the board of that college. Rev. Dr. John Scrimgeour, Principal of the Presbyterian College, said in a press interview (Montreal Gazette, September 11, 1912): "The Anglican College was approached more out of compliment than with any real hope it would join. We were delighted when we found with what cordiality Dr. Rexford and Bishop Farthing took up the idea."

2 - Vide infra p. 171.

and also provided certain salary augmentations and retiring allowances. Rexford retained his first enthusiasm for the plan, quoting it as a successful precedent when the missionary boards of the various denominations were arranging a joint training scheme, and again when consulted about a similar proposal for theological colleges in Vancouver.¹

By informal agreement, the principals of the various colleges acted as "Dean" in rotation. Rexford was recognized as such throughout the War years. This circumstance was partially responsible for his appointment as Dean of Theology of Khaki University when the Joint Colleges at McGill accepted responsibility for that faculty.² And at its Jubilee Celebrations in 1917, the Presbyterian College honoured him with the degree of Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa.

Power to Grant Degrees

Rexford considered that his Diocesan College was unjustly hampered by not possessing the power to confer degrees in its own right. If comparative standards required for passing are any criterion, then he was justified, for passing standards at the Montreal College were relatively high.

- 1 - Rexford's review of his work at the Diocesan College on the eve of his retirement, as reported in the Proceedings of the 69th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1928: pp. 110-115.
- 2 - Vide infra pp. 111f.

Indeed, the Montreal Diocesan Theological College even embarked on the delicate task of raising the standards of its fellow Church of England colleges: a movement, led by Dr. Abott-Smith and Rexford, which resulted in the establishment by the 1915 General Synod of a Central Board for Divinity Degrees.¹ Under this plan all Church of England colleges agreed to grant degrees only after submitting their candidates to standardized examinations prepared by the Central Board.

The question of degrees at the Montreal Diocesan College first came to the fore in 1886, when an enabling bill was quashed in the Private Bills Committee of the Quebec Legislature. Opposition at the time came chiefly from Bishops College, Lennoxville, led by its well-known and influential Chancellor, R.W.Heneker. He argued, not without relevance, that Bishops had been established to serve the two dioceses of Quebec and Montreal; and offered in compromise to amend Bishops' regulations to allow suitable graduates of the Montreal Diocesan College to receive Bishops' divinity degrees.² The compromise was not accepted by the Diocesan College. The Board of Governors not only desired to retain its own identity, but also considered unwise such virtual affiliation with Bishops, coming on the heels of actual affiliation with McGill.

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- 1 - Canon X of the General Synod of the Church of England in Canada. Enacted Session VI, 1915; vide M.R.Kingsford, A Handbook to the Work of the General Synod of the Church Of England in Canada; pp. 126-130.
 - 2 - Cf. Facts Bearing on the Application of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College for the Power to Grant Degrees in Divinity: correspondence between the Lord Bishop of Montreal and Dr. Heneker, published by the latter in pamphlet form June, 1886.

From 1891 degrees were conferred at the Montreal Diocesan College on the authority of the Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada.

By 1923 the Diocesan College had settled back somewhat after the War and its immediate aftermath, and Rexford and his Board found time to give battle again on the degree question. This time the campaign was supported by well-organized lobbying. Guided by the Honorable Henry Miles, it passed the Assembly easily and met only slight opposition in the Council. ".....When the members of the Legislature had the facts clearly before them they at once recognized the justice of our claims, and cheerfully granted our application," says Rexford.¹ The Act (15 Geo.V, c.123) gave those holding the Testamur of the College the right to use the title Licentiate in Theology (L.Th.), and also authorized the conferring of the Bachelor and Doctor of Divinity degrees both in course and honoris causa, as well as a Licentiateship in Religious Education (L.R.E.).

In view of the number of activities in which Rexford actively interested himself, it is difficult to realize that in 1925 he celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday. On the advice of his physicians he did turn over some of his teaching duties about that time to Dr. Howard. His last major effort for the college before retiring was the \$250,000. Jubilee

1 - Proceedings of the 69th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1928; p.111.

Endowment Campaign. He was able to report that the objective was almost attained by May 1, 1928, the date of his retirement.

Rexford must have entered that retirement with a good deal of satisfaction. It was by no means a complete retirement: he continued to be active in the councils of his Church and on the Protestant Committee. But in addition to his achievements in other fields, he could now look back on twenty-five successful years at the Diocesan College, during which he had seen many of his objectives realized. The most important, to him, were in terms of religious education, as discussed in Part IV of this thesis. From the administrative point of view, he had brought the college into closer relationship with the Synod of the Diocese,¹ which resulted in a wider active interest in and practical support for the college; active co-operation between the various denominational colleges affiliated with McGill was an accomplished fact; the Diocesan College had always paid its bills one way or another, had built up a first-class theological library, was recognized as a leading Church of England college in Canada, and had been awarded powers to grant degrees in its own right.

1 - Rexford took his first formal steps in this direction in 1909, when in response to his request the Lord Bishop of Montreal appointed four Synod representatives to the College Board of Governors. Rexford never lost an opportunity to report to the Diocese, or to seek its support. As will be seen later, he also organized Sunday School teachers' training programmes at the College for the benefit of the various parishes.

Dean of Theology,
Khaki University of Canada

Khaki University¹ was the name given to a programme of formal studies at the university level, operated by the Canadian Army for soldiers awaiting return to Canada during the year following the peace of 1918. It grew out of a Y.M.C.A. lecture series, which had been so successful that early in 1917 the Y had invited Dr. H.M.Tory, then president of the University of Alberta, to survey the situation with the idea of organizing formal classes. Dr. Tory returned to Canada fired with enthusiasm.² He organized an advisory board, consisting of representatives from the various Canadian universities, to arrange curricula, staffing, and university credits for work completed by students at Khaki University. As the plan mushroomed the military authorities themselves assumed more and more responsibility for it, until by October 1918, just in time, Dr. Tory's Khaki University was officially organized as an Army unit, with Colonel Tory as Principal, and

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- 1 - For history of Khaki University see Report of the Ministry - Overseas Military Forces of Canada (1918); and Charles W. Bishop, The Canadian Y.M.C.A. in the Great War.
- 2 - H.M.Tory, "A Khaki University for Canadian Soldiers", in the University Magazine; December 7, 1917.

under the office of the Army's Deputy Director of Educational Services (Lt.Colonel Frank D. Adams, Vice-Principal of McGill, on leave of absence). Students of all ranks were attached to Khaki University for full-time study in arts, applied science, agriculture, law, medicine, pharmacy, and theology.

The co-operating theological colleges at McGill were asked to assume responsibility for the Faculty of Theology. The fact that Tory had been a McGill man and Adams still was probably had little influence upon the choice: the Montreal colleges were the logical selection, since for over five years they had been demonstrating their ability to work together. Rexford was Dean of the co-operating colleges at the time, and he approached the new challenge with a will. A non-denominational curriculum was drawn up;¹ a provisional staff was appointed, including Rexford as Dean, and Reverend Professors R.E.Walsh of the Presbyterian College and W.H. Gifford of the Wesleyan Methodist College.² They sailed for England in November, 1918.³

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- 1 - A circular to the troops issued by "The Khaki Theological College" in January 1919 lists no fewer than 27 courses, including several on each of New Testament Theology and Exegesis, 4 Church History, 3 Apologetics, 3 Christian Theology, 1 Christian Ethics, 2 Social Study and Service, and 4 "Practical Training", including homiletics and religious pedagogy. A copy of the circular is preserved in the fyles of the Department of Education, Quebec; Dossier 2175/18.
 - 2 - Others added later include Dr. W.A.Ferguson, now Principal of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College.
 - 3 - Report of Dr. G.Abbott-Smith, acting principal of the Diocesan College; Proceedings of the 60th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1919; p.127.

After many organizational difficulties, classes got under way February 1st at Ripon, Yorkshire, in an old theological college building. Seventy-one students were registered in all, representing twenty theological schools, and doing work in all three years of the normal divinity course. (Eighteen were students of the Church of England). By dint of hard work (six periods every week-day and three on Saturday) sixty-two of the seventy-one managed to complete the equivalent of a year's work in the five months before the college closed its doors June 30th. Church authorities in England had been very co-operative: several outstanding churchmen and scholars had been guest lecturers, the Bishop of Ripon had made the Diocesan Library available.¹

A portion of a letter from Rexford to Parmelee is of interest in this connection:

Khaki University of Canada
Theological College,
Tower Hotel,
RIPON, Yorkshire.

17th February, 1919.

Dr. G.W. Parmelee,
Secretary, Dept. of P.I.,
Quebec, Canada.

Dear Dr. Parmelee,

I wish to thank you for your letter of January 10th, concerning the subject of Religious Instruction, and also for the enclosures referred to therein.

1 - Rexford's report to Synod (Proceedings of the 61st Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1920; pp.127f.). Rexford here states there were seventy candidates. Bishop (op.cit., p.341) quotes the official figure as 71.

Dr. Laird has been kind enough to keep me in touch with the movements in the Province of Quebec, in which, of course, I am greatly interested. I have been too busy since I came over to give attention to anything outside of the matters specially connected with my mission to England at this time. I have been up against a good many difficulties and situations during my lifetime, and I have never met anything quite equal to the conditions under which we have been called upon to organize Theological Training for the members of the Canadian Overseas Forces. We have landed at last in Ripon, in Yorkshire, where we have been fortunate in getting possession of an old Theological College building, with a very good library, class room accommodation, and residence for several members of the staff. We have been regularly at work since 1st February. We have six members of the staff, 25 regular Theological students, and 10 or 15 partial students.

If military authorities do not interfere with our arrangements, we shall be able to do a very good piece of work between this and July 1st next.

We have met with many surprises in our efforts to work out our programme. One of the most interesting is that the students are keener and have a better grasp on work than they had when they entered ^{upon} their military career. This is one of the most unexpected of our experiences, but the evidence to this effect is so general, not only from the student body, but also from others who had completed their University courses before enlisting, that the fact may be considered thoroughly established.

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Sincerely yours,

Elson I. Rexford.¹

In another letter, written six weeks later for publication in The Educational Record, Rexford said:

.....Our work here has been making very satisfactory progress. We have now 70 men duly registered in our Theological classes, and under the direction of a staff of six professors we are working out a good session, and have every prospect of being able to complete a year's

1 - Fyles of the Department of Education, Quebec;
Dossier 2175/18.

work by the 1st of July next. The attempt to graft an educational scheme upon a military organization was a very courageous movement, but notwithstanding all the difficulties and obstructions arising from this connection, the Khaki University of about 800 students here at Ripon [only one of the University centres] is going forward with considerable regularity.¹

In his thesis on Dr. Tory, Dr.J.R.Kidd sums up the work of Khaki University as follows:

Khaki University was closed up as soon as the men for whom it had been designed were on their way home. Its existence was very brief. There was scarcely more than two years between the time of the original survey report and the final closing. And yet this "university" can claim a prominent place among Canadian educational institutions. For it has had a large share in three important results: the development of education programmes among armed service personnel in many countries, the maintenance of a healthy morale and the assistance with their readjustment of Canadian troops in 1919, and the encouragement of a great many Canadians to continue their education which, otherwise, they might have abandoned.²

1 - The Educational Record, Vol.XXXIX No.4-6, April-June 1919; p.123.

2 - J.R.Kidd, A Study of the Influence of Dr. H.M.Tory on Educational Policy in Canada; p.113.

Teachers' Associations

It was largely activity in teachers' professional associations which resulted in the consideration of Rexford for that first important post of English Secretary of the Department.¹ He maintained his interest in such associations to the end of his days; and an active interest it was, too, at least until his seventy-seventh year, when he again was a featured speaker before the annual P.A.P.T. convention, taking as his subject "Rural Conditions and Child Development".² In the intervening years he had had a share in the direction of the P.A.P.T. and its committees almost constantly, as well as being one of the founders and early officers of the Dominion Education Association (now the Canadian Education Association). It is significant that even after leaving off teaching at the school level in 1903 Rexford remained so active in the P.A.P.T. It is yet another indication that one of his dominant interests was the child in the community: in a very real sense he regarded his work at the Diocesan College as training men to lead children.

At the time of his appointment to the Department of Public Instruction, Rexford was completing his second year as secretary of the P.A.P.T. He continued his activities

1 - Vide supra p.25.

2 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 64th Annual Convention, 1927.

with that association throughout his term with the Department, often using this informal relationship with the teaching body generally to provide a sounding board and even a pressure group for measures he was about to introduce formally through the Department. (For example, the standardized course of study for superior schools was first discussed at the Convention of 1883). However, there must have been occasions when it was very difficult both to represent the P.A.P.T. "at court" and to be an agent of that court at the same time. Thus at the Convention of 1884 Rexford was appointed to a P.A.P.T. committee to approach the Council of Public Instruction ".....to present teachers' opinions and demands on teacher training and certification, and pensions." Dr. S.P. Robins, chairman of the committee, reported subsequently, "On maturely weighing many considerations arising from his official position, the Reverend E.I. Rexford, English Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction, deemed it his duty to decline to act on this committee."¹

In any case, in 1889, while still with the Department, he was elected president of the P.A.P.T., and re-elected the following year: the first president to be honoured with a second term, other than Sir William Dawson, the Association's founder.² in 1903-04 Rexford was president a third time; and

1 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 23rd Annual Convention, 1886.

2 - Rexford's election was, of course, not unopposed. After the Convention of 1891 a number of letters appeared both

it was only with difficulty that he persuaded the Convention of 1910 not to draft him for a fourth term. As a vice-president he served no fewer than sixteen terms between 1882 and 1919;¹ and there was hardly a year up to 1925 when his name did not appear on the roster of at least one P.A.P.T. committee: often dealing with the professional training of teachers, or course of study; and in 1917-19 the Committee on Compulsory Education.

(continued from previous page)

in The Educational Record and the Montreal Daily Witness, complaining that too much power in the P.A.P.T. had been usurped to Montreal. A letter from Mr. John L. Watson of Hull to the Record (Vol.XI No.12; p.356) reads in part: "When I add that the retiring President, the President-elect, one of the Vice-Presidents, the Recording Secretary, one of the Pension Commissioners, and the Representative to the Protestant Committee are all connected with the High School, Montreal, it does seem as though the Convention were either trying to honour one institution to an extreme extent, or were anxious to pay all the compliments they could to its much-esteemed head. If the Montreal teachers wish to make the P.A.Q.P.T. a local affair, by all means let them do so, but let me respectfully suggest to them the propriety of changing its name."

The same issue of the Record comments editorially (p.311): ".....In these times it is often difficult to keep caucus-force out of even the most staid of our societies."

- 1 - Rexford was elected a vice--president of the P.A.P.T. at the following Annual Conventions: 1882,1895,1899, 1900,1901,1904,1905,1906,1907,1908,1909,1911,1916, 1917,1918. In addition he was an ex-officio vice-president in 1893-94, as president of the Montreal Local Association of Teachers.

Rexford's work here was cut short by his appointment to Khaki University, but the Committee carried on a vigorous campaign for compulsory education, circularizing all members of the Legislature, bombarding the press, and even enlisting the support of a number of prominent French-Catholics (traditionally opposed to compulsory education in Quebec as an infringement upon the rights of Church and family). The Committee's mandate from the Convention of 1917 read in part ".....that it be a recommendation to the Committee to inquire how strictly the laws regarding child labour are enforced in this Province..."¹, a line of approach which they followed with telling effect. A letter from Parmelee to Rexford dated January 10, 1919, reads as following on the subject:

Since you left nothing of an unusual character has occurred in education circles, excepting perhaps in the great interest that has been excited, mainly through the propaganda of the Teachers' Association, in regard to compulsory education. As you already know the English population is practically unanimous in its demand for a compulsory law and there are indications now that the movement is gaining ground on the other side.²

Rexford states in reply, February 17, 1919:

My wife and others have kept me in touch with the educational movement by mailing clippings from the Canadian papers and it is quite evident that the Teachers' Compulsory Education Committee has created quite a stir....The Cardinal will certainly have hard work to restrain the educational forces that are moving in this direction.³

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- 1 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 54th Annual Convention, 1917.
 - 2 - Files of the Department of Education, Quebec; Dossier 2175/18.
 - 3 - Ibid. The "forces" were "restrained". Compulsory education did not arrive in Quebec until 1944. For a discussion of the question in 1918-19, and further references, vide Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1919; pp. 539-541.

It should be noted that while Rexford favoured the principle of compulsory education, he had some doubt as to its advisability under existing school conditions at the time. In a report to the Protestant Committee he suggested two pre-requisites for a compulsory scheme: some plan to attract and hold more men and women in the teaching profession, and a broadened course of study which would be less academic, less frankly college-preparatory.¹

It was while serving on committees for revision of the constitution that Rexford engineered two major moves for the P.A.P.T. in terms of organization. In 1888, after a vigorous lobby both among teachers themselves and then the members of the Protestant Committee, provision was made for the appointment by the P.A.P.T. of a practising teacher to be their representative on the Protestant Committee, where he sits as an associate member.² The following year Rexford carried a campaign for incorporation by Act of Parliament (52 Vict. c.70, as amended).

Rexford was very active, too, in the formation of what became known as the Dominion Education Association. The

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, February 25, 1920.

2 - The first P.A.P.T. delegate under the Amendment Act of 1888 (51-52 Vict. c.36) took his seat the following year. Rexford himself was elected to the post in 1891. His son, Orrin B. Rexford, sat as teachers' representative and fellow-member with his father from 1928 to 1932.

idea of a national association of teachers was first mooted by the Ontario Teachers' Association, which approached the fledgling P.A.P.T. on the matter as early as 1867.¹ However, little progress seems to have been made until the question was revived at the P.A.P.T. Convention in 1889. It is not surprising that the idea of a national association should be revived at this time, and meet with a favourable reception. This was the period when the Dominion was first sensing a feeling of real nationality. Sir John A. Macdonald's "National Policy" of protective tariffs no longer merely bordered on respectability; the Canadian Pacific Railway was a fait accompli; the Canada First Movement was past its height, but its ideal of a truly Canadian nationality was beginning to show some signs of realization.² Moreover, Montreal had recently been the scene of conventions of both the American and the British Societies for the Advancement of Science; and the Royal Society of Canada set a sort of precedent, as well as the National Education Association of the United States.

As a result the P.A.P.T. sent Rexford as a missionary delegate to the Ontario Teachers' Association, and Dr. F.W. Kelley in the same capacity to the Maritimes. The upshot was that during the annual convention of the American National Education Association which was held in Toronto in July 1891,

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- 1 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 4th Annual Convention, 1867.
 - 2 - A good discussion of this phase of Canadian history is to be found in D.G. Creighton, Dominion of the North; pp. 335-381.

the Canadians in attendance held separate sessions to discuss the formation of a Dominion Education Association. The main speakers were the Honorable G.W.Ross, Ontario Minister of Education, and Rexford.

A "Provisional Council" was set up, consisting of "(1) The Superintendents or Acting Ministers [of Education] of the various Provinces, (2) The Presidents of the Universities of the Dominion, (3) The Principals of the Normal Schools or schools engaged in the teaching of pedagogy and (4) The Presidents of all existing Teachers' Associations." The Council organized unanimously as follows: President, Ross; Vice-Presidents, the Superintendent and Acting Ministers of Education; Secretary, Rexford; Treasurer, E.W.Arthy, Montreal's Superintendent of Schools. Rexford was also appointed Convenor of the Committee on Programme. Thus responsibility for the first convention of the Association, held at Rexford's High School of Montreal the following July, was largely his.

That meeting saw 448 Canadian educationists gathered to hear the following addresses, among others:

- a) Dr.A.H.Mackay, Superintendent of Education in Nova Scotia: "The True Scope and Function of the High School".
- b) The Honorable G.W.Ross: "Educational Tendencies and Problems".
- c) J.L.Hughes, Toronto: "The Duty of the State in Relation to Education".
- d) Dr.E.D.Warfield, President of Lafayette College, Pannsylvania: "The Relation of the School to the University".

- e) Dr. Grant, Principal of Queens University, Kingston: "Universities and University Extension in Canada".
- f) Reverend Abbé Verreault, Principal of Jacques Cartier Normal School, Montreal: "The Educational History of Quebec".
- g) G.U.Hay, Principal of Victoria High School, St. John, N.B.: "Ideal School Discipline and How to Attain It".
- h) Professor James Seth, Dalhousie College: "Psychology in Its Relation to the Art of Teaching".

In addition there were separate sessions for Kindergarten, Public School, High School, and University Sections. The provisional executive was confirmed, with power to assemble subsequent conventions; and a constitution was adopted, strangely enough including no statement of purpose. The executive was directed to have the proceedings of the convention printed, including the full texts of addresses.¹

The next meeting of the D.E.A. was held in Toronto in 1895. There are no details of that meeting available,² although Rexford states that sixty-five writers had entered a D.E.A. \$200. prize contest (plus ten per cent royalties) for a school text in Canadian history: first and second prizes being awarded to Mr. W.H.P. Clement and Miss Emily P. Weaver, both

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- 1 - Minutes of Proceedings, with Addresses, Papers and Discussions of the First Convention of the D.E.A., Montreal, July 5-8, 1892. Most of the material above has been taken from that volume. From correspondence and notes preserved in scrap books in the Rector's Office at the High School of Montreal, it appears that the Reverend E.M. Taylor, Inspector of Schools, aided Rexford in the preparation of the volume, as well as acting as secretary of the ad hoc committee Rexford set up to handle local arrangements.
 - 2 - The Executive Secretary of the C.E.A. writes that no records are available from 1892 to 1900. (August 10, 1948).

of Toronto.¹

At the Halifax meeting in 1898, when the D.E.A. first urged the Federal Government to establish a National Bureau of Education on the plan of the United States Education Office, Rexford may not have been present. He definitely did not attend any of the meetings after that date. Indeed, interest generally in the D.E.A. seems to have waned after the first burst of enthusiasm. The meeting scheduled for 1903 in Winnipeg had to be postponed at the last minute to 1904, because of lack of interest; and only three representatives from Quebec thought it worthwhile to journey to the Toronto meeting in 1907.

What was actually happening to the D.E.A. was a shift in emphasis and function: it was becoming less and less of a practising teachers' association, and more and more an association of educational administrators. With this redefinition of purpose came added strength and influence. Thus at the Ottawa meeting in 1917 (the year before its name was changed to the Canadian Education Association) all provincial Departments of Education were officially represented. In addressing the Eleventh Convention in Ottawa in 1922, Dr. G.E. Parmelee, president-elect, stated:

My conception of the function of an association like this is that it should gather together not a large number but a very important number, I would say, of people who are doing a very different class of work from that which is being carried out by the teacher - people who are either

1 - The Educational Record, Vol.XIV No.2, February, 1894; p.44; and VOL.XVI No.6, June-July, 1896; p.156. Miss Weaver's book was in use in Quebec public schools as recently as 1935.

in charge of active administration connected with Departments of Education, or engaged in inspectorial work or other administrative work.¹

The C.E.A. at present is financially supported largely by contributions from the Provincial Departments of Education. Its aim is stated in Article II of the Constitution (1936) as follows:

By bringing about a better understanding on the part of each Province of the educational progress and educational ideas of the other Provinces, thereby to promote the common educational interests of the several Provinces of Canada and to foster a healthy Canadian spirit.

Its conventions are a meeting ground for official representatives of the Departments of Education; it publishes Canadian Education, a quarterly journal; its early efforts toward the establishment of a National Bureau of Education resulted, in 1938, in co-operation with the Canadian Teachers' Federation, in the setting up of the Canadian Council on Educational Research, which finances certain research projects. It has also played an important part in fostering federal aid for agricultural and technical education.

Meanwhile, a second national body, the Canadian Teachers' Federation, had grown up to parallel the C.E.A. as a teachers' association. Founded in 1919, it is a federation of provincial organizations rather than an association of individual teachers.

1 - Proceedings of the 11th Convention of the C.E.A., Ottawa, 1922; p. 128.

It has worked specifically toward the improvement of the status of the teaching profession throughout the Dominion, and toward the breaking down of "...provincial barriers of isolation and exclusiveness".¹

Rexford's enthusiasm for the D.E.A. seems to have burned itself out once that association was properly on its feet. Perhaps he realized that it was bound to become an official body, if it was to survive -- teachers in any number simply could not find the wherewithal from their meagre incomes to travel great distances. Better to rely on local associations, and let the officials conduct their own body if they so wished. But aside from members' travelling expenses, as a matter of practical finance Rexford could not see the D.E.A. remaining an active and independent association if its own operating expenses were to be paid by provincial governments. Thus in May 1892, even though himself a member of the D.E.A. executive, he penned for The Educational Record this only slightly guarded criticism of the D.E.A.'s acceptance of \$8000. in government grants:

Some are inclined to think that the success which has attended their efforts in raising funds by subscription for the running expenses of an institution that ought to be independent if it is to be useful, may after all prove to be anything but a success. They maintain that the eleemosynary principle is a dispiriting one to any society, and seek to add strength to their statement by citing the enervating influence it has had on the Royal Society. As is

1 - James Collins Miller: National Government and Education in Federated Democracies: Dominion of Canada; p.576. Miller includes brief surveys of both the C.E.A. and the C.T.F. The whole question of the growth and influence of the P.A.P.T., and the relationships between it, the C.E.A., C.T.F., and local associations would be well worth detailed study.

thought, it too often leads to holiday-making at Conventions, and a mere putting-in of the time at our teachers' institutes.¹

One hope Rexford had cherished for the D.E.A. was the development of a workable arrangement whereby one province could accept at face value teaching certificates granted by another province. As English Secretary of the Department he had initiated correspondence with Ontario on the matter in 1889, and he had used it as an argument in favour of the proposed D.E.A. at the preliminary meetings in Toronto. He was a good many years previous in his thinking in the matter. A suitable formula still remains to be found, despite years of committee work by both C.E.A. and C.T.F.

1 - The Educational Record, Vol.XII No.5, May, 1892; p.139.

Member of the Protestant Committee,
Council of Public Instruction

June 30, 1932, one hundred and thirty-two guests -- public figures and educationists -- gathered in Quebec's Chateau Frontenac to honour Rexford on the completion of no fewer than fifty years of service with the Protestant Committee: from 1883 to 1886 as English Secretary of the Department, and until 1891 as the Committee's secretary as well; briefly, in 1891, as representative of the P.A.P.T.; from 1892 to 1919 as an associate member, elected by the Committee itself; and from 1919 as a full member of the Council of Public Instruction, holding office at the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor.¹

The chairman of the Committee said at the luncheon that those fifty years had seen Rexford change from ".....the fiery young reformer to the mellowed man of influence -- the "Grand Old Man" of the Committee. Still a reformer, still a man of action; but now he knew everyone, and everyone knew him,

1 - For details of early years, vide supra pp. 23ff. The only break in Rexford's connection with the Protestant Committee was from September 18, 1891, when he resigned to become Rector of the High School, to his election as P.A.P.T. delegate the following month. He resigned that appointment on election by the Committee as an associate member February 19, 1892; and he was appointed a member of the Council of Public Instruction September 26, 1919, in succession to Sir William Peterson, resigned. (See minutes of appropriate meetings.) Associate members have the same standing in the Committee as members, but they do not form part of the Council of Public Instruction.

and had added respect for his mature judgments weighed in the light of conviction and long experience."¹

Certainly Rexford was always among the more active and vocal members of the Protestant Committee. As a new young member at the meeting of May 21, 1892, for example, he had his name in the minutes as many as eight times, including three major motions; of the other ten present, even chairman Sir William Dawson is mentioned only five times. The minutes of another meeting chosen at random (June 2, 1911) list Rexford's name eleven times, including five motions, and two reports as convenor of separate sub-committees. And he was a most regular attendant at the quarterly meetings of the Committee, missing only five in his first fifteen years. Until ill-health finally forced his resignation September 25, 1936, just a month before his death, the eighty-six-year-old executive was still attending meetings and still chairing two sub-committees of the Protestant Committee. Beginning September 25, 1914, he had frequently chaired meetings of the Committee itself in the absence of Sir William Peterson; and from September 26, 1919, to May 27, 1925, he held office himself as chairman of the Committee.

The overall direction of Protestant education in Quebec is the responsibility of the Protestant Committee; specifically,

 1 - The Honorable W.G. Mitchell, as reported in the Quebec Chronicle for July 2, 1932.

"....the organization, administration and discipline" of Protestant publicly-supported schools.¹ When sanctioned by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, Regulations of the Committee have the force of law. Together with its Roman Catholic counterpart, it comprises the Council of Public Instruction, which last assembled in 1908. (Council of Education since the 1925 Revision of the Statutes, which everywhere substituted "Education" for the more literal translation of the French "l'instruction publique".) Rexford was first associated with the Protestant Committee only six years after the Council had been split into the two Committees, each autonomous insofar as schools of its own faith were concerned.² Thus in a sense he grew up with it, and had almost from the beginning a part in its growth in influence and importance within the wide terms of reference assigned to it: both in defining policy and producing regulations for the Protestant schools of the Province, and in counselling the government when bills affecting Protestant education were under consideration.

The Committee has adopted a schedule of regular quarterly meetings. Most of its work, however, is studied and prepared by a system of sub-committees, some standing and some ad hoc. At no time, as associate member or member,

1 - R.S.Q. 1925, c133 s.29.

~~2 - Promulgated in the Quebec Official Gazette before February 26, 1876, under authority of the Act of 1869.~~

did Rexford sit on fewer than two sub-committees, except during part of his term as chairman of the Committee when he was ex officio a member of all sub-committees anyway. A list of those sub-committees would cover virtually the whole field in which the Committee operated: from Taxes to Teaching Reading, Textbooks to Teachers' Salaries, Grants to Gymnasias, Inspection to Mental Hygiene. But certain interests of Rexford's asserted themselves over and over again, and will be discussed as such: educational campaigns, teacher training, course of study and examining, and rural education. Religious education was a constant concern of his, but will not be treated here since Part IV of the thesis is devoted to it.

Educational Campaigns

Rexford was convinced that any good system of publicly-supported schools required sympathetic understanding by the public generally of its aims and organization. As English Secretary of the Department he had spent a fair portion of his time in visiting not only local schools, but also local school boards, and in addressing public meetings. Through the pages of The Educational Record he advised teachers to "Adopt some legitimate means of showing your patrons what you are really doing. It pays both parties...."¹ Nevertheless, public relations were still none too good. Mr.

¹ - Volume V Number 1, January, 1885; p.25.

Abel Vineberg draws attention to 55 Vict. c.61 s.3, by which the Provincial Legislature intervened in 1892 to direct that meetings of school commissioners in Montreal be public. Of course, the Legislature may have gone out of its way in this manner due to the contentious High School Question at the time; but Vineberg notes a frequent tendency not to take the public into the full confidence of the educational authorities -- to regard education as a matter not for the lay mind.¹

Early in 1906 Rexford, Parmelee and perhaps one or two others gathered informally in the Windsor Hotel room of the Honorable Sydney Fisher, federal Minister of Agriculture in the Laurier Cabinet and member of the Protestant Committee. During conversation a series of articles published in the Montreal Daily Witness came up for discussion -- articles suggesting that lack of public interest was stifling rural education. This was the hey-day of agricultural fairs, of course, and "educational meetings" were a commonplace in neighbouring Ontario. Moreover, Fisher for one must have had wide experience with the power of the old-fashioned political

1 - Abel Vineberg, History of Education in Quebec; pp.23ff. Vineberg comments that one adverse result of a system headed by a superintendent rather than a minister, with education thus sharply removed from politics, is a loss of public interest in education. He quotes the Honorable Athanase David, addressing the Assembly as Provincial Treasurer, as saying, "....that his 'job'[with respect to education] was merely to make sure money was voted for the schools." (p.17)

picnics. Accordingly the decision was made to recommend to the Protestant Committee a concentrated Educational Campaign of public meetings at strategic rural centres, to publicize the work and needs of the schools.¹ The first campaign was held in August of 1906. Considerable interest seems to have been aroused. Certainly press coverage was very liberal.

The next major Educational Campaigns were in 1913 and 1914, with Rexford and Fisher again on both planning committees and public platforms. Again meetings were held throughout the Province, and the Department an educational exhibit for the Sherbrooke Exhibition. The chief emphasis in the 1912 campaign was on higher salaries for rural elementary teachers, so that trained people might be attracted to the ungraded rural schools. Two suggestions were put forward to aid local authorities in the matter: consolidation, and Provincial Minimum Salary Grants. A government publication the following year commented: ".....the advertisements which appeared in the newspapers this year [1913] have shown a great improvement in this respect. A number of Municipalities in the Eastern Townships which had been paying previously only \$20. or \$22. a month to their teachers were now offering \$30. a month....."²

A sixteen-page pamphlet entitled Protestant Rural Schools was circulated widely during the 1912 campaign. Although it

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- 1 - The Educational Record, Vol.XLI No.4-6, April-June 1921;p.100.
 - 2 - Department of Public Instruction, Protestant Schools in the Eastern Townships; p.3.

is not signed, Dr. Percival says "It has the Rexford touch." A twenty-page pamphlet entitled Protestant Schools in the Eastern Townships was prepared for the 1913 campaign. Attractive, illustrated, it is very "breezy" by government standards of the time, perhaps revealing the hand of Mr. Victor E. Morrill, member of the Educational Campaign Committee and publisher of the Sherbrooke Daily Record. The cover and title page carry the following:

The central problem of Canadian Rural Education is the provision of such schools everywhere as will ensure the knowledge, the mental training, and the general outlook needed for the transition into modern, organized agriculture.

The burden of the pamphlet is that rural areas must have schools suited to rural agricultural needs; and the first step towards improving the ungraded, one-room school is consolidation. A quotation is made from a speech of Rexford's: "[The one-room school] is merely playing at school: not only is it expensive and inefficient, but also it offers no incentive to teachers to further qualify or even to accept a position!"¹ This campaign of 1913 must have been particularly close to Fisher's heart, with its demand that rural education be in part at least a preparation for rural living, rather than the all-too-frequent emphasis of urban values. For years Fisher was chairman of the Sub-Committee on the Teaching of Agriculture, and at his death he left a portion

 1 - Department of Public Instruction, op.cit.; p.8.

of his estate to establish the Fisher Trust Fund for the aid of agriculture and education in Brome County.¹

December of 1919 saw the next major Educational Campaign. One of Rexford's first actions on election as Chairman of the Protestant Committee was to ask his friend Fisher to organize this campaign -- again in an effort to improve teachers' salaries. This was the period of economic stress following the War; qualified teachers were in short supply in any case, and offers of much higher salaries were luring many of the few west to the Prairie Provinces. Fourteen meetings were held, but with little immediately evident result.

Again in 1926 it was Rexford's enthusiasm which resulted in the organization of still another Educational Campaign: his fifth. This one was aimed at awakening interest particularly in the consolidation of weak districts, and the conveyance of pupils.

It is noteworthy that the consolidation of one-room rural schools into stronger central schools was a major object of all the Educational Campaigns. As early as 1890 articles on consolidation had appeared in The Record, and the Act of 1899² had authorized school commissions to take steps for the conveyance of pupils living at a distance. In 1901, too,

- 1 - Vide infra p.200.
- 2 - 62 Vict. c.28 art.118.

Sir William Macdonald had offered certain sums to aid in the construction of consolidated schools in the Eastern Townships. Yet the Superintendent regretted, in 1905, that practically no action had been taken, except in Kingsey, Richmond, Ulverton and Rougemont.¹ Thereafter the advisability of consolidation was mentioned constantly in the reports of inspectors and the Superintendent. In 1914 a special circular went out to all concerned, outlining clearly the steps for local boards to take to effect consolidation, together with the values to be gained, and attacking the reasons of roads, weather and expense commonly advanced against it.

In the early 1920's consolidation sub-committees of the Protestant Committee were very active, as were committees of the P.A.P.T. A rash of articles appeared in the press. J.C.Sutherland, then Inspector-General of Quebec Protestant Schools, and tireless in his work toward consolidation, summed up the three main difficulties facing consolidation as he saw them:²

- 1) The natural conservatism of the farmers of Eastern Canada. The spirit of use and wont is common to Ontario and the Maritimes as well as to Quebec.
- 2) The difficulty of reaching a common decision as to the site, even when general approval of the plan has been obtained.

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- 1 - Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Quebec, 1904-05; pp. XV ff. Opposition in Kingsey was so strong that legal action was taken in an attempt to prevent the operation of the new consolidated school.
 - 2 - In a report to the Protestant Committee dated May 24, 1923; files of the Department of Education, Quebec; Dossier 370/23.

- 3) Aid is always asked toward the cost of the new building required, and on this point no definite statement can be offered.

In 1923 a sub-committee under Mr. A. Kirk Cameron, including Rexford, interviewed the Premier and Provincial Secretary on behalf of the Protestant Committee, seeking additional financial aid for rural elementary schools: particularly for grants toward capital expenditure for new consolidated schools, and initial grants toward the cost of conveying pupils.¹ Money was advanced for the latter, under conditions, the following year; and 1925 saw the inauguration of government grants toward new building costs. In the resultant spurt sixteen consolidations were completed before Rexford left the Consolidation Sub-Committee in November of 1928.

By 1946 there were 57 consolidated schools on the Protestant side in rural Quebec. The process is still going on, finances remaining the chief difficulty. As Dr. Percival remarks, "School Boards in Quebec have always fingered school money fondly before parting with it."²

Teacher Training

Rexford firmly believed that a school system could be no better than its individual teachers. Accordingly, he

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- 1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, November 30, 1923;
November 25, 1924.
- 2 - W.P. Percival, Across the Years; p. 16.

constantly busied himself in the attempt to raise salaries and status of teachers generally, and also to raise the standards of professional training among Protestant teachers of the Province.

After eight years of agitation, as English Secretary of the Department he finally succeeded in establishing a Central Board of Examiners in succession to the previous unqualified local boards, which had arranged the granting of teachers' diplomas practically at will.¹ Indeed he himself was secretary of that Central Board until he left Quebec for the High School of Montreal in 1891; and he was reappointed a member in March 1893, serving as such until advancing age forced his resignation August 29, 1935, except for a break from 1899 to 1908 due to "pressure of other duties".² In the early years the work of the Central Board involved both setting and marking papers, and reviewing results together with recommendations from the normal school and inspectors. Latterly, however, duties as a member of the Central Board of Examiners were probably not overly onerous, since policy was largely laid down by the Protestant Committee, and the actual examinations were set and corrected by the various teacher training institutions.

1 - Vide supra pp. 60ff.

2 - See Minutes of appropriate meetings of the Protestant Committee.

But Rexford was also a perennial member of sub-committees of the Protestant Committee dealing with various phases of teacher training. It is in this connection that a fellow-member of the Protestant Committee, Mr. Howard Murray, suggests that Rexford made his greatest contribution to education in this Province.

As chairman of the Sub-Committee on Professional Training, Rexford brought in a report November 27, 1896, which was accepted and acted upon, that henceforth no diploma for Protestant schools could be granted without formal training. The existing nine-month course at the McGill Normal School was to lead to an Advanced Elementary Diploma, and a new four-month course was introduced leading to an Elementary Diploma. The idea, of course, was that sufficient candidates might be persuaded to take the short course so that even the most remote ungraded rural schools would be presided over by a teacher with at least a smattering of professional training. Unfortunately, such was not the case; and in order to keep many schools open at all, the Department has always been forced to grant temporary teaching permits to persons totally unprepared professionally.¹ This remains a serious problem. Rexford attacked it from every angle he knew: better salaries, consolidation, better public relations, increased

1 - On November 26, 1948, the Director of Protestant Education reported to a meeting of the Protestant Committee that 182 persons were teaching on "permit".

supervision by inspectors, normal school bursaries, and direct bursaries to qualified teachers accepting appointments in rural elementary schools. In 1921, as a member of the late W. Allen Walsh's Sub-Committee on the Status of Teachers, he even went so far as to consider further lowering the standards of professional training, by means of "....a supplementary schemeby which a modicum of training may be given to those persons otherwise liable to undergo no professional training." At that time no fewer than 254 of the 587 Protestant rural elementary teachers were completely untrained! Rexford's sub-committee proposed the establishment of a Rural Elementary Diploma, to be granted after (a) one month's normal school training, following a pass in all subjects at the Grade IX level or better; (b) four month's satisfactory teaching, supervised and attested to by an inspector; and (c) a final month at normal school. After discussion the plan was unanimously rejected, on the grounds that certification requirements were already dangerously low, and because the real cause of the shortage at that time appeared to be low salary levels.¹

In March, 1905, Rexford was appointed to a sub-committee to meet with Sir William Macdonald's representative "....in regard to some further assistance which Sir William is desirous of giving towards the improvement of the schools under the Protestant Committee."² The upshot was Sir William's gift

1 - Fyles of the Department of Education; Dossier 50/22.

2 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, March 13, 1905; and the minutes of many meetings thereafter.

to McGill, in 1907, of his six-hundred-acre farm at Ste. Anne de Bellevue, together with approximately seven million dollars toward building and endowment. In addition to the new Faculties of Agriculture and Household Science, Macdonald College was to house a School for Teachers, replacing the old McGill Normal School. One of its stated objectives was "...the enlargement of the means of training of teachers and the improvement of rural education generally." Living expenses at the College were to be kept to a minimum, and as a residential college, in the country, it was generally agreed that more and better work could be expected than at its non-residential predecessor in Montreal.

The Protestant Committee had been in the habit of appointing the staff at the McGill Normal School, and generally directing its operations; the new School for Teachers was directly responsible to the Governors of McGill University. Rexford expressed himself as being somewhat less than lukewarm toward that clause of Sir William's gift, although he welcomed the opportunity to train teachers in "nature study and agriculture", and the additional \$16,866.67 -- the former Provincial grant to the McGill Normal School -- which Sir William's gift released for other phases of Protestant education. As a matter of fact the School for Teachers has always worked closely with the Protestant Committee and the Department of Education, both because of its customary representation on the Protestant Committee, and as a matter of practical

necessity inasmuch as it is preparing candidates for Provincial diplomas.

Rexford had to fight for his \$16,866.67, though. In accepting Sir William's arrangements to operate the School for Teachers without cost to the public,¹ the government had agreed that the sum previously voted annually for the maintenance of the McGill Normal School would be continued for the support of Protestant education. But the government also passed an Order-in-Council, without reference to the Protestant Committee, distributing the Normal School Grant among all Protestant schools roughly on a per capita basis. Feelings ran high at the Committee meeting of November 29, 1907. A portion of the Committee, led by Rexford, considered the Order-in-Council an unprovoked attack upon itself. One can hear Rexford growling, "Educational progress in different sections of the minority in this Province has been in direct proportion to the degree of influence which this Committee has been empowered to exercise."² His motion of censure was eventually tabled, but he was appointed to a committee to protest to the Premier. The Honorable M. Gouin received the deputation cordially, and agreed that henceforth the Protestant Committee should dictate the disposal of what became known as the Released Normal School Grant. The way was thus cleared for the inauguration of Rexford's scheme of

1 - This situation no longer holds. Rising costs have long since forced the School for Teachers to seek government financial aid.

2 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, November 29, 1907.

\$5000. in bursaries to encourage attendance at Macdonald and teaching in rural schools, the remainder being added to the Poor Municipality Fund. It is interesting to add that the Chairman of the Protestant Committee, the Reverend W.I. Shaw, refrained from naming Rexford to the sub-committee on recommendations as to the distribution of the Fund, as a mark of disapproval of his intense feeling in the matter!

When the McGill Normal School was closed,¹ the training of high school teachers was entrusted to McGill University, where certain courses in methods of teaching and school law and organization were offered prospective teachers in the third and fourth years of their degree courses. A similar scheme had been in operation at Bishops since 1898. In 1921 Parmelee, as Secretary of the Central Board of Examiners, wrote the following report for the Protestant Committee, consulting with Rexford over its wording:

....The provision now made by McGill and Bishops for the training of the High School teachers, while satisfactory as to quality, is entirely inadequate in extent, and it is a regrettable fact that teachers who receive High School diplomas after taking a course at McGill [or Bishops] take immediate charge of schools in which there are sub-ordinate teachers who have had a much more extensive professional training than they have had.²

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- 1 - It is interesting to note that at the February 17th meeting, 1911, Rexford was appointed to a delegation to approach the government with a view to having income from rental of the old McGill Normal School building on Belmont Street earmarked for the purposes of Protestant education. The same building was demolished only a year ago to make way for the Bell Telephone Company's new long distance centre.
 - 2 - Report dated November 30, 1921, and correspondence Parmelee-Rexford. Fyles of the Department, Dossiers 2200/21 and 50/22.

As chairman of the Protestant Committee at the time, Rexford appointed a sub-committee to go into the whole question of High School Diplomas with the University authorities and the Central Board of Examiners. The matter was a somewhat delicate one -- there was danger in some quarters of that old bugbear being raised of freedom from interference in the workings of the universities. Accordingly the sub-committee was content to move slowly. In 1925 Rexford himself, member of both the Protestant Committee and the Central Board of Examiners, and associated with McGill as principal of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College, succeeded to the chairmanship of the sub-committee. After successive discussions, in May 1926 he was able to present a progress report indicating that the following suggestions were under consideration:

- (a) a post-graduate year for professional studies.
- (b) B.Sc. in Agriculture as a possible basis for the High School Diploma.
- (c) Credit toward Master's Degree to be given for post-graduate year of professional studies.

At the same time he strongly urged that the Chair of Education at McGill should be filled by a full-time professor, supported in part, if necessary, by a government grant.¹

A full report was accepted and acted upon in April of the following year, with the previous agreement of the universities. The chief provisions² concern the academic

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, May 7, 1926.

2 - Ibid., April 29, 1927.

pre-requisites for entering the High School Diploma course in the third and fourth years: basic courses in Latin, English, Mathematics, French, History, and Science or Greek. After two further years of negotiation, however, Rexford was able to report¹ that increased Legislative grants had been obtained for McGill to provide for the appointment of a full-time professor; professional training at Bishops was now concentrated in a graduate year; and in both universities credits toward a Master's Degree could be arranged under conditions for work done in education.

Meanwhile, at a special meeting in 1927,² Rexfordrd had seen to another safeguard against the certification of inadequately-trained teachers. The following motion of his was carried, with strong support from Dean Sinclair Laird of the Macdonald School for Teachers:

That all authorization to teach in the Protestant schools of the Province be issued in the form of interim certificates, to become permanent after a period of successful teaching.

A second motion of Dean Laird's set the probationary period at two years, which may be extended at the discretion of the Department.

The problem of recruitment, training and qualification of teachers remains a very serious one for Quebec, as elsewhere.

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, May 17, 1929.

2 - Ibid., May 20, 1927.

The name of Elson I. Rexford, however, was associated with almost every advance made on the problem for almost fifty years from the day when he addressed the P.A.P.T. Convention in 1880 on "Examination of Teachers".

Course of Study
and School Examinations

"The system of examinations is pernicious when used solely for purposes of promotion and comparison with the results of other schools," said Rexford, in addressing the P.A.P.T. Convention in 1899.¹ Of course, he admitted their practical value as a measure of a student's readiness to proceed with further studies; but, he went on to say, their real value was as an aid to the teacher: both in revealing what he had taught well and what needed further attention, and also as a guide to keep him close to the course of study, and a suggested standard for him to attain or surpass with his pupils. Rexford was speaking of the annual external examinations and the Provincial courses of study which he himself had inaugurated as English Secretary of the Department.

He never lost his interest in the course of study and school examinations; time and again he was named to a Protestant

1 - As reported in The Educational Record, Vol.XIX No.12, December, 1899; p.206.

Committee sub-committee concerned with those matters. Thus in 1900, profiting by his experience at his own High School of Montreal, he succeeded in having Grade I Model follow Grade IV Elementary instead of duplicate it, thus adding another year to the school course in view of the increasing amount of work required from superior schools.¹ Subsequently he was in the van of a similar change for Grade I Academy, and the addition of a pre-elementary "Primary" class. Finally, in May 1915 the present "grade" terminology was adopted, already widely used at the time in neighbouring provinces and states:

| | | |
|------------------------|--------|----------------|
| Primary Class | became | Grade I |
| Grades I-IV Elementary | became | Grades II-V |
| Grades I-III Model | became | Grades VI-VIII |
| Grades I-III Academy | became | Grades IX-XI. |

These changes affected principally the rural schools. The city schools (especially in Montreal), better organized at an earlier date, virtually self-supporting, had long exercised a certain degree of autonomy. In fact, in 1896, on the recommendation of a sub-committee chaired by Rexford, the Protestant Committee had recognized the situation by the addition of Regulation 84a,² which authorized those schools not receiving Provincial grants to set their own examinations and to modify the Provincial course of study, "...providing it remains equivalent to the Provincial course of study." It was further provided that the Inspector of Superior Schools

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- 1 - The Educational Record, Vol.XX No.10, October, 1900; p.243; and Vol.XXI No.2, February, 1901; pp.69ff.
 - 2 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, September 25, 1896.

should inspect such schools when so ordered by the Protestant Committee, although he was not to examine pupils or otherwise interfere with the work of the schools. It is a commentary on the power of the dollar, in terms of Government grants, that the Provincial inspectors never actually did inspect Protestant high schools in Montreal until the spring of 1946, when the Province took over financial control of the Montreal Protestant Central School Board through the Quebec Municipal Commission.

Another continuing problem with which Rexford grappled on several occasions concerned the integration of the course of study in the senior high school grades with final school examinations and university entrance requirements. When he drew up his first Academy course of study the matter was simple -- for Academy graduation consisted of sitting the McGill Associate in Arts examination, and the programme of studies was traditionally arranged to suit the McGill pattern. That in itself was reasonable, since in 1883 the chief function of the academies was to provide preparation for university entrance. As the years wore on, however, and ever increasing numbers of students enrolled in the high schools without any intention of advancing to the universities, the wisdom of aiming virtually the whole curriculum at the universities, and even submitting to university examination, began to appear in doubt. Moreover, the physical work of correcting more and more papers became a burden to the McGill authorities.

But change moves slowly: a mighty power lies in an established procedure in the very weight of its establishment. The criticism is still levelled - and not only in Quebec Province - that high school courses of study are still disproportionately slanted towards college preparation.

As for final school examinations, several times Rexford acted on sub-committees attempting to co-ordinate preparation in the superior schools with university requirements. In 1906, for example, such a committee secured an understanding from the representatives of McGill and Bishops to base the Associate in Arts examinations on texts in use in the schools.¹ The following year, after another Rexford sub-committee investigation, the present system of High School Leaving Examinations was set up; the universities agreeing under conditions to accept successful candidates without further examination, and McGill agreeing to grade candidates' papers in return for certain financial considerations. The latter arrangement broke down in 1915 when, after investigation by still another Rexford sub-committee,² the Department assumed full responsibility for setting and grading the School Leaving Examinations, retaining additional staff for the purpose.

By 1920 the co-ordination of the high school course of study with university entrance requirements was up for study again. Rexford was chairman of a sub-committee which

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, November 23, 1906.
 2 - Ibid., October 1, 1915.

arranged a series of conferences with representatives of the teaching profession and McGill in an attempt to standardize entrance requirements for all faculties. In order to provide for all cases at the time, as many as fourteen subjects had to be offered in Grade XI. The representatives of the Protestant Committee approached the meetings with the following reservation:

....An overwhelming majority in these schools do not enter University, and it is therefore considered imperative to make the needs and interests of those pupils who do not continue beyond the high school grades the determining factor; secondly, that emphasis should be placed upon those subjects, methods and practices which directly influence the formation of character and preparation for the duties of citizenship, which is one of the main objects of the public school system.....¹

After a long series of conferences, some standardization was effected in the entrance requirements for the various faculties, the School for Teachers, and straight High School Leaving Certificate, although not as much as had been hoped for.²

In later years Rexford interested himself particularly in the retarded child. He was chairman of the Sub-Committee on Education of Retarded and Mentally Defective Children continuously from its inception in 1928 to his retirement in 1936. It began by seeking the help of Dr. W.B.T. Mitchell, then of the Canadian National Committee of Mental Hygiene. Its

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, September 24, 1920.

2 - Report to the Protestant Committee, September 23, 1921.

recommendations were:¹

- (a) That a survey be made of such children between 5 and 14 years of age.
- (b) That special classes be set up where 15 or more were found.
- (c) That Government grants be sought to defray the expenses of the survey and the proposed special classes.
- (d) That suitable teachers be selected and trained.
- (e) That the Government set up special residential schools and farm colonies for the defectives.

With the exception of (e), all recommendations were carried into effect by September, 1929. A vigorous lobby had been required to secure Government financial aid, one of the telling arguments being that similar programmes were already in existence in every other Province but Prince Edward Island. The first teachers were trained at the Ontario College of Education, and four classes were opened in Montreal during the 1929-30 school session. The Depression of the early 'Thirties precluded the setting up of the proposed residential schools and farm colonies; but Rexford's committee continued to function, publishing, for example, "Suggestions for the Organization of Special Classes for Retarded Children".²

On course of study committees Rexford constantly emphasized moral and religious training, as discussed in Part IV of the thesis. He was also outspoken in favour of

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, October 26, 1928.

2 - The Educational Record, Vol.LII No.4, October-December, 1933; pp224f.

agriculture as part of the curriculum in rural schools. Closely akin was his work on successive textbook committees, too. In fact in 1896 as chairman of such a committee he was sued jointly with Professor A.W. Kneeland, Committee member, by the Educational Book Company, over a new series of "Canada Readers" which the two had declared unacceptable due to lateness in publication and errors in printing and content. The suit was subsequently abandoned, largely due to the influence of Principal Peterson of McGill.¹

Rural Education

Throughout his career on the Protestant Committee, even while himself Rector of the High School of Montreal, Rexford was a champion of the rural schools. Educational Campaigns, consolidation, teacher training, course of study, examinations -- in all these he had the rural school in mind. It was a belief of his, repeated in substance on many occasions, that "A sound education should be the heritage of every child. No child should be condemned to illiteracy just because he chanced to be born on a farm."² And he had in mind especially the rural elementary schools. "If there is to be economy, let it come in the higher grades; but have the best, the most experienced, even if the highest-paid teachers for our

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- 1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, November 27, 1896.
 - 2 - Letter to Dr. Parmelee dated September, 1922. Fyles of the Department of Education; Dossier 450/22.

primary pupils."¹

When the Protestant Committee was attacked in the Legislature in March, 1903, as being "....inefficient in management of rural schools, because members were ignorant of their needs and were themselves chiefly interested in higher or city education...." and accused of "....unfairly apportioning the public grants to the loss of the elementary schools...."² it was Rexford who did public battle for the Committee. In a widely-reprinted letter to the Montreal Daily Witness, April 6, 1903, he pointed out at length the policies of the Committee, the reforms it had effected, and the difficulties it faced in conditions regarding the apportionment of funds.

Although Rexford was included in many delegations waiting upon the Government with money as their object,³ he was not a financier. He was content to leave questions of raising money largely to his confreres of the business world.

But he certainly had a good deal to say about the spending of money. Thus a considerable controversy arose in 1903 -- of which the exchange in the Legislature and the press mentioned

1 - The Educational Record, Vol.V No.9, September, 1885; p.232.

2 - Mr. W.A.Weir, speaking March 26 in the Legislative Assembly, as quoted by the Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs for 1903; p.533.

3 - For example, Increased Grants for Primary Education, 1885, 1901, 1906, 1908, 1923; Released Normal School Grant, 1907; Rental from McGill Normal School Building, 1911; Salaries for School Inspectors, 1921, 1928.

above was one phase. The Protestant Committee had controlled the distribution of grants for superior education almost from the start. Rexford himself had often served on the annual sub-committee for their distribution, the monies being amounts voted as the Superior Education Fund, together with the income from marriage licenses, which were required only in the case of Protestant marriages.. The Protestant Committee was thus able to vary grants from year to year, based on the merit and comparative need of the various schools. It was the custom in the case of primary education, however, apparently firmly rooted in ease of administration and political expediency, for the Government to apportion grants solely on a population basis. Although the Protestant Committee had been able to exact compliance with certain of its Regulations on pain of forfeiture of the annual grant,¹ yet the grants still bore no relation to actual school attendance nor even school population; nor was there any way in which they could be used conveniently as an encouragement toward adequate local contributions for school purposes. As a result of the controversy of 1903, the Government allowed the Protestant Committee further discretionary powers over grants to elementary schools, with corresponding increase in its control over them. But it was not until the year 1913-14 that Rexford could relax in the knowledge that for the first time grants to the elementary schools, insofar as population was concerned, were

1 - For example, boarding around, course of study. Vide supra p.52.

were based on actual enrolment, rather than the Dominion census. Thus grants were made only for work being done, and a spur was provided for local school boards to make a sort of unofficial "compulsory" attendance arrangement.¹

Rexford ran head-on into another controversy over finances for rural education in the matter of Minimum Salary Grants. He considered that from a practical point of view one of the most important questions for the improvement of rural elementary schools was that of teachers' salaries. As early as 1906 he was advocating a scheme whereby local school boards would receive direct assistance from the Provincial Treasury towards teachers' salaries. His plan, which was adopted in principle in 1909, proposed to encourage local boards to greater efforts themselves on behalf of their teachers by a system of minimum salary grants, rather than merely salary grants; that is, the grants would be made only to municipalities which agreed to pay every teacher a specified minimum salary; such grants, of course, not being available to school authorities in towns and cities. Although fairly large sums of money were distributed in this way, and average salaries of rural teachers increased appreciably, yet the results were disappointing in the matter of encouraging increased local contributions. The total increase in salaries, in fact, from 1909 to 1912, was little more than the amount distributed by the Provincial Treasurer.

1 - The Educational Record, Vol. XXXIII No. 10-12, October-December, 1913; pp. 281f.

Rexford's purpose was to encourage the employment of qualified teachers. He was disappointed, therefore, at the extremely low minimum required to qualify for the Grants -- especially so since all too often the minimum salary becomes also the maximum. In 1912-13, for example, the minimum was \$100. annually, with increased grants offered for \$125. and \$150 minimums; whereas in the same year the average salary of female teachers with diplomas in the Protestant rural elementary schools was \$191. But the Government held that the minimum, though admittedly very low, was a realistic one; and that the whole purpose of the Grants would be defeated if the minimum standard were raised, at one stroke, beyond what the municipalities were ready to accept.¹ Another criticism levelled at Rexford's scheme in the beginning attacked the whole process of "training" teachers as an unnecessary expense. Letters to the press suggested that "teachers were born, not made".....this as late as 1906!²

A further sidelight on Rexford's interest in rural schools is to be found in his arrangements, as chairman, to hold the Protestant Committee meeting of May 24-25, 1923, in Sherbrooke, rather than in Quebec or Montreal as was the custom. Mr. Victor E. Morrill, Committee member and publisher of the Sherbrooke Daily Record, arranged the details, including

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- 1 - See the Budget Speech for 1912 of the Provincial Treasurer, The Honorable P.S. G. Mackenzie. For a brief outline of educational financing generally at Quebec at the time see G.W. Parmelee, Education in the Province of Quebec; pp.100-104.
- 2 - The Educational Record, Vol. XXVI No.4, April, 1906; p.115.

tours to representative rural schools of various sizes to give the Committee members first-hand information of the conditions under which those schools functioned.

Before completing this survey of Rexford's work on the Protestant Committee, mention should be made of a few lesser incidents. It was he who, in the excitement of the Victoria Jubilee celebrations, caused the Protestant Committee to decree that a suitable flag and staff be added to the equipment tables of all Protestant schools.....From the first he held out for special holidays for the annual P.A.P.T. convention, in the face of efforts by local school boards to have it shifted to the regular summer or Easter vacation period. "Let us be realistic," says Rexford, "and not kill teachers' interest in an organization which aims at professional improvement."¹ In a Province traditionally and legally conservative with respect to granting public office to women, he led a campaign in 1915-17 urging that regulations be altered to permit women to sit on school boards. The Protestant Committee went on record as favouring the change (February 25, 1916); and on Rexford's appointment as a full member in 1919, the Committee elected Professor Carrie Derick of McGill to

1 - Fyles of the Department of Education; Dossier 450/22, including correspondence on the question with the Montreal Protestant Board of School Commissioners.

succeed him as associate member.....In 1910, in recognition of his work with the Protestant Committee in particular, and for rural education generally, Bishops University bestowed upon him the degree of Doctor of Civil Law, honoris causa..... Many examples of his methodical approach to a problem are to be found in the minutes of the Protestant Committee. On a contentious question his suggestion would frequently be accepted for breaking down the subject into logical groupings for easier discussion¹.....

From the time when as a young man of thirty-two Rexford was appointed English Secretary of the Department to September 1936 when failing strength forced his retirement, over fifty-four years had passed -- fifty-four formative years in the development of ^{the} Protestant education system of the Province of Quebec. Rexford had himself been the leader in many instances; in practically all he had had some part. It is interesting to note how close the relationships were between Rexford and Parmelee, who succeeded him as English Secretary of the Department, which post eventually became the Directorship of Protestant Education, and which Parmelee held until his retirement in June, 1930. Indeed Dr. Percival suggests that

- 1 - For example, during a discussion of the quadrennial revision of the authorized list of textbooks, Rexford's motion was carried, "That we now proceed to consider the question.....in the following order: 1st, the methods followed in the revision; 2nd, the results reached through the recent reports upon revision; and 3rd, the particular objections which have been raised against the recent revision." Minutes of the Protestant Committee, March 8, 1895.

from the record of co-operation between the two it is often difficult to determine which one was in the driver's seat! Certainly the fyles of the Department contain much correspondence between them (especially Parmelee's "letter books" from December 1893 ot February 1898), often including two letters on the same subject: one the formal letter, opening "Reverend and Dear Sir:- ".....and the second marked Private and beginning "My dear Rexford". And it was usually Rexford who presented Parmelee's case to the Committee, in such matters as urging increased staff for the Department.¹ When the Committee recommended the first Protestant appointments to the Order of Scholastic Merit in 1931, Rexford and Parmelee were presented to the Lieutenant-Governor as the first recipients of the Third (and highest) Degree, for Distinguished Merit.²

The Protestant Committee meeting of Setpember 25, 1936, opened by placing on record its regret that Rexford found it necessary to resign on the advice of his physician. How well Rexford knew the formula! As Grand Old Man of the Committee he himself had introduced several similar resolutions during the previous ten or fifteen years, as retirement had overtaken one after another of his confreres. There is an atmosphere of great warmth about this resolution on Rexford's retirement, however. It concludes:

...His resignation.....cannot be accepted without recording again our appreciation of his long, faithful and devoted service to education in our midst. There is probably no single individual who has contributed so much in such a varied list of educational activities.

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- 1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, November 28, 1895; May 13, 1921; December 7, 1928.
 - 2 - In October, 1948, Rexford's son, Orrin B. Rexford, was also awarded the Third Degree of the Order.

P A R T IV

REXFORD AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

"A school that fails to develop sound moral character in its pupils fails, I hold, at the most important point of its work."¹

If one could appear before Rexford now and ask what he considered his most important contribution to education in Quebec, and if he were able to answer, he would probably gloss over his work as an administrator and educational executive and point instead to the area of religious education. Not that he was satisfied with what he managed to accomplish -- real gains in his beloved field of moral and religious training are likely to be intangible and not readily measurable in any case; but this was the dominant interest in the man's life -- the driving force which revealed itself again and again, making a strong personality even stronger, and developing not a few enemies in the process.

Any understanding of the man and his work predicates a recognition of his fundamental religious convictions. He was

1 - From Rexford's first Rector's Report: Annual Report of the High School of Montreal for the Year 1891-92.

brought up in the Church of England, he was trained in its ministry, and remained active in the Church. He believed in God and the Trinity, and the power of prayer. He was no great pulpit orator in the sense of being a popular preacher -- probably he had no desire to be. Rather were his occasional sermons in line with the work he was doing, and as often as not dealt with some phase of religious education and the responsibility of adults to see to the proper upbringing of their children. "On a practical platform," says Dr. O.W. Howard,¹ "a course of study, an appeal to students, even an annual report, he could make his subject live and breathe."

Rexford was a Low Churchman. Indeed, he seems to have approached religious education with something of the earnestness and fervour usually ascribed to various of the dissenting communions.

1 - Faculty member of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College, in conversation with the writer.

In the Church

As already pointed out, Rexford studied theology concurrently with Arts in his undergraduate days at McGill, being awarded the Licentiate in Sacred Theology and ordained Deacon in December, 1876. His days as Curate of St. Luke's in Montreal were cut very short, however, when his knee gave out, and he turned his primary attention to the schools. Yet, as is customary in the Church of England, he was named by succeeding Bishops as assisting clergyman -- without stipend, of course -- to various parishes throughout his life, regularly assisting in the ritual, and preaching from time to time.¹ In 1894 Rexford was ordained Priest, having made it one of the conditions on which he accepted the Rectorship of the High School of Montreal that he be free "...to proceed with his examinations for ordination and to take Sunday duty."² And in 1913 he was honoured by appointment as a Canon of the Diocese of Montreal.

1 - Rexford's attachments, as listed in appropriate Proceedings of Annual Synods of Montreal and Quebec, were as follows: 1877-79, St. George's, Montreal; 1879-81, Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal; 1882-91, The Cathedral, Quebec; 1891-93, St. James the Apostle, Montreal; 1893-95, St. George's; 1895-98, St. Martin's; 1898-1920, St. Stephen's. From 1920 appointment to the Faculty of the Diocesan College was considered sufficient attachment. The reason for such attachments, as explained by the Venerable Archdeacon J.F. Morris of Montreal, is that under the Church of England hierarchical organization arrangements are made whereby every ordained clergyman will be responsible to the Bishop of the Diocese in which he happens to be.

2 - Vide supra p. 83.

In the Church of England in Canada the Canonry is an honorary life appointment made by a Bishop. The Dean, Archdeacons and Canons of a Diocese together comprise the Cathedral Chapter, to which the Bishop is nominally responsible for his actions. Thus it is sometimes said that the Church of England organization is in reality a democratic one, with the Bishop responsible to his parishioners. With tongue in cheek, though, it is also sometimes said that the chief function of a Cathedral Chapter in Canada is to select hymns for the Annual Synod!

In any case, Canon Rexford remained an Active Member of the Cathedral Chapter of Montreal until his death, as well as a member of the Diocesan Court from 1918, a body whose chief duty it is to pass on candidates for holy orders. In addition he was a perennial delegate from the Montreal Synod to the General Synod (first time in 1906, last in 1931), as well as to the Provincial Synod.¹ He served on many committees of the various Synods, including the Executive Committee of

1 - The unit of the Church of England in Canada is the Parish, a number of which are organized into a Diocese under a Bishop. Annually the Diocesan Synod meets, consisting of clergy and lay delegates from the various parishes, to formulate church laws, called canons. A canon must be passed by one synod and confirmed by that of the following year before it becomes binding, Bishop, clergy and laymen voting separately and each possessing the right of veto. In addition a series of Dioceses will be constituted an Ecclesiastical Province under a Metropolitan (Bishop or Archbishop), with its own Provincial Synod and canons; and the Ecclesiastical Provinces are united under a Primate, with the General Synod of the Church of England in Canada and its canons.

the Synod of the Montreal Diocese until 1935; but especially and repeatedly the various Committees and Commissions and Boards dealing with religious education.

Rexford was particularly active in the Sunday School movement. As a student in Montreal he taught Sunday School; while in Quebec City he also took young people's Bible classes from time to time, although his frequent trips out of town prevented his accepting any regular responsibility.¹ Back in Montreal in 1892 he joined those who were clamouring ^{for} more attention to the Sunday School in the Church of England. Reginald Buchanan, Esquire, many times chairman of the Synod Committee on Sunday Schools, had for years been urging the importance of expanding Sunday School work. An example of his strong phrasing is to be found in his report to Synod in 1893.² Those were the days when the Methodists and Congregationalists in particular were organizing gigantic Sunday School rallies and picnic outings -- keen competition for the conservative Anglicans!³

When the 36th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal reorganized its Standing Committee on Sunday Schools and placed the Diocesan Sunday School Association on a firm footing

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- 1 - See comments of the Very Reverend Dean Norman at the annual meeting of the Women's Christian Association, as reported in the Quebec Morning Chronicle, March 23, 1892.
 - 2 - Proceedings of the 34th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1893; p.100.
 - 3 - The Sunday School movement was particularly strong among the Methodists. A scholarly account is available in Addie G. Wardle's History of the Sunday School Movement in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

in 1895, Rexford was the driving force behind the organization.¹ The D.S.S.A. consisted of clergy, Sunday School teachers and officers throughout the Diocese, organized for mutual help. In practice it narrowed down to the Montreal area, with rural districts receiving rather short shrift. One of its featured activities, from 1896 through 1904, was a weekly Tuesday evening "preparation and normal class for Sunday School teachers", led by Rexford, at which work was prepared for the following Sunday.²

It is interesting to note that from the time John Raikes organized the first classes in Gloucester in 1780, the Sunday School has been a field of active co-operation among many of the various Protestant denominations. The International Sunday School Association is one example.³ In 1896 Rexford was sent as Montreal Diocesan representative to the conference of that Association. There he was appointed to the International Lesson Committee, of which he remained member, and for a time chairman, for twenty-nine years. Since 1872 this Committee had annually selected a lesson for

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- 1 - Proceedings of the 36th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1895; pp.96ff.
 - 2 - Proceedings of the 44th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1903; p.111.
 - 3 - For details of the International Sunday School Association and the International Lessons Committee see Theodore G. Soare's article on Sunday Schools; Vol.XII pp.111ff of the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings.

each Sunday of the year, and prepared suitable outlines and background commentaries. These lessons were widely used by various denominations throughout the United States and Canada, as well as by the British Sunday School Union. It also became customary for Saturday "home" newspapers to devote a column or two to the exposition of the lesson for the following day. In 1908, at the 12th Conference of the International Sunday School Association, the educational value of the uniform lesson - the same lesson for all age groups - was called in question; and at that time a graded series was instituted, from Beginners' Department to Adult Bible Class Department.

In 1908 the Fifth Session of the General Synod of the Church of England in Canada set up a Sunday School Commission to take charge of all Sunday School work throughout the Anglican communion in Canada. Rexford had been one of the delegates most outspoken in the matter; and with the Primate as ex officio President, he was appointed Chairman. The following year a Sunday School Commission office was opened at Church headquarters in Toronto, with a full-time executive secretary. The aims of the Commission were expressed as follows:

- (a) The effective organization of Sunday School work in the Dioceses.
- (b) To further departmental work of the Sunday School: including teacher training and the Adult Bible Class Department.
- (c) To study and recommend the best lesson schemes for Sunday Schools.
- (d) The publication of a Sunday School paper to supplement the all too short one-hour period available for teaching each Sunday.²

Rexford was particularly interested, as might be expected, in lesson outlines and teacher training. By 1910 he had written up a suggested teacher training syllabus and examination series for distribution to the Dioceses, and he strongly urged upon all Dioceses the operation of teacher training summer schools.

He had not lost interest in the Diocese of Montreal, however; and following the formation of the Sunday School Commission he piloted through the Montreal Synod Canon No. XXXIX - Diocesan Sunday School Association. An extension of the Sunday School Association of 1895, it included a branch association for each group of rural Parishes and Missions, and arranged teacher training summer schools in 1915 and 1916.

The Eighth Session of the General Synod, 1918, is a landmark in terms of organization for the Church of England in Canada. In that year the previous national set-up of committees and commissions was abandoned in favour of four strong boards, of which the General Board of Religious Education was one. This board (the G.B.R.E.) assumed the responsibilities of Rexford's former Sunday School Commission, and also included a Department on Religious Education in Public and Private Schools,

- 1 - (from previous page) Proceedings of the 53rd Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1912; pp.149-157.
- 2 - At first Our Empire, a publication of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, was distributed by arrangement.

as well as a lantern slide department, which has since developed into the Educational and Supplies Department, regularly publishing no fewer than twenty-one periodicals. Inasmuch as Rexford remained Chairman throughout the reorganization and for seven years afterwards, and was largely responsible for the specific form which the G.B.R.E. took, and the wording of Canon VII - On Education, as enacted by the General Synod in 1918 and confirmed the following year, it is reproduced at Appendix E. The Diocese of Montreal followed with a new Canon XXXIX establishing a Diocesan Board of Religious Education in 1921-22. The D.B.R.E. remains substantially the same today, except that a revision in 1926-27 made it a representative body rather than a convocation of all clergymen and laymen active in religious education.

The G.B.R.E. undertook to foster closer integration of Sunday School work with religious education in the schools, something which Rexford had long advocated. In addition to his Sunday School activities, he had frequently served on the Montreal Diocesan Standing Committee on Education.¹ Two of his reports will be cited. One, in 1898,² strikes a note he repeated again and again, in urging all clergymen to exercise their legal right to visit the schools. "Make full use of the

1 - Member, 1893-95; Convenor, 1895-1900; Convenor, 1909-16. See Proceedings of appropriate Synods.

2 - Proceedings of the 39th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1898; p.134.

educational privileges we enjoy in this Province," he says, "especially as the clergy of other Dioceses are striving to secure similar privileges in other Provinces." He is a schoolteacher as well as a clergyman, however, and goes on to warn that the clergy are privileged to visit and inspect only, and not to teach or examine. At the same time he mentions for His Lordship the Bishop's attention, the "ornamental part of the Committee" -- only two or three had gathered together of the twenty-five named to it!

The report of another Diocesan Committee on Education of which Rexford was the convenor -- that of 1916 -- is reproduced in part at Appendix F as an example of his work on such committees. "The only trouble with Canon Rexford as a convenor," reminisces a former confrere, "was that sometimes he would write the report of the committee before even summoning it to meet!"¹ The 1916 report is of interest because it gives Rexford's views on religious instruction for day school teachers in training. It had been customary for representatives of the various denominations to take the weekly religious instruction periods of the teacher training syllabus for candidates of their respective denominations. The report lashed out at a proposal to assign such work to regular members of the teacher training staff:

,,,,,First because it will be treated as an ordinary subject of instruction in the curriculum; and secondly because the teachers in training will fail to get that

1 - Dr. D.L.Ritchie, retired Principal of the United Theological College, Montreal, in conversation with the writer.

vision of duty, that enthusiasm and interest in this department of school life, which comes from a more direct appeal to religious sanction in life and conduct....

The Synod agreed, and strong recommendations were made to the Protestant Committee, including a delegation to the Committee's May meeting headed by the Right Reverend John Farthing, Bishop of Montreal.¹

Another phase of Rexford's work in religious education is to be found in his twenty-five years as principal of the Diocesan College. This has already been dealt with in some detail.² But it should be pointed out here that although his appointment was that of Principal and John Duncan Professor of Dogmatic Theology, from 1919 on practically all his teaching was in the field of Religious Education, and for ten years before that he had carried a course entitled "Sunday School Pedagogics".

One of his favourite projects was the setting up of a degree course in religious education under the Joint Faculty of the co-operating theological colleges affiliated with McGill. In 1920 Lt.Colonel Gerald W. Birks financed a Chair of Religious Education, to which was appointed Dr. Ernest M. Best, formerly Professor of Religious Education at the Y.M.C.A.'s Springfield College. A Religious Education Department was authorized, with

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, May 19, 1916.

2 - Vide supra pp.102ff.

a curriculum offering

.....a thorough training for professional workers in Religious Education and Social Service within the limits of a four-year course. It seeks to give a broad cultural background from Literature, History, and the Social and Biological Sciences. On this foundation, the course offers through the study of Philosophy and Theology a Christian interpretation of life. From this point of view, the course then provides a scientific training in the theory and practice of Education as the method by which the Christian ideal is to be attained.

The curriculum of study is correlated with a curriculum of observation and actual practice, particularly in the third and fourth years.¹

The Religious Education Department continued for five years, granting not a degree, but a Licentiate in Religious Education, a diploma from the Joint Colleges. Thereafter courses in religious education were modified to become one of the approaches to the Bachelor's degree in Divinity.

In 1925 Rexford celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday, and with it came a recognition of the need to relax somewhat from his many obligations. Accordingly he resigned the Chairmanship of the Protestant Committee, together with membership on the International Sunday School Lessons Committee. At the same time he resigned as Chairman of the G.B.R.E., after seventeen years at the head of the Church of England's religious education organization in Canada. The Primate wrote him a most complimentary personal letter

1 - Bulletin for 1921-22 of the Religious Education Department, Montreal Theological Colleges Affiliated to McGill University; p.6.

at the time, urging him to remain as an advisory member of the G.B.R.E. at least -- which he did; and the G.B.R.E. itself went on record as follows:

The members of the G.B.R.E. in their Annual Meeting, having received and accepted with sorrow the resignation of the Rev. Canon E.I. Rexford, M.A. LL.D., as Chairman of the Board, desire to express their heartfelt regret that he has found it necessary to resign. The Board wishes to bear witness to the greatness of his contribution to the cause of religious education throughout the Church of England in Canada, and would place on record its appreciation of the many years of valuable service rendered to the Board by Dr. Rexford in his capacity as Chairman from its inception.

The Board is gratified to learn that it will still enjoy in an advisory capacity the help and assistance of Dr. Rexford and prays that many years of useful service for Christ and His Church may lie before him,¹

In the Schools

As the title of his presidential address to the P.A.P.T. in 1891 Rexford chose "Moral Culture". His thesis was that moral culture had been neglected in favour of intellectual culture, and that there was a disposition among teachers to regard a moral fault as unpardonable, an intellectual one as natural. The aim should be to induce the child to act in the highest way he can comprehend. The cardinal virtues of the schoolroom should be truthfulness, honesty, humility,

1 - For this and a copy of the Primate's letter the writer is indebted to Canon R.A. Hiltz, D.C.L., D.D., General Secretary of the G.B.R.E.

and industry.¹

Rexford had four specific proposals for the development of character in the schools:²

1. Definite teaching based on religious instruction and the everyday occurrences of life.
2. The elimination of any customs and practices of school life which tend to vitiate the moral atmosphere of the school.
3. The securing of masters whose example shall be for good.
4. The promoting of physical health....A healthy physical development tends to good morals, as well as to good mental action.

In Quebec Province two separate publicly-supported school systems operate side by side, the division based on religion. It was Rexford's conviction that despite that legal basis, despite the predominance of clergymen on Protestant school boards from the Protestant Committee down, despite the legal right granted clergymen to visit and inspect the public schools, and the certificate of good moral character required of all teacher candidates - despite all these, in practice there was far too little positive moral and religious training in the Protestant schools; in fact in many cases the schools were Protestant in little more than name. Strengthening this phase of the school programme was a cause célèbre with Rexford

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- 1 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 28th Annual Convention, 1891.
 - 2 - Rexford's first Rector's Report: Annual Report of the High School of Montreal for the Year 1891-92. Vide Appendix D.

throughout his association with the Protestant Committee. It involved him in the controversies over the education of Jewish children; it raised problems of teacher training, and denominational dominance; it precipitated some very sharp differences indeed in the Protestant Committee; yet more than one observer still suggests that the sections on Moral and Religious Instruction in successive Handbooks for Teachers have been more noted in the breach than in the observance.¹

Rexford's first course of study, introduced in 1883-84 when he was English Secretary of the Department, did not list moral and religious instruction as a separate subject to be taught. Nevertheless as editor of The Educational Record he saw to it that appropriate articles appeared frequently. As early as December, 1883, he recommended books on the subject for teachers;² in 1886 he began publishing "Notes of Lessons on Morals", consisting of detailed lesson outlines on such topics as honesty.³ Other articles had such titles as "Moral Education an Essential Feature in Public School Education",⁴ "Moral and Physical Education",⁵ and "Systematic Moral Instruction".⁶

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- 1 - This is suggested in Chapter XII of the Hepburn Report. It is also borne out in conversation with such Provincial officials as Mr. H.C.Young, Assistant Inspector of High Schools, and Mr. C.Wayne Hall, Supervisor of English.
 - 2 - Vide supra p. 56.
 - 3 - by Dr. Edward Brooks. The Educational Record, Vol.VI No.9, September, 1886; p.199.
 - 4 - Ibid., Vol.VI No.1, January, 1886, pp.52-54.
 - 5 - E.W.Arthy; ibid., Vol.VI No.5, May, 1886; p.115.
 - 6 - Ibid., Vol.XI No.8, August, 1891; p.205.

When the Regulations of the Protestant Committee were codified in 1888, the following sections appeared under the heading Religious Instruction:¹

158. Religious Instruction shall be given in all public schools, but no person shall require any pupil in any public school to read or study in or from any religious book, or to join in any exercise of devotion or religion, objected to in writing by his or her parents or guardians.

159. Every Protestant school shall be opened each day with the reading of a portion of the Holy Scriptures followed by the Lord's Prayer.

Section 160 was added September 24, 1890:

160. In all grades of the Protestant schools the first half hour of each day shall be devoted to opening exercises (prescribed by the preceding Regulation), instruction in morals, and Scripture History. The Holy Scriptures and the authorized text-books shall be used for this purpose. No denominational teaching shall be given in such schools.

This new Regulation followed the introduction throughout elementary and superior schools of a new course called "Scripture Knowledge".² Rexford outlined a suggested course in "Scripture History" which was circulated to the schools, but a good deal of latitude was allowed the individual teacher in the choice of subject matter. There were no examinations required in the schools, although it was made an examinable subject at the McGill Normal School,³ and was

1 - Elson I. Rexford, Manual of School Law and Regulations in the Province of Quebec; p.55.

2 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, May 7 and September 24, 1890.

3 - Regulation 34, as amended September 24, 1890.

one of the courses usually offered at the Teachers' Normal Institutes.¹ The Ontario Department of Education had published a volume of selections from the Scriptures for use in the schools. Rexford wanted no such volume in Quebec. "Let us have the whole Bible," he said at the P.A.P.T. Convention in 1887.²

Back in Montreal as Rector of the High School, Rexford saw to it that the regulations about opening all classes with prayer and Scriptures were rigidly adhered to. At the same time he conducted monthly Monday Morning Quiet Hours in the Assembly Hall. Some of the prayers which he wrote for those occasions are preserved in the records of the school, or gathered in the little book entitled Hymns and Prayers for Schools which was authorized by the Protestant Committee in the early 1920's.³ A few of the prayers still used occasionally at assemblies in the High School are reproduced at Appendix G.

At the same time the Protestant Committee was still feeling its way somewhat in the matter of Bible study. Difficulties arose repeatedly, centring about the individual teacher, many of whom regarded themselves --or were regarded -- as unable to teach religion - certainly unable to teach it in such fashion as to avoid charges of denominational bias.

- 1 - Vide supra p.57.
- 2 - Minutes of the P.A.P.T. 24th Annual Convention, 1887.
- 3 - This book was first prepared at the direction of the Montreal Protestant Board of School Commissioners, by a committee of the clergymen on the Board. James E. Fee, later Rector of the High School, and Rexford's son-in-law, was a member of the committee.

Sub-committees of the Protestant Committee, Rexford invariably included, attempted to meet the situation in part by preparing and revising successive courses of Bible study: as frequently as 1894 and again in 1897, for instance. And there were not a few who thought that while religious instruction might be feasible for the Roman Catholics, the best thing the Protestants could do, with their many discrete communions and even non-Protestant pupils, was simply to allow religious instruction, in practice, gradually to slip out of the curriculum. They would have agreed with the words of British Columbia's Governor Seymour, thirty years before:

It is vain to say that there are certain elementary matters in which all Christians, leaving out Jews, must agree. It is merely calling upon a man, picked at random, allured by a trifling salary, to do what the whole religious wisdom, feeling and affection of the world has not yet done. The paring down of all excrescences which a man on a hundred and fifty pounds a year may think disfigure the separate religions, and the reducing them to a common standard, becomes a sort of Methodism which may locally be named after the schoolmaster who performs it.¹

In any case, the Regulations of the Protestant Committee covering religious instruction remained unchanged, with various passages from the Bible being prescribed from time to time for reading or memorization. No central examinations were set.

1 - Alexander Robinson, "History of Education in British Columbia"; Shortt and Doughty, Canada and Its Provinces, Vol. XXII; p.416.

In 1918 the Sub-Committee on Course of Study came to grips with the question of religious instruction once again. Rexford was on the sub-committee, although by the time it brought in its first report he was on his way to Khaki University in England. Dean Sinclair Laird of the Macdonald School for Teachers presented the report, and after a lengthy debate the Protestant Committee endorsed its recommendations, resolving:

[That]....in the selection of subjects for the Course of Study increased emphasis [shall be] placed in all grades upon those subjects, methods and practices which directly influence the formation of character and the preparation for the duties of citizenship, as this is one of the main objects of the public school system.¹

Led by Rexford on his return from overseas the following year, the sub-committee interpreted this resolution as approval in principle of its proposals for preparing a new integrated course of religious instruction. This it proceeded to do in the next two years, drawing up a detailed Manual on Character Building, or Manual (or Memo) of Suggestions to Teachers: Moral and Religious Instruction, Character Building, as it was variously called. Rexford did the actual writing of this two-hundred-page document, although several others, including Professor Carrie M. Derick, Dean Laird and Mr. Charles

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, November 29, 1918.

McBurney were members of the sub-committee at one time or another. The manual was divided into separate sections for primary, intermediate and senior grades. It consisted of "....a selection of material from the Scriptures, and also from nature, history and literature.....so that the teacher may be guided in regard to her scripture material for the development of character in the life of the child."1 Chapter headings included "The Importance of Character Building"; "The Child to be Educated" (advancing the recapitulation theory of child development, dismissing Thorndyke's theory of continuity of development); "Materials Available for Character Building"; as well as "Lesson Courses for Character Building". It called for the memorization of continuous passages from the scriptures, rather than isolated texts. It asked for no examinations in the subject, other than the usual inspectors' reports.

And it split the Protestant Committee wide open.

It came up for discussion in one form or another at eight meetings of the Protestant Committee before the crisis was reached early in 1922. At one stage it had been suggested that the new course might be substituted for history as a compulsory senior high school subject -- following Ontario's lead in making history optional. Although the proposal was forthwith dropped, it had not strengthened the position of

1 - Report of the Sub-Committee on Course of Study; Minutes of the Protestant Committee, November 19, 1918.

Moral and Religious Instruction at all.¹ At each of the eight meetings Rexford had vacated the chair temporarily in order to enter the debate in support of his pet project. Finally, after extensive readings from the manuscript at the February 1921 meeting, the following four-fold resolution was carried:

After much discussion it was moved by Dr. Rexford, seconded by Miss Norris: That the Manual on Character Building as a Preparation for Citizenship be received and the general principles upon which it has been prepared be approved.

Secondly; That the Manual be completed, printed and distributed to members of the Committee for criticism and suggestions.

Thirdly; That these criticisms be sent in writing to the Chairman of the Committee on Course of Study.

Fourthly; That the Committee edit the Manual in the light of the criticisms and suggestions received and submit the completed Manual to this Committee for adoption at a future meeting.²

No copy of the Manual, either in manuscript or as printed for circulation to the members of the Protestant Committee, can be located at this time. The files of the Department contain many references to it, including the covering letter under which it was despatched to the members of the Protestant Committee,³ but no copy of the document itself. However, the criticisms and suggestions of

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- 1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, November 26, 1920; September 23, 1921.
 - 2 - Ibid., February 25, 1921.
 - 3 - Files of the Department of Education, Quebec; Dossier 1300/21.

sixteen members of the Committee are available, and show a sharp difference of opinion.¹ Mr. V.E.Morrill, Mr. M.G. Dr. Crombie, Reverend/A.T.Love and Bishop Lennox Williams of Quebec offer whole-hearted approval; others, led by Mr. Howard Murray, Dr. Milton L. Hersey and Professor Carrie M. Derick, oppose the work in detail and/or in principle. The very length of their comments (Murray 26 pages, Derick 11), and the pains they had obviously been at, indicate the heat with which the question was discussed.

The major objections may be summarized as follows:

- (a) The work is too long and verbose to provide a useful day-to-day guide for the teacher.
- (b) Many of the topics discussed -- such as foreign missions and the resurrection of the body -- should be left to the Sunday Schools. Where pupils of varying denominations and creeds are taught, controversial religious questions should be avoided.
- (c) "The author seems to confuse Character Building and Morality with Religion, as if the former were impossible without dogmatic religion."² More attention should be paid to school activities, history and literature as source materials.

Accordingly, at the February meeting in 1922, the Sub-Committee on Course of Study was forced finally to report that "....until there is a greater unanimity of purpose, method and content of a course in religious education and character building, it is useless to proceed further in the matter."³

1 - Fyles of the Department of Education, Quebec; Dossier 50/22.
 2 - From Dr. Hersey's comments, dated January 26, 1922.
 3 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, February 24, 1922.

Rexford was bitterly disappointed. He was so convinced of the need for more comprehensive religious training in the schools that he had used every possible avenue at his command to support it. He had been responsible, for example, for a resolution carried by the Montreal Diocesan Synod in 1921 to circularize all clergy, teachers, and parents, urging "...the importance of taking the fullest advantage of the opportunities for Religious Education afforded in the Protestant schools..."¹ Always a forceful man, it may be that the extraordinary degree of force he sought to employ here helped to defeat his ends. Heated phrases appear in correspondence from various members of the Protestant Committee: "The Chairman has arrogantly misread the mandate given to the Course of Study Committee".... "He took upon himself the preparation of this outline....and has attempted to force it through the Committee"....."The duty was to prepare a course of study, NOT a memorandum for teachers".... But Rexford went down fighting. Twice -- January 17 and February 10, 1922 -- he sent circular letters to members of the Committee, answering some of the criticisms levelled at him and his Manual: "If the Scriptures are themselves doctrinal -- if a systematic arrangement of Scripture material for lesson purposes is dogmatic -- then the Memorandum may be doctrinal and dogmatic."² And under date of January 22 Parmelee wrote to

- 1 - Proceedings of the 62nd Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1921; p.49.
- 2 - All the correspondence referred to on this page is to be found on Dockets 1160/21 and 50/22 in the Fyles of the Department of Education, Quebec.

Rexford:

I return the letter addressed to Mr. Walsh which you marked confidential, and sent for my perusal. I am glad to return it, for I do not wish even to have it on my private files where there would be in the future any possibility of it being turned up by others!

It appears that these personal animosities served to camouflage at least one point which would have been in Rexford's favour. The bitterest opponents of the proposed course seemed to be under the impression that the whole matter was something new, that in fact the formal programme of religious instruction laid down for the schools had long since fallen entirely into disuse. At first Rexford himself may have inadvertently furthered this notion, in his enthusiasm for something better. Actually, such was not the case, as Parmelee pointed out emphatically January 24, 1922.¹ Yet the point was never quite driven home, and much of the discussion in the Protestant Committee was not so much criticism of Rexford's proposals as criticisms of any but the most cursory programme of religious education in the schools.

The net result of all this work and discussion, then, seemed to be simply that henceforth the name "Scripture Knowledge was replaced in the curriculum by "Moral and Religious

1 - Letter Parmelee to Murray, January 24, 1922, quoting Inspectors Sutherland, Taylor and Rothney in support of his statement. In Fact, Inspector W.O. Rothney had just completed his doctoral dissertation on "Character Education in the Elementary School", basing much of it on practice and experimentation in Quebec rural elementary Protestant schools.

Instruction".¹ Rexford had to console himself with the thought that at least a great deal of publicity had been given to the matter of religious education in the schools.

Indeed much thought was being given throughout Canada at the time to "the need for strength in moral quality". In one sense the 1918-1922 struggle in the Protestant Committee might be considered both a reflection of and a contribution to the awakened awareness of the day to things spiritual. Professor Miller suggests that the War had given Canada a new sense of nationhood, and that as the inevitable psychological reaction came ".....a deeper sense of the significance of her loss in manpower.....a quickened response to the appeals of religion.....a deeper sense of the need for integrity, good faith and good will....."² Certainly it was a period of "Forward Movements" in the Protestant churches. And in October of 1919 there assembled at Winnipeg a rather remarkable National Conference on Moral Education in the Schools in Relation to Canadian Citizenship -- remarkable because it was conceived of and organized by neither church nor educational authorities, but by a group of interested businessmen, financed largely through the Rotary Clubs of Canada. There were 1504 accredited delegates (including Fisher, Bickerdyke

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- 1 - Circular of the Department, dated June 30, 1921, as quoted in The Educational Record, Vol.XLI No.4-6, April-June, 1921; p.202. It still goes by that name in the Protestant elementary schools of the Province, with Bible readings forming part of the High school course in English.
 - 2 - J.C.Miller: National Government and Education in the Federated Democracies: Dominion of Canada; p.574.

and Rexford from the Protestant Committee), and attendances of up to 5000. It established the National Council of Education, and passed a number of resolutions, including:

That this Conference puts itself on record as recognizing the necessity for the deepening and strengthening of the moral and physical factors in our national education, alike in the school, the church and the home, and instructs the newly-appointed Council to make a consideration of the problem here involved a first charge upon its deliberations.¹

Jewish Population
and the Protestant Schools

Another problem in which Rexford actively interested himself was that of the growing Jewish population in the Montreal Protestant schools. In 1924 he delivered an address before the K.A. Club (κύκλος ἀδελφών -- "Circle of Brothers" -- a body of kindred spirits, largely clergy, which gathered informally from time to time to discuss serious questions of the day). This address was subsequently published as The Jewish Population and the Protestant Schools. One of the chief factors was the financial one, which hardly needs discussion here. It is sufficient to state that the solution generally adopted to reimburse Protestant school boards for the cost of educating Jewish children has been to make that cost, over

1 - As reported in The Educational Record, Vol. XL No. 4-6, April-June, 1920; pp. 92f., 104-111.

and above amounts received directly from Jewish taxpayers, a first charge against the neutral tax panel.¹

Two other aspects of the situation were of particular interest to Rexford: attempts by the Jewish population to obtain representation on the Protestant Committee and on Protestant school boards; and the effect on religious instruction which the presence of large numbers of Jewish children in a Protestant classroom might have.

Since under the Act of 1903² Jews were "...to enjoy all the rights and privileges of Protestants for educational purposes....", a substantial section of the growing Jewish population in Montreal considered that it deserved representation on the Protestant Board of School Commissioners, and even on the Protestant Committee. Attempts had been made in 1906 and 1909 to set up a new system whereby school commissioners would be elected by popular vote rather than appointed by the Provincial Government and City Council, and whereby Jews would not be barred from voting or from election because of their religion. These attempts had failed to receive the necessary Government support, and enabling legislation had never been passed.

- 1 - For details of successive financial arrangements, as well as other material discussed in the following pages, see Elson I. Rexford: The Jewish Population and the Protestant Schools, especially pp.12ff.; Harold Ross: The Jew in the Educational System of the Province of Quebec; Abel Vineberg: History of Education in the Province of Quebec, especially pp.10f.; Elsie C. Woodley: History of Education in the Province of Quebec, pp.123-140; also *supra*, pp.65f.
- 2 - 3 Ed.VII c.16.

In 1916, however, a capable Jew having been elected to the City Council, a strong movement was organized to have him named as one of the Council's three appointees to the six-man Protestant Board of School Commissioners. A storm of protest arose among Protestant church organizations. Rexford, as convenor of the Education Committee of the Diocesan Synod, was most outspoken, arranging and chairing inter-denominational meetings among the Protestant communions, securing newspaper publicity, and organizing a representative delegation to the City Council to protest against the possible appointment of a Jewish school commissioner. In both 1916 and again the following year the Joint Committee thus successfully blocked the appointment of a Jew.

Rexford's attitude here was never that Jewish children were not welcome in the Protestant schools. Indeed, he was most sympathetic to their position, as is brought out in his work with Mr. Howard Murray's sub-committee of the Protestant Committee on "Conditions in the City of Montreal applying to educational facilities accorded to the foreign element";¹ but he considered that the admission of Jews as school commissioners would involve the destruction of the Christian character of the administration -- something very dear to

1 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, February 19, 1915, refer to the report of Mr. Murray's sub-committee. The full published report with related correspondence is available in the Files of the Department of Education.

his heart. It was acceptable -- perhaps even desirable -- for Jewish children to be educated in the Protestant schools, provided equable financial arrangements were made; and agreements had already been entered into whereby Jewish pupils were not subjected to Protestant religious instruction, nor penalized for absence from classes on their holy days. But the Protestant schools must remain under Protestant control, said Rexford; and he found legal basis for that argument in that clause of the British North America Act which stated that although education was left to Provincial jurisdiction, yet no legislative changes could be made which would "...prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law in the Province at the Union."¹

If for example the Provincial Legislature should pass an Act declaring that for educational purposes all English speaking Roman Catholics should be regarded as Protestants and should enjoy all the rights and privileges of Protestants in the Protestant school system of the Province -- no one would hesitate to say that such an act was a violation of the guarantees given to the Protestant minority in this Province at Confederation. But if the incorporation of a non-Protestant, but Christian element of the population is illegal, the incorporation of a non-Protestant and Hebrew element of the population with full rights and privileges as Protestants would appear to be a greater violation of the guarantees of Confederation.²

Rexford presented these arguments as convenor of a Joint Committee representing the Protestant communions of Montreal

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- 1 - The B.N.A. Act, 1867; Section 93 (a).
 - 2 - Elson I. Rexford, op.cit.; p.40.

at a meeting with Jewish representatives in May, 1917.

The Jewish population subsequently arranged for the matter to be taken to the Supreme Court of Canada and thence to the Privy Council. The latter judgment, handed down February 2, 1928, stated:

The contention of the appellants that the word "protestant" in the statutes must be construed as meaning non-catholic and so including Jews is declared to be quite untenable.¹
to be quite untenable.

At the same time it was declared that since the Protestant Committee had been created by post-union legislation, the Provincial Government could, if it so desired, alter that legislation to admit Jews to membership on the Protestant Committee. When the Jews urged such a step on the Government in 1930, at a special meeting of the Protestant Committee Rexford moved a resolution of protest.² The Government took no further action.

Another element in the Jewish question which caused Rexford some concern was the effect the presence of large numbers of these children in the schools -- nearly 40% in Montreal in 1922 -- was likely to have on Protestant religious instruction.³ As has been seen, he believed that

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- 1 - From the report of M. Eugene Lafleur, representing the Protestant Committee at the hearing. The Educational Record, Vol. XLVI No. 2, April-June 1928; pp. 121-124.
 - 2 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, January 3, 1930.
 - 3 - 12,432 pupils were Jewish, of a total enrolment of 31,654, according to pp. 5 and 7 of the Report of the Montreal Protestant Board of School Commissioners, 1921-22.

there was far too little moral and religious instruction in the classroom in any case; and with Jewish pupils in his class, the teacher was faced with a neat problem. "It is not fitting that the Jewish pupils should receive all of this instruction, and it is most undesirable that it should be given to a few Protestant pupils in the presence of a large number of Jewish pupils."¹ This may appear to be a relatively minor administrative difficulty. Surely the separation of Jew and Gentile would solve the problem. Yet on the grounds of democratic principle Rexford could not agree to permanent segregation in separate classes or schools, any more than could the Jewish community.² And he had had ample experience as a practising teacher and principal to realize that temporary reorganization of classes for the first half-hour every morning was likely to result in so much confusion that the programme would collapse of its own weight. This remained an unanswered problem for Rexford. The only compromise solution -- and one which he did not like to think about -- was a further "watering down" of the religious content in Moral and Religious Instruction.

Religious education, then, was one of the vital, continuing interests in Rexford's life. It was an over-riding

- 1 - Elson I. Rexford, op.cit.; p.41.
- 2 - Harold Ross, op.cit.; p.27.

consideration with him, whatever his immediate responsibilities happened to be. Bishop John Dixon considered it most fitting, in 1944, to name the new Montreal Diocesan venture in adult religious education "Rexford Layman's College". Rexford would surely have approved of the enterprise, and of its aims:

....To train adult parishioners, both men and women, in the content of the Christian religion.....and to provide instruction of a special nature for those who wish to equip themselves for service in various phases of the church's lay ministry....The church is not discharging its full educational responsibility through the Sunday Schools.....and no subject, particularly the Christian religion, can be completely mastered during a lifetime....¹

The College offers reading courses and evening classes, under a nine-man faculty. Rexford would have approved of its inter-denominational nature, too -- although its three-year diploma, Associate of Rexford College, is understandably reserved for those intending entrance into the lay ministry of the Church of England.

1 - Miss Florence A. Filer, Warden of Rexford Layman's College, since 1948 the extension department of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College; as reported in The Montreal Daily Star for September 17, 1948.

P A R T V

AN APPRECIATION OF REXFORD'S
CHARACTER AND ACHIEVEMENTS

This study of Rexford's lifework was undertaken with two purposes in mind. The first was to uncover any additional sidelights which might be revealed upon the course of educational development in Quebec. The evidence has been brought forward in the preceding pages; and with it as part of the text, or as parenthetical paragraphs or footnotes of interest for themselves, a number of comments and illustrations of the course of educational development in the Province. Rexford was actively associated with so many phases of that development and with so many boards and committees and institutions, during nearly seven decades from Confederation, that any discussion of his work must inevitably involve some discussion of those boards and committees and institutions as well.

The second purpose of the study was a consideration of the following questions:

- (a) What was the nature and extent of Rexford's contribution to education in the Province of Quebec?

- (b) To what extent was he a product of his times, and conversely to what extent did he help to shape those times?

It remains to attempt, in answer to those questions, an interpretation and assessment of the man's achievements, based on the available evidence.

What sort of man was he, personally? In appearance he was rather stocky, with powerful trunk seeming to lean forward somewhat from the hips, for all the world like Lloyd George. Like Lloyd George, too, he wore a beard -- although close-clipped; and he looked out through commanding eyes from a rather rounded face to quell many a refractory student. A teetotaler and non-smoker, there was that about his manner and bearing which seemed to add inches to his medium height: perhaps it was his usual smiling amiability -- what one man has called "something of the Apostle about him; as if you expected him to say, 'Yes, my son. Benedicite.'"¹ On the other hand, his hair was a reddish brown, and occasionally a fiery temper showed itself to match the hair. He was a practical man, and realized the practical value of compromise; yet he was also a man of some very strong beliefs, for which he was ready to do battle with all comers. He was very frank. You knew where you stood with Rexford. And despite the knee which had failed him when he was twenty-six, he was possessed of an amazing energy and physical vigour.

1 - Mr. Peter G. Clark, special officer of the Montreal Protestant Central School Board.

Consider the multitude of responsibilities the man took upon himself during no fewer than sixty-eight years from his his first appointment as a schoolmaster in Montreal to his retirement from the Protestant Committee: directing the Protestant side of the Department of Public Instruction, then the High Schools of Montreal, the Diocesan College, the Joint Theological Colleges, and Theology at Khaki University; serving in almost every conceivable capacity on the Protestant Committee, and so many of its sub-committees, and the Central Board of Examiners; acting as delegate, member, convenor, chairman of countless committees and meetings and boards of his Church of England; lecturing on the public platform; preparing Sunday School lessons for the International Committee; ranking high in the councils of the various teachers' associations; serving as a Governor's Fellow of McGill University, as a High Chief Ranger of the Foresters, a founder of the Canadian National League, and of the Quebec Religious Education Council: the list seems almost endless. And with it all he found time to raise a family of eight, three of whom became teachers, a fourth a school nurse.¹

What was his philosophy of life? Of education?

Perhaps no distinction should be made between the two, for to Rexford both were based on a firm belief in a practical

1 - Actually eight Rexfords have taught in Quebec's schools: Elson, his mother, his sister Eva and brother Orrin, and his son Orrin B. and daughters Eva, Hazel and Marguerite. Vide Appendix H.

Christianity. "He had been brought up in the old evangelical tradition and he never saw any reason to depart from it. That reading of the gospel and of church history satisfied him, mind and soul," said The Montreal Churchman.¹ He believed in the power of prayer: "The chapel is the determining factor in the life of the college," he wrote in reviewing his work at the Diocesan College.² And throughout his years on the Protestant Committee he was constantly reminding his confreres that "....The main object of our public school system is the formation of Christian character."³ Rexford also believed firmly that "....The future welfare of a people depends largely on the character of its teachers..... well-trained teachers who have a lively and lasting sense of their responsibility....to God and to man...."⁴ -- which accounts for his preoccupation with securing, training and holding the best possible teachers. Again, he believed it was his calling to serve God through the child in the community. All his work was aimed in that direction. Even at the Diocesan College he was more concerned with training leaders of children than leaders of men: for today's boy is tomorrow's man. And he was particularly concerned about

- 1 - Editorial, November, 1936. This was the monthly magazine of the Diocese of Montreal.
- 2 - His last report to Synod as principal of the College. Proceedings of the 69th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1928; p.112.
- 3 - Minutes of the Protestant Committee, May 7, 1926.
- 4 - Rexford's report as chairman of the Diocesan Committee on Education. Proceedings of the 36th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1896; p.103.

young children -- elementary schools rather than superior schools.

In the light of such a philosophy, then, and all those years of activity, precisely what was the nature and extent of Rexford's contribution to education in Quebec? Perhaps the solid core of that contribution is to be found in the very length and breadth of his association with such a variety of educational enterprises. Scarcely an issue of any significance to Protestant education in the Province was decided, through nearly seven decades, without Rexford at least being present in the deliberating body. And those were vital, formative years. James Truslow Adams suggests that there have been more crucial changes of an economic and social nature in this last three-quarters of a century than in any other seventy-five year period in the history of the western world.¹ This applies with special significance to Canada, because during those years Canada was coming of age as a nation.

However, aside from Rexford's general pervading influence which blanketed the developing Protestant educational system in Quebec for so many years, mention should be made of certain specific contributions which he made:

(a) Rexford was an "organizer" and a "systematizer".

One of the delights he found in administration was to be faced with a muddled and difficult situation, and to proceed to

1 - James Truslow Adams, Frontiers of American Culture; pp. 99-108.

square it away -- to start the wheels turning in the right direction and on solid ground. A good example is his work as English Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction. When he succeeded to the post every Protestant school -- or at best every school municipality -- was in effect a law unto itself. There was no compulsory -- nor even recommended -- course of study, no general adherence to a series of prescribed texts. External examinations were unknown: in fact, many schools did not use written examinations of any type. Standards of teaching and of teacher certification were generally low. There were few superior schools, and no inspection for those few. There was no collected body of regulations for the guidance of inspectors, boards, teachers or pupils. Then came Rexford, the organizer and systematizer. By the end of his nine years at Quebec schools were uniformly classified, following a standard course of study and using authorized textbooks. The in-service teachers were somewhat better qualified, and aspiring teachers were more carefully screened before certification. The Regulations of the Protestant Committee, along with the School Law, were revised and codified for easy reference. In short, a "system" -- substantially the present system -- was set in operation, under inspection and Provincial examinations, with the English Secretary of the Department the recognized centre of activities, exercising a measure of control over the whole.

(b) Rexford was a constant champion of rural education.

"A sound education should be the heritage of every child," he wrote to Parmelee. "No child should be condemned to illiteracy just because he chanced to be born on a farm."¹ And much of what Rexford did -- towards training and status of teachers, Educational Campaigns, consolidation, Minimum Salary Grants, and the like -- much of that was done with an eye to the struggling rural school. Even his work of "organizing" and "systematizing" as English Secretary was directed largely toward rural education, inasmuch as the city schools were already better established and remained somewhat independent of Provincial control.

It would be very difficult to assess the precise value of Rexford's work in the cause of rural education. He was, after all, only one factor in its development -- a development which is still going on. But he was a constant factor for fifty-five years or more; and no one faced the problems of rural education with greater zeal. One of his aims was so to arrange the rural school programme that pupils might be led to see the place of agriculture in the world, and some of the advantages of rural life. Thus he was a constant member of the Honorable Sydney A. Fisher's agriculture sub-committee of the Protestant Committee, and was an original trustee of the

1 - Letter Rexford to Parmelee, dated September, 1922. Files of the Department of Education, Quebec; Dossier 450/22.

Fisher Trust Fund for the encouragement of education and agriculture in his native Brome County.¹ "No greater friend of the rural school has ever lived in the Province," wrote Inspector H.D.Wells.²

(c) The training of teachers. Rexford believed that no school system -- day school or Sunday School -- could be any better than its teachers. His first lasting victory in this respect was the setting up of a Central Board of Examiners in 1888, which alone could certify teachers, in place of the previous system of local boards which had arranged the granting of certificates practically at will. Rexford himself served on that Board for thirty-six years. He was also a member of practically every sub-committee of the Protestant Committee dealing with professional training and teacher status throughout the years; so that his hand is visible in

- 1 - When Fisher died in 1921, he left just under \$100,000. as a fund for the encouragement of education and agriculture in Brome County. Rexford served as one of the four trustees until his death, and his son Orrin is presently a trustee. The income from the Fund is expended annually by the Trustees, on such projects as: scholarships to secondary schools, and to the Macdonald Faculty of Agriculture and School for Teachers; grants in aid of school fairs, and to encourage various types of farming from time to time, especially among boys and girls; yearly essay contests for both teachers and pupils; bursaries for teachers taking further professional training; grants to local school boards towards maintenance and new building costs. The relatively high standards of Protestant schools in Brome County is ascribed in part at least to the operations of the Fisher Trust Fund. See H.D.Wells, "Brome County's Legacy", The Educational Record, Vol.LVI No.5, July-September, 1937; pp.182f.
- 2 - H.D.Wells, op.cit.; p.182.

much of both the policy and practice of teacher training in Quebec today. Of course in actual fact, try as one would, it has always been necessary -- if certain schools were to open at all -- to allow varying numbers of unqualified personnel to teach. Rexford attacked this every way he could: public meetings, Minimum Salary Grants, bursaries. The problem still remains, in Quebec as elsewhere; but Rexford's name must be connected with almost every advance made on that problem in Quebec for fifty years from the day he first addressed the P.A.P.T. convention in 1880 on "Examinations of Teachers".

(d) Religious Education. This was the foundation of all education for Rexford. The General Board of Religious Education of the Church of England in Canada, with the local Diocesan Boards, stands as an institutional monument to his work in the Church. In the schools he never let an opportunity pass to strengthen the moral and religious phase of the programme: whether it was writing for the Record, preparing successive courses of study, conducting a school assembly or a teachers' institute, visiting a local board, or debating in the Protestant Committee. It is impossible to determine accurately the extent of his influence on the schools in this respect. Real gains in religion and morals are likely to be intangible and not readily measurable in any case. They will be made in the mind and spirit of an individual or a series

of individuals -- who cannot readily be placed under a microscope and dissected.

One of the greatest disappointments in Rexford's life was his failure, during that all-out drive in the Protestant Committee from 1918 to 1922, to institute an intensified programme of religious education in the schools. What his opponents were advocating was actually a system of common, non-sectarian schools: Protestant in name only, as distinct from Roman Catholic. Rexford could never countenance such a point of view. He could not believe that Christianity should be allowed simply to seep into the schools without conscious teaching; that the schools will be Christian insofar as the society in which they exist is a Christian society. He fought long and hard -- and always vocally -- to maintain and extend the Protestant Christian nature of administration and teaching on which Quebec's Protestant school system is legally based. And although much latitude is allowed the individual teacher, the Regulations of the Protestant Committee, as formulated during Rexford's term as English Secretary, still prescribe opening exercises each morning to include scripture readings, the Lord's Prayer, and moral and religious instruction.

Although Rexford was a staunch Anglican, he continually sought practical co-operation in religious education between the various Protestant denominations, and he never used his considerable influence in the Protestant Committee to favour

the Church of England over other Protestant denominations.¹
 In Bishop Farthing's charge to the Diocesan Synod in 1928,
 it was said of Rexford on his retirement from the Diocesan
 College:

He was the outstanding educationalist of our church in
 Canada.....As head of our Diocesan College he has also
 influenced the lives of many of our clergy.....We realize
 that a Man has lived and worked among us: one who holds
 our admiration and esteem for what he is and for what
 he has accomplished.²

Such, then, were Rexford's major contributions to
 education in Quebec: in terms of religious education, the
 training of teachers, and rural education; and in terms of
 organizing the functioning of a central authority within the
 Protestant schools of the Province. Moreover he was actively
 associated with so many phases of Protestant education over
 such a long period that scarcely a single issue of educational
 importance in the Province escaped his attention.

To what extent was he a product of his times, and to
 what extent did he help to shape those times?

No conclusive answer can be made to that question, of
 course, intriguing as speculation may be. The underlying
 philosophical problem, as to whether man does shape his destiny

1 - A case in point is the resolutions forwarded to the
 Protestant Committee by the Diocesan Synod in 1916, urging
 the retention of the system whereby clergymen took the
 religious education periods of teachers in training who
 were members of their respective denominations. Canon
Rexford, Chairman of the Synod committee, in wording the
 resolutions respectfully requested the Protestant Committee
 "...to secure, in case of any radical change in the present
 arrangements...to the Church of England...those rights and
 privileges...enjoyed since the inauguration of teacher
 training in this Province." But Rexford the member of the
 Protestant Committee refused to countenance any such
 special concession. See Minutes of the Protestant Committee,
 May 19, 1916.

or is merely a child of that destiny, has little place in this thesis. But primarily, Rexford was a practical man of action, not a scholar or an intellectual. And although he welcomed new ideas, he was not an out-and-out reformer, and was loath to accept something simply because it was new. True, he was a founder: of teachers' associations, of administrative processes in the school system, of Boards of Examiners; but he was hardly a founder in the sense of originator. Rather did he tend to follow a course of selective borrowing from what had proven successful elsewhere. Most of his ideas came to him not by a process of inductive reasoning in advance of his time, but rather from association with other educationists and familiarity with what was being done elsewhere. Indeed it is there that his particular genius lay: in his ability to seize upon an idea, and then develop the practical machinery necessary to put it into effect. In this sense he was an educational administrator, not an educational philosopher.

On the other hand Rexford was never content to sit back and await developments. In some ways he was a very forward-looking person. With Ryerson he believed that the people generally should be made aware of the aims and activities of the schools. He brought to the fore the need for improved administrative and educational practices in the schools. His notions about better pay for better teachers, the value of professional training as opposed to mere mastery of a specific

2 - (from previous page) Proceedings of the 69th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, 1928; p.32.

subject to be taught, and of a teacher's certificate acceptable throughout all the Provinces of Canada -- these are ideas which have not been accepted even yet in some quarters. In some ways, too, perhaps Rexford was neither ahead nor behind, but simply out of step with his times. For instance, he was always attempting to foster more formal religious instruction in the Protestant schools than those schools were ready to accept.

His was not the stature of an Egerton Ryerson, nor of a Horace Mann. Indeed, it is fair to say that many of his accomplishments were "in the air" in any case, and might well have eventuated without him. However, as Parmelee said, "Rexford's reputation is not impaired by the reflection that he had great opportunities for making it, for...he was always equal to those opportunities."¹ And sometimes he made his own opportunities as well.

Probably Elson Irving Rexford was not really a great man, as the world counts greatness; what he was in fact was a talented, amiable, and enormously energetic man. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why he was able to live a happy as

1 - G.W.Parmelee, "English Education"; Shortt and Doughty, ed., Canada and Its Provinces; Vol.XVI p.464.

well as a busy and successful life. One is struck by the unusual extent of his interests and accomplishments: from ungraded rural elementary school to theological college, from hints on managing a single class to the organization for directing a province-wide school system; and always with the individual child and his Christian character in mind. Look almost anywhere in Quebec's Protestant education system today -- or in the religious education organization of the Church of England in Canada -- and something of Rexford's contribution will be there.

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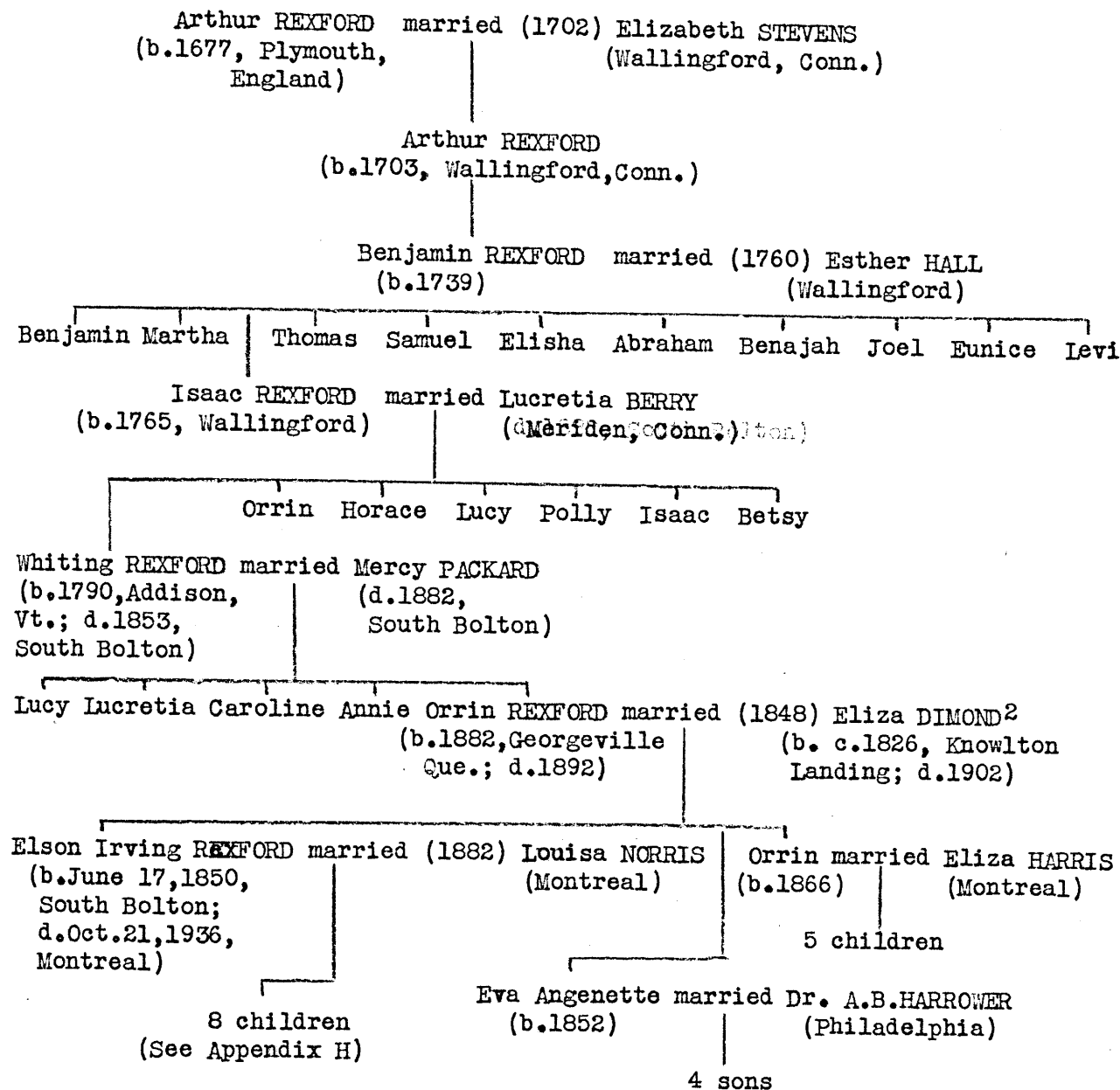
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Appendix A

REXFORD FAMILY TREE 1NOTES

- (1) The Rexford (Rexfjord) family appears to have sprung from the area of Ramsdale on the South-West coast of Norway. (Rex, or Rikkes = a hero, a mighty one; fjord = a bay or lake). The first traces of the family in England are dated 1615, near Plymouth. The registers of New Haven, Conn., show Arthur Rexford of Devonshire, master of the sloop Rose, was married September 3, 1702, to Elizabeth Stevens of Wallingford.

- (2) Eliza Dimond, Dr. Rexford's mother, was the eighth child of John Dimond and granddaughter of Reuben Dimond, who came from Ipping, N.H., about 1800 as one of the early settlers of Brome County.
- (3) Information tabulated on the preceding page has been taken from Dr. Rexford's MS., A Rexford Family, 1794-1902; pp.1-8 et passim; Reverend E.M.Taylor, History of Brome County, Quebec; pp. 256-264; and T. Lee Quimby's column, "Forests and Clearings", in the Stanstead Journal for July 19, 1945.

Appendix B

"A FEW THOUGHTS ON OUR DISTRICT SCHOOL SYSTEM"¹

I don't propose to enter into any elaborate discussion of this subject but I wish to bring before this convention a few commonplace thoughts which must occur to every one who takes the trouble to examine into the common school system as it exists in many parts of our Eastern Townships. By this means I desire to bring clearly before those of influence amongst us some of the great and unnecessary evils that exist in the common school system and to show the easy manner in which some of them may be removed. I feel a pride in being able to claim the Eastern Townships as my home. I take a deep interest in all that concerns their moral, intellectual and material progress. As I look back over a period of fifteen years to the time when I was a school boy in one of those typical red school houses with which these Townships are fairly supplied I see that great changes have taken place. The country has made great progress in almost every direction. I have but to notice the great change in farming implements and house furniture to see what rapid progress the country has made. We see machines employed on every hand, where none were to be found fifteen years ago. And machines then in use have been superseded by others more serviceable and less expensive. I can remember using a mowing machine that required two heavy horses and a strong man to manage it and a horse rake that required a strong man and boy with a good horse to make it do very indifferent work. Now a girl can manage a mowing machine and a still younger one do the work of five men with a horse rake for amusement. And if we take a look into our farm houses we find the same improvement: sewing machines, harmoniums and the latest new churn are now numbered among the necessities of life.

In fact if Rip Van Winkle had slept his twenty years' sleep on one of the beautiful hills of our Townships and should make his appearance among us today I am sure he would be more astonished at the changes that have taken place than he was when he descended from the Kaatskill Mountains.

One familiar object, however, would now strike the eye of him who fell asleep twenty years ago. Rip Van Winkle would

1 - Paper read by Rexford at Bedford, October 24, 1878, at the P.A.P.T. Fifteenth Annual Convention. The original MS. is in the possession of Orrin B. Rexford. See text, p.29.

at once recognize an old friend in the Red School House. The exterior is the same; and if he entered he would find the interior a little more dingy, but the furniture is much the same. There is the same stove with legs spread out as though determined never to budge an inch, the same water pail, the tin cups, the woodbox, the broom, the blackboard, the lump of chalk - these would all be familiar objects to the Rip Van Winkle of twenty years ago. And this is the apparatus with which the teacher of the Townships is expected to work today. Our farmers have been very active in the improvement of our agricultural implements; they have spent their time and money liberally in promoting the railway interests of the country. But they have yet to learn that the material prosperity of the country can best be promoted by a thorough and efficient system of common schools where their children can be thoroughly grounded in the elements of an English education. Much might be said in this connection about the careless manner in which teachers are engaged. About the little trouble that is taken to ascertain the qualifications of a teacher. A contrast might be drawn between the care that is taken to secure a well-qualified man to mould the farmer's cheese in the factory and the indifference that is shown in engaging a teacher to mould the brains of an immortal child in the school. But I pass at once to consider some of the unnecessary evils of our system.

The first one that I will mention is the great variety of text books in use in our district schools. This is a difficulty which meets a teacher on the first day of her school work and which annoys her all through the term. The number of arithmetics, geographies, grammar and reading books that are placed in her hands on the first day of school would form a very respectable reference library on these different subjects. And in this library the teacher would have the benefit not only of the combined wisdom of Canadian authors but also of that of our American cousins. This great variety of text books is the natural result of the present system in which the choice of text book lies wholly with the parents. The parent decides that his child shall study arithmetic, reading and geography. He furnishes his child with these text books from the nearest store, or they are cast-off books of an older pupil. And when the first day of school arrives the child is sent to the teacher thus equipped. The books may sometimes happen to be like those of some other child. Many times they are quite different, and the child is thus constituted a class by himself. If the teacher protests, the parent declares that the books are good enough for his child and that he is not going to throw away money for new books.

Think now of the Herculean task that lies before the teacher placed in such a position, a task which must baffle the powers of the most experienced organizer. I think that it will be admitted by all that the greatest difficulty a

district school teacher meets in conducting her work is the variety of attainment that exists among her pupils; that in her small school of twenty-five pupils she has primary classes, intermediate classes, senior classes and advanced classes; that in almost every subject she teaches she is obliged to divide her twenty-five pupils into four or five classes. This is what I would call one of the necessary evils of our district schools. It is no doubt a great inconvenience and will always mar the efficiency of these schools compared with the graded schools of thickly populated districts. But when we remember that the four or five classes into which it is necessary to divide a school in a particular subject on account of variety of attainment are generally broken up into seven or eight on account of variety of text books, we can see how great this evil is and how seriously it interferes with the efficiency and success of the schools. It paralyzes the teacher's efforts and ties her hands. It magnifies the greatest difficulty she has to contend with by increasing her already too numerous classes. Class teaching is in many instances turned into individual teaching, and the teacher not only finds it very difficult to overtake her work even during the long six hours but she is unable to use the spirit of emulation and the sympathy of numbers which are very valuable in the instruction of the young. If parents saw that by placing a strange reading book in the hands of their children they were not only increasing the work of the teacher but also were depriving their child of much of the teacher's attention that he would otherwise receive I think there would be less trouble about variety in our text books. For it does seem to me that by the present arrangement children receive in many cases one-half of the teacher's attention they would receive if a uniform series were used in our schools.

But again this system brings into our schools inferior books, books that are quite behind the age; and as a rule these are more expensive than the improved text books which can be furnished at a low rate on account of their wide circulation. And this is a very important point in our ungraded schools where the pupil has to spend more time with the text book and less with the teacher. Again it very often happens that the child comes to school bearing in his hand a text book which is entirely unsuited to his years and attainment. And yet the teacher is expected to keep up the interest of her children and to bring them on under all these difficulties: a task which I for one should be very sorry to undertake.

It must be evident to all that this is not a necessary evil; that it would be easy to secure a uniform series of text books if only the proper machinery were set in order to direct the parents' choice. To whom, then, are we to look to remedy this evil? Can we expect that the parents themselves will bring this about? How are they going to agree? Each

parent will naturally want to keep the particular set that his children are using. And who among them is to decide upon the relative merits of the different books in actual use? And I do not think that the present attitude of parents towards educational matters gives us reason to hope that they are likely to meet together and decide upon a uniform series of text books. We cannot look to the parents for reform in this matter.

Can we look to the teachers to decide the question? If they taught for any length of time in one place they might exert a powerful influence over the parents to bring about a uniform use in their own schools. But when they change every term as at present it is evident that they can do very little to settle the question. If they attempt to make any change they are at once accused of taking too much upon themselves and of putting the parents to needless expense. And the parents are confirmed in their opinion when the next teacher condemns the books recommended by her predecessor.

It is to the inspectors, I think, that we should look to take the lead in this reform. I am confident that if the inspector for this district, for example, would enter heartily into this question he could within two years secure a uniform series of text books for our schools and thus greatly enhance the efficiency of the school work in the district. The inspector is looked to by the people as a man of great experience, of good judgment, and of influence in educational matters. Any suggestions therefore that came strongly recommended by him would have great influence. Let the inspector choose out from the authorized titles a list of books which he considers best for the schools in his district. Let this be placed in the hands of school boards, teachers and pupils, endorsed by the strong recommendation of the inspector. Let the parents be called together at two or three points in each township and there let the inspector point out to the people the great advantages to be gained by having a uniform system: advantages to parent, to pupil, to teacher - and I am sure that when the matter is clearly laid before them by one in authority they will at once cooperate in bringing about a state of things that so materially benefits themselves. And in passing I may state that I think these gatherings might prove useful in many ways. For I think that we should consider it part of an inspector's duty to cultivate a healthy public interest in school matters and thus lead the parents to do their duty. For it seems to me that there are many duties which the parents owe to their school teacher which they do not recognize instinctively. They require plain and definite instruction upon many points in order that they may cooperate with the teacher in securing the efficiency of the school. This instruction they would gladly receive from the lips of the school inspector.

I appeal therefore to our inspectors, because they can carry out this reform better than any one else; I appeal to the teachers to interest themselves in removing one of the most unpleasant features of their work; I appeal to parents who are indifferent, because they are thus depriving their children of a large part of their teacher's attention which they might otherwise enjoy. I appeal to those parents who are willing to accommodate themselves to a uniform series because those who are not are destroying the efficiency of the school and injuring the children of others.

The next point that I wish to refer to in our district school system is the frequent change of teachers that prevails. This is also an unnecessary evil that must sadly interfere with the success of any school system. In view of the small inducements that are held out to school teachers we must expect few young people to adopt this as their life's work. Young men will use this profession as a stepping stone to something more lucrative. But by spending their fresh energies in this direction they confer as well as receive a benefit. Young women spend a few years in training the children of others and then leave this for the highest type of life - that of training one's own children. A certain amount of change is necessary under the present circumstances. But the present custom of changing the teacher every term is simply outrageous. I think you will agree with me that there is no more effective means of retarding the progress of scholars than that of placing them in strange hands every three or four months. This custom arose, I suppose, in the days of the Hoosier Schoolmaster, when it required the muscular powers of a man to control the brute force which manifested itself in our winter schools. A woman might teach the little ones in the summer school but a man must be had for the boys in winter. This distinction has now practically passed away. We have become more civilized. Throwing boys through the window is not now a necessary part of school work and therefore young women are engaged for the winter. Or shall I say that young women have proved themselves better teachers than men and therefore they are now engaged for both terms of the school year? But I think I am giving a true impression of the present state of things when I say that as a general rule the schools have a different teacher every term. For a teacher to continue two, three or four terms in a school is the exception and at once becomes the subject of remark.

This is sufficient to ruin the efficiency of any school. But there are certain peculiarities in our district schools that make these frequent changes doubly injurious. The evil of these frequent changes arises from the fact that the new teacher cannot grasp at once the exact mental state of his different pupils. He cannot discover for some time just what

the child knows, what work he has really mastered, and what he can undertake next with the most profit. The new teacher has to take the child on trial at first; and as he teaches him in the different subjects points come up continually which show his ignorance or knowledge until the child's real attainments are clearly before the teacher. While the teacher is getting fully acquainted with the child and the child is becoming fully acquainted with the peculiarities of the teacher two, three or four weeks pass by, during which both pupil and teacher have been working at a great disadvantage. This difficulty would not be so great, nor the delay so serious, if the teacher had but one class in a single subject. But when there are three or four different classes in each of the several subjects the difficulty becomes much greater and the delay that is caused by these frequent changes of teachers becomes a very serious matter in view of the short school year of seven or eight months.

Another reason why it is difficult for the teacher to discover the exact standing of the pupils is that each of the two terms into which the school year is divided is preceded by at least two months' holiday. The new teacher therefore does not receive the pupils with their minds fresh from the instruction of the former teacher, but after they have [lain fallow (?)] for two months. If it be difficult to discover what a child knows at any time, it is ten times more difficult to discover the attainments of a child who has grown rusty during two months' absence from school. This, of course, magnifies the evil of these frequent changes.

Again there are no records in connection with these schools which the incoming teacher may consult to assist him in ascertaining the standing of the pupils and in organizing the school. In most well ordered schools written examinations are held once or twice a year in all the subjects, and the pupils are classified according to the answering in these examinations. These periodical examinations form not only a test of the success of the teacher's efforts and of the pupil's progress, but the registered results form a valuable book of evidence particularly to the new teacher taking charge of a school. Now written examinations are entirely unknown in our district schools. The idea of closing up the term by a written examination in each subject to test the work and progress of each pupil during the term has yet to be introduced into our district schools. The new teacher finds no record from which he can learn anything concerning the state of the school that he is to take charge of.

From these various reasons it is evident that this frequent change of teachers tends in an especial manner to interfere with the success of these schools.

But the remedy for this evil is not a difficult one. Let the board of commissioners resolve that they will not engage a teacher for less than a year. Let them first recognize the importance of the question and then let them use their influence to keep for as long a period as possible the same teacher in the same school. Let them indicate that they look with suspicion upon those teachers who move about from school to school. In their appointments let them show a preference for those teachers who have taught several terms in the same school. Let them make a slight difference in salary in favour of those who continue in the same school from term to term. If the regular salary can be ten dollars per month let the board offer nine dollars for the first term, ten for the second and third and eleven for subsequent terms if a teacher continues in the same school. If these simple means were faithfully adopted I feel confident that these changes would in a very short time be reduced to their minimum number. But parents and boards of commissioners must first be brought to a due appreciation of the loss which they and their children sustain in these frequent changes.

Another remedy which would counteract the evil in great measure is regular written examinations. If written examinations were held at the close of each term and a permanent record made of the questions and of the percentage of marks in each subject it would prove of very great value to the teacher in organizing the school. By comparing the percentage of marks taken by a pupil in any subject with the questions set in that subject the teacher would have at once a correct idea of the standing of the pupil in that particular branch. The weak points and the strong points of every pupil would thus be brought clearly before her mind at the very outset of her work.

The present division of the school year into two terms separated by long intervals of vacation tends to perpetuate these frequent changes. Those who divided the terms in this way seem to have thought that extremes of temperature were most favourable to mental activity. For the coldest days of winter and the warmest days of summer form the greater part of the school year, while the temperate weather of spring and autumn is set apart for recreation. If the two terms were brought nearer to one another and made to continue from October until June with slight interruptions it would tend to check these frequent changes of teachers, and improve the efficiency of the schools in every way. I believe that if these simple suggestions I have made were faithfully acted upon they would reduce these changes to the minimum number and counteract in a real measure their evil results.

I have referred to written examinations as one of these counteracting remedies. I desire now to point out the great

value of written examinations as part of the regular school work. I regard the absence of written examinations as one of the most serious defects of our district schools. It seems to me there can be no two opinions about the value of written examinations as a means of education and training. They not only afford a necessary test of the amount and thoroughness of the work done in a given time, says Dr. McLellan in his late address, but they also possess a high educative value. Oral examination is not enough; there must be frequent written examination if the best results are to be secured. Examinations represent the active use of the faculties as contrasted with that passive use which too often resolves itself into letting things come in at one ear and go out at the other. Examinations excite emulation in the active and able; they touch the pride even of those who do not love knowledge much but still do not like to write themselves down as absolute blockheads; and these examinations are themselves an exercise in English composition, in the control of thoughts and in the useful employment of knowledge. It is not merely that which goes into the eyes and ears of a student which educates him: it is that which comes out of him. No one certainly knows himself master of a subject until he has reproduced it. In short, written examinations give a thorough mastery of the subject, prevent the student from sinking into an attitude of mere passive receptivity, educate to logical habits of thought, and clearness and precision of expression. And yet our district schools know nothing of this means of training which the best educationalists prize so highly. And they would prove very valuable as fresh incentives to study in our country schools where the spirit of emulation is not very strong. Apart from their educative value these examinations form a test in connection with these schools which cannot be over-estimated. We often hear it said that teachers hold a most responsible position, yet it seems to me that teachers of these schools are the most irresponsible class of workers that can be found in the country. Their engagement in the great majority of cases consists merely of a verbal agreement. They are not usually engaged for any period recognized by law. They take charge of a school: no one knows anything of the state of the school or the attainment of the pupils. They carry on their work for four months without any regulations or standard of attainment to guide them. At the close of the term they quietly leave their work. There is no test of work done, no test of progress, no taking stock. No one knows whether the pupils have made fair progress or whether they are in the same position or in a worse position than at the beginning of the term; and no one inquires. The teacher leaves the school never to return; another teacher takes the work at the beginning of another term and works on in the same irresponsible manner. Is it not true then that the teachers in district schools hold most responsible positions and yet are responsible practically to no one for the manner in which they discharge their duties?

Now a regular series of written examinations introduced .

at the end of each term would form a general test of the amount and thoroughness of the work done, and the most successful teachers would at once be marked off by the results of their work which these written examinations would bring out. In this way credit could be given with some reference to the results of a teacher's work, and these periodical tests would prove beneficial to even the most faithful and conscientious teachers. For we all require these little stimulating influences to keep our shoulder up to the collar the year in and the year out. Such examinations would furnish the means for comparing the efficiency of schools in the different townships and in different parts of the same township. The desire to have one's pupils pass a creditable examination as compared with other schools would form a strong incentive to energetic work on the part of the teacher, and a wider field for competition would be brought before pupils of small schools.

It may be thought that I have overstated this case, as there are inspectors who look after the teacher's work. I submit, however, that the present method of inspection has practically no effect upon the teachers nor upon the schools. The inspector visits a school for one or two hours during a term. He records his visit in the register kept in the school for that purpose. But if you read between the lines you will find this statement, "I left the school just as I found it, without making any effort to improve it." I maintain that such a plan of inspection has no beneficial influence upon pupil or teacher. I have great faith in the office of the school inspector. I believe that it is by means of these officers that the present unsatisfactory state of our district schools can best be improved. But they must take a broader view of their responsibilities before they can do this. For I feel bound to say that after looking over the past ten years of the history of our district schools I can see no practical results of the present system of inspection.

There are many other points in these schools to which I would like to direct the attention of the convention; but I fear that I have occupied too much of your valuable time already: not more time than I am persuaded the subject demands, but more perhaps than I should have given it.

Appendix C

CIRCULAR OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
ADDRESSED TO ALL PROTESTANT SCHOOL BOARDS¹

Department of Public Instruction

Quebec, 3rd April, 1883.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to direct your special attention to the following instructions concerning the management of the schools under your control:

I. Boarding around. It is the opinion of all persons acquainted with the circumstances and requirements of our District Schools that the time has come when the custom of requiring teachers to board from house to house among the inhabitants of a district should be discontinued in those municipalities in which it still prevails. This custom is injurious to the health of the teacher; it renders the discipline of the school more difficult, especially for young teachers, by giving rise to undue familiarity between teachers and their pupils; it is a fruitful source of neighbourhood quarrels; it deprives the teacher of the quiet retirement requisite for the study and preparation of school work, which is so necessary for successful teaching; and therefore this custom must seriously interfere with the efficiency of the schools. You are therefore requested to provide that each teacher of your municipality shall, for the future, have a permanent boarding place; and you are hereby notified that no grant will be paid to a municipality where this custom of boarding around prevails, after the first of January, 1884.

II. A uniform series of authorized text-books. It is the duty of School Commissioners and Trustees to provide that no other books be used in the schools under their jurisdiction than those approved and recommended by the Committees of the Council of Public Instruction. Moreover, since two or more text-books have been authorized for each of the elementary

1 - Rexford's first official attempt to lay down regulations for the conduct of rural schools. See text, p.44.

subjects of the School Course, it frequently happens that the pupils of a school belonging to the same grade are provided with different text-books on the same subject, to the great inconvenience of the teacher and to the injury of the school. It is evident therefore that in order to secure a uniformity of books in each school of a municipality it is necessary for the School Commissioners or Trustees to select from the list of authorized books a list of books for the use of their respective municipalities, naming only one book or one graded set of books in each subject. You are therefore requested to prepare, at your earliest convenience, a list of books for use in the schools of your municipality and to give notice that you will insist on the exclusive use of the books of the list after the first of July, 1884. The school inspector for your municipality will be able to give you valuable assistance in the preparation of this list, a copy of which you are requested to forward to this Department not later than the first of July next.

As soon as your list has been prepared, it should be published in the local papers for the benefit of parents and local booksellers and your teachers should be instructed, when furnished with the list, to admit NO NEW text-book not mentioned in the list from their schools after the first of July, 1884; for the payment of the grant to your municipality will depend upon the prepared list being rigidly adhered to.

III. Course of study. It has long been felt by those intimately acquainted with our elementary schools that a course of study should be provided for the guidance of the elementary teachers, a large number of whom are untrained and inexperienced. Such a course of study has at length been prepared, copies of which are enclosed herewith for your consideration. It is not proposed to lay down an exact limit table which the elementary schools are to work out in a given time. The great difference in the composition and circumstances of the schools forbids this. The aim has been to provide a plan of studies which will be a general guide to teachers in carrying out their work. This course of study will assist the teacher in classifying the school; it will indicate the work which should be taken up by each class; it will secure the symmetrical training of the pupils; it provides that a reasonable amount of work shall be done in each of the subjects on the school course, and it will do away, in a great measure, with those disputes that arise so frequently between the teacher on the one hand and the pupil or parents on the other, concerning the particular subjects which a pupil is to study.

You are therefore strongly urged to adopt this course of study for the schools of your municipality, if a similar course is not already in use.

When notice is sent to this Department that the course of study has been adopted by your municipality a sufficient number of copies will be forwarded to supply all your schools.

IV. The engagement of teachers. It is very important in the interests of the schools that the law which provides that teachers shall be engaged by the School Commissioners and by written contract should be strictly adhered to.

The School Commissioners and Trustees can in this way prevent many district quarrels which arise when the teacher is selected by the local manager; they can place the more experienced teachers in the larger and more difficult schools and can give the younger teachers the smaller and less trying schools. They can encourage the efficient teachers, having the larger and more difficult schools under their care, by giving them a little larger salary than is given to the teachers just entering upon their work, and, in this way, they can promote the general interests of the schools of the community. A still more important point is to retain the same teacher throughout the school year. There is probably no custom which interferes so much with the efficiency of our schools as the custom of engaging teachers for a term of three or four months, thereby placing the children under the care of two different teachers during a short school year.

The practice is not only injurious but it is unnecessary and prevails only in certain portions of the Eastern Townships.

It wastes the time and retards the progress of the pupils; it tends to make the teachers careless about the results of their work; it makes it impossible to ascertain whether a teacher is doing good work and it prevents the teacher from carrying out any definite plan of work in the school.

All the French Schools of the Province engage their teachers by the school year. Protestant Superior Schools make yearly engagements with their teachers, and the best of the Protestant Elementary Schools follow the same plan. I cannot impress upon you too strongly the importance of engaging your teachers for the number of months that your schools are to continue in session during the school year. I desire to remind you, in this connection, that when teachers are engaged for a number of months, it is the calendar month that is understood and that the law provides that every Saturday shall be a school holiday. You are requested to attend to these points in the engagement of your teachers.

V. The school year. The length of teachers' engagements is very intimately connected with another important question, viz: the arrangement of the terms of the school year.

The custom of dividing the school year into two distinct portions forming Summer and Winter Schools separated by long holidays certainly interferes with the progress of the pupils and should be avoided whenever it is possible to do so. A continuous school year, with such short holidays as

the Commissioners and Trustees may appoint (beginning for example about the first of September) has very great advantages over the plan of Summer and Winter terms. In the first place the younger children would be able to attend during September and October and during the pleasant days of the winter months and would derive as much benefit as they do attending a summer term, when we take into account the little that is learned during the hot weather of July and August, when most of these Summer Schools are in session. The school inspectors report that the work done in the Summer Schools, during the hot weather of July and August, is worth very little.

The older children who are retained at home in the summer would get five or six months' school instead of three or four, as is the case of the winter term, and in that time would overtake nearly double the work done in the short winter term.

The practice of having the school year consist of one school session with short holidays prevails in the French Schools of the Province, in the Protestant Superior Schools, and in a large portion of the best Protestant Elementary Schools. And these elementary schools are manifestly superior to those which have summer and winter terms.

You are therefore strongly recommended to make your school year consist of one session with short holidays under the same teacher. This can be done at once in all the village schools and thickly settled districts, and should be carried out in all the districts of a municipality, an exception being made when the peculiar circumstances of a district make it undesirable.

VI. Teachers' meetings. As the great majority of the teachers of the elementary schools in the Province have received no professional training, I have directed the inspectors to hold, at least once a year, a meeting of teachers in each county, for the purposes of considering the difficulties, defects and desirable improvements of the schools of the county, and also for the purpose of illustrating by means of Papers, Model Lessons, etc., the best methods of teaching and organizing elementary schools. As the object of these meetings is to make the teachers more efficient and therefore more valuable to the municipality, it is the duty of the School Commissioners to encourage their teachers to attend these meetings and to do all they can to promote their success.

VII. The Educational Record. This magazine, which is issued every two months, is provided free of charge to every

Protestant School in the Province. It contains all the official information connected with Protestant education in the Province, together with original and selected articles upon the practical work of the school room. As the teachers of the elementary schools change frequently from school to school, great difficulty has been experienced in distributing this magazine among them. It is now addressed to each school or school district instead of to the individual teacher. Teachers should, therefore, enquire for the Record at their respective post-offices, in the name of the school or school district where they are at work, and not in their own names. If, upon careful enquiry at the neighbouring post-offices, it is found that no copy has been received for a particular school or school district, information should be sent to this Department at once, giving the local name and the number of the district and post-office address, and a copy of the Record will be sent immediately.

School Commissioners would promote the interests of their schools by circulating this information concerning the Record among their teachers, and by encouraging them to obtain and read this educational magazine.

Some of the above suggestions have no doubt already been complied with in the management of schools of your municipality, and you will accordingly require to direct your attention to those points only which are of interest to your municipality.

I trust that these instructions will receive that careful consideration which the importance of the subjects to which they refer calls for, knowing that the value of the work done in your schools will depend in a very great measure upon the energy and faithfulness with which these instructions are carried out.

Objections will, no doubt, suggest themselves in connection with some of the points urged in this circular. But it should be remembered that these instructions are issued after careful consideration of the difficulties involved and after consultation with the school inspectors, experienced teachers and others familiar with the working of our elementary schools, and the unanimous opinion is that the objections to the points raised are more apparent than real and that the instructions of the circular only require to be carried out to meet with general approval.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

GÉDÉON OUMET, Superintendent.

Appendix D

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HIGH SCHOOL OF MONTREAL
FOR THE YEAR 1891-92¹

In submitting my report for the year 1891-92 it is hardly necessary for me to remind you that this has been a critical year for the High School. To lose its home, to be broken up into separate sections and to be obliged to seek temporary shelter in inconvenient quarters widely separated from one another is a severe blow to any institution, but when in addition to these disadvantages the High School has been called upon to lose the Head, under whose direction it had braved the difficulties of nearly half a century, and gained and held a position in the front rank of the educational institutions of the Dominion, we may well believe that the past year has been a critical one in the history of the High School.

Ten years ago this month of June I took leave of the High School after three years of service in its classes under the direction of Dr. Howe. And although during this period of ten years there has been an entire change of pupils, and only one member of the teaching staff of that time is now in the school, I felt in returning in September last that I was returning home. The High School seems to have an existence apart from the pupils, staff and building, and it holds its place in the affections of those who have been connected with it even when pupils, teachers and buildings have completely changed. Few of us, however, will be able to think of the High School for many years to come except in close association with him who for so many years wisely guided the destinies of this institution.

Notwithstanding the difficulties with which we have had to contend the work of the year has been satisfactory to the teachers and beneficial to the pupils. That the school has been beneficial to the pupils is evident from the observation of the teachers in their daily intercourse with the pupils, and from the results of the tests-examinations through which the school has just passed. Our aim has been to develop the moral, physical and mental prowess of the boys.

1 - Rexford's first Rector's Report. See text, p.88.

We have observed with great satisfaction a marked growth of the boys' moral powers. This is a kind of improvement which does not submit itself to written tests, and is not easily recorded on reports, but it becomes very apparent in the school room.

The boys have gradually increased in their power of self-control; the cases of corporal punishment have been few; and notwithstanding our disorganized condition there has not been a severe case of discipline in the school during the year. The proper development of the moral powers seems to me to be the most important part of a boy's education. A school that fails to develop sound moral character in its pupils fails, I hold, at the most important point of its work.

We propose to give special attention to character building in the treatment of our boys. We intend to do this first by definite teaching based upon religious instruction and the every day occurrences of life; secondly by eliminating any customs and practices of school life which may tend to vitiate the moral atmosphere of the school; thirdly by securing masters whose example shall be for good; and fourthly by promoting their physical health.

There is a close connection between the moral and physical powers. A healthy physical development tends to good morals, as well as to good mental action. For these reasons we have given considerable attention to the physical development of the boys during the past year and we propose to give physical culture a still more prominent place in our work in the years to come. With airy class rooms, spacious corridors and splendid gymnasium in our new building we should be able to provide for the physical development of our pupils according to the most approved methods.

While endeavouring to develop the mental powers of the boys we shall strive to avoid over-pressure of work in school and at home, without attempting the fruitless task of providing a Royal Road to learning. Mental powers can only be developed by use. The proper function of the teacher is to get the boys to use their own powers. That which benefits a boy is not what a teacher, a parent or a sister does for him, but what the boy does for himself. In assigning our home-work we aim first to make the work reasonable in amount and we will be glad to hear from parents at any time that they consider the work excessive; and secondly we aim to give the boys such home-work as they are quite able to do by themselves. All that should be necessary for parents to do in relation to home-lessons is to see that the boys devote the time named in the limit-tables to their lessons each night. If a boy is unable to do his work it is an indication

that he has not taken full advantage of his teacher's explanation in school.

This is the first year that the classes known as the Preparatory School have been included in the High School so as to form one school under one head. The work of the school has received my special attention during the year and the results of the year's work are creditable alike to the very efficient staff of lady teachers in charge of the work and to the pupils. No pupil who has been in regular attendance upon these classes throughout the year has failed to earn his promotion. This should satisfy the parents of the children in attendance and commend the school to those who desire for their boys a thorough preparatory training.

Appendix E

CANON VII -- ON EDUCATION¹General Board of Religious Education

1. For the purpose of unifying and developing the Educational activities of the Church there shall be a General Board of Religious Education of the Church of England in Canada, which may be referred to, briefly, as the Board of Education.
2. The Board shall consist of the Primate ex-officio, who shall be the president of the Board, the Bishops of each Diocese, two representatives of each Order from the Lower House, appointed by the Prolocutor at each Session of Synod, and two Clergymen and two Laymen, elected by each Diocesan Synod at each regular meeting thereof, together with any Executive Officers who may be appointed by the Board.

In any Diocese where there is no Diocesan Synod the Diocesan representatives shall be appointed by the Bishop. The Board shall have power to increase the membership.

3. It shall be the duty of the Board to study the Educational needs and problems of the Church in respect of Primary and Secondary Education and of all Sunday School work, and to recommend such measures as it may deem advisable to advance the cause of Religious Education, and to provide, as far as possible, that the education of our youth shall be maintained in harmony with the principles of the Christian religion and in close connection with the faith and worship of the Church.

4. The Board shall meet at least once a year at such time and place as may be determined by by-law or resolution of the Board.

5. The Board shall have power to fix its own quorum, to frame regulations for the orderly and convenient discharge of the business and duties entrusted to it, to appoint such officers as may be deemed expedient, to regulate the powers, duties and emoluments, if any, of such officers.

3.-----

1 - Of the General Synod of the Church of England in Canada; Enacted 1918, Confirmed 1919. See text, p.169.

6. The Board shall have power to associate with itself experts in different departments of educational work, who shall form consultative councils for the purpose of studying and reporting upon educational problems affecting the interests of the Church.
7. The Board may appoint an Executive Committee to conduct the business of the Board in the intervals of its meetings.
8. The Executive shall meet at such times and places as it may determine, and shall report to the Board at each meeting thereof.
9. It shall be the duty of the Board to submit a Report to each Diocesan Synod, to each Provincial Synod and to the General Synod at their regular meetings.
10. It shall be the duty of the Board to determine from time to time what money will be required for the work of the Board, and to arrange for the raising of the same, either by arrangement with the several Dioceses in Canada or otherwise, as may be determined by the Board.
11. The third Sunday in October shall be observed for and shall be devoted to the following purposes:
 - (i) Intercessions on behalf of the home, the Sunday School and other educational agencies of the Church.
 - (ii) Supplying information concerning the Church's Educational work.
 - (iii) Holding special services for children and adults.
 - (iv) Providing offerings in behalf of the work of the Board.
12. The first Order of Business on the Monday of the second week of the General Synod shall be the consideration of the Report of the Board.¹

1 - Amended Tenth Session of the General Synod, 1924.

Appendix F

EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION¹

.....Your Committee notes with special satisfaction the increased interest and attention that is being given to religious education in the different educational systems on the continent. There is a rapidly increasing tendency to recognize the supreme importance of religious education as a preparation for citizenship. The child is being recognized as a religious being - education has for its main object the development of character. Any education that provides for the all-round development of the child must therefore be essentially religious.

The education of the child is mainly dependent upon the following agencies - the Home, the Sunday School and the Day School. So far as religious education in the Day School is concerned, our position in the Province of Quebec is unique. We enjoy privileges as to religious education in our Day Schools not shared by any other school system on this continent.

Our clergy are official Visitors of the Protestant schools within their respective cures. They have a right to visit the schools at all reasonable times, to examine the time-table, the School Journal, and to report any matters requiring attention to the School Board, the School Inspector or to the Department of Public Instruction, Quebec.

The clergy, however, have no right to question the scholars or to teach or to address the school unless invited to do so by the teacher.

A definite course of scripture is laid down grade by grade for religious instruction by the Protestant Committee, and this work occupies the first period every morning. These privileges secured by the School Law of the Province afford the clergy every reasonable opportunity of co-operation with the Day School in securing effective religious education for the children. The effectiveness of this scheme of religious

1 - As adopted by the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, February 11, 1916. Rexford was Convenor of the Committee on Education at the time. See text, p.170.

education is no doubt determined in large measure by the religious attitude of the teacher. In order to produce practical results in the lives and character of the children the teacher must approach the subject with vision and enthusiasm and with a keen sense of responsibility in this connection.

With a view to developing in the teachers in training for the Protestant schools of this Province a keen sense of personal responsibility in this matter and special interest and enthusiasm for this department of their work it has been customary for more than half a century for representatives of the different communions to take the teachers in training of their respective communions at the Normal School each week for religious instruction. And the deep sense of responsibility, the devotion to duty and the high ideals of life which have generally characterized our normal school graduates in the past have been largely due to the definite religious influence brought to bear upon teachers in training by special provision for religious instruction and by the consistent Christian lives of the instructors.

Upon the removal of the Training School to St. Anne de Bellevue, the work of religious instruction has been divided between the two resident ministers of St. Anne. Recently, however, it has been decided to discontinue the services of clergymen altogether after the close of this session, and to assign the work to regular members of the teacher training staff. Strong representations have been made against this proposed change, first because it will be treated as an ordinary subject of instruction in the curriculum and secondly because the teachers in training will fail to get that vision of duty, that enthusiasm and interest in this department of school life which comes from a more direct appeal to religious sanction in life and conduct. In the opinion of your Committee this subject should receive the careful consideration of the Synod.....

[This recommendation and others, including reference to compulsory education, and the advisability of admitting women to appointment as members of school boards, were accepted by the Synod. Later in the report it was worded:]

3. That this Synod respectfully requests the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction:-

- (a) To withhold its approval from the proposal to withdraw the religious instruction of the teachers in training at Macdonald College from the clergy who have been entrusted with the work for more than half a century.....

- (b) To preserve to the teachers in training in this Province the full privileges of religious instruction now being provided in accordance with the recommendations of the Teacher Training Committee; and
- (c) To secure, in the case of any radical change in the present arrangements for religious instruction, to the Church of England the continuance of those rights and privileges in relation to religious instruction of teachers in training which she has enjoyed since the inauguration of teacher training in this Province.

Appendix G

SOME OF THE PRAYERS WRITTEN BY REXFORD FOR ASSEMBLIESAT THE HIGH SCHOOL OF MONTREALOpening Prayer

Almighty God our Heavenly Father, without whom nothing is strong and nothing holy, let Thy favour rest upon us Thy humble servants, who here implore Thee to pardon all our sins, to defend us from all evil, and to lead us into all good. We praise Thee for all that Thou hast done for us, both for time and for eternity, and we beseech Thee to give us true repentance for our sins past, a living faith in Christ our Saviour, and a thankful remembrance of our many mercies.

Bless our country. Defend our King, and all in authority. Direct the schools of our land in all their ways. May they be instruments in Thy hands for the complete development of the youth of our country, for the formation of their characters, and for preparing them for usefulness in life.

Grant to us who teach wisdom and a right judgment in all things, that we may be faithful and patient in the discharge of our duties. May there be aptness to teach, and willingness to learn. Take away everything that may hinder us from godly union and concord so that we may work together for the good of each other, in the interests of our schools and for the Glory of Thy name.

Remember, O Lord, for good, all who have gone forth from these schools. Pour out Thy Holy Spirit upon them that they may be strong against evil in all its forms, and ready for every good work. And, O Heavenly Father, regard with Thy favour the pupils of these schools. Keep them from all harm both in soul and body. Preserve them by Thy spirit from sin and selfishness. Make them humble, obedient, pure and truthful; make them generous and brave in their recreations, and diligent and faithful in their studies. Develop in them a spirit of self-control, a generous regard for the rights and feelings of others, and a desire to make good use of their present privileges. May they remember Thee in the days of their youth and at all times bear in mind that Thine eye is upon them, and so may they grow up in Thy fear and love, and increase, like the child Jesus, in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and man; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For the Beginning of the Term

O Heavenly Father, we give Thee hearty thanks for the pleasures and happiness of our holidays, and for the strength and refreshment we have gained from them. Help us steadily to persevere in our work that lies before us. Guide and help us, O God, so that teachers and scholars may progress together in wisdom and knowledge, and in favour with Thee and man. Amen.

Direct, O Lord, the work of education and guide all those to whom Thou hast entrusted it; that in our various stations we may do Thee hearty service, and, our task completed, may render up our account with joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, of whose gift cometh wisdom and understanding: behold with Thy gracious favour our schools, we beseech Thee, that the borders of knowledge may ever be enlarged, and all good learning flourish and abound. May strong and worthy character be nourished within these walls, and life trained to serve Thee. Bless all who teach and all who learn and grant in humility of heart we may ever look upwards unto Thee, Who art the fountain of all wisdom and virtue; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Appendix H

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON REXFORD'S CHILDREN

1. ELSON NORRIS (b.1884, d.1896))
 Died of typhoid and its after-effects at)
 age of twelve.)
2. ARTHUR (b.1885)) Predeceased
 Died as an infant.) Dr. Rexford
3. EVA L. (b.1886, d.1929))

Married Canon James E. Fee, honours graduate of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College and Rector of the High School of Montreal from 1929 to 1932. She was School Nurse in Outremont, 1922-24. The late W.A. Walsh, then Principal-Superintendent of the Outremont Protestant Schools, said in a letter to Col. I.P. Rexford dated Easter, 1929, "She initiated our medical health department....and laid the foundations on which we are continuing to build at the present time."

4. IRVING PUTNAM (b.1883)
 Company executive. Vice-President and Managing Director, The Crown Trust Company, Montreal; President, Shipping Containers Limited. Overseas in War of 1914-18 as Officer Commanding (Lieutenant-Colonel) 87th Battalion, C.E.F.
5. ORRIN BAIN (b.1893)
 B.A. (McGill) 1915; M.A. in Education (McGill) 1936. Thirty years in education in Quebec; active in the P.A.P.T.; Teachers' Representative on the Protestant Committee, 1929-32; presently Vice-Principal of the Commercial High School, Montreal. Trustee, Fisher Trust Fund. Served in both Wars, the recent one as Lieutenant-Colonel, Assistant to the Director of Army Education, and then as head of the Education Section of the Directorate of Military Training. Awarded the Third Degree (Highest) of the Order of Scholastic Merit, October 7, 1948.
6. VOLNEY GODDEN (b.1894)
 Living near Magog, Quebec. Volney was the name of a boyhood playmate of Dr. Rexford's in South Bolton; Godden the name of the clergyman who established the first Anglican Church in the South Bolton area.

7. HAZEL MUSSON

Graduated from the School for Teachers, Macdonald College, and taught for a time before marrying Dr. Hugh E. Burke of Montreal and Metis.

8. MARGUERITE E.

Graduated from the McGill School of Physical Education and taught Physical Education in the schools for a time before attending the School for Teachers at Macdonald College; then taught academic subjects. Married H. Walton Blunt of Granby, Quebec.

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