Egerton Ryerson and Educational Policy Borrowing: Aspects of the Development of Ontario's System of Public Instruction, 1844 – 1876

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Abstract

Literature within the field of Comparative Education often cautions against the transfer of foreign policies from one context to another. Despite this warning, Ontario's public education system is said to have been based on an eclectic mix of foreign examples: teacher training institutes replicating Prussian Seminaries, school financing and the role of the chief superintendent and board of education as in the states of Massachusetts and New York, and using the Irish curriculum. This study conceptualises the manner in which these foreign elements became part of the 1846 school law and the reaction of stakeholders in and outside of government. The period covered by this study, 1844 – 1876, corresponds to Egerton Ryerson's time as Chief Superintendent of education in Ontario.

Extensive archival research of incoming and outgoing correspondence from the department of education, district council meeting minutes, newspapers, and local superintendent, inspector and trustee reports revealed contrasting opinions. On the one hand, sources indicated favourable results: increased pupil attendance, number of facilities and money raised to fund schools. There is also evidence that many foreign educationalists not only requested resources from Ontario's board but aspired to emulate features of the province's reformed education system in their own nations. This study's finding of a 'reverse cross-national attraction' is a new contribution to Canadian historical studies.

However, many resented features of the school bill. Critics called the superintendent and board's method of organisation 'Prussian despotism' in Canadian schools; others argued the injustice of property tax to fund free schools and the cost burden of importing Irish textbooks. An original conceptual framework has been produced to review the manner in which Ryerson defended the new bill and the internalisation of these foreign policies and practices. This framework may serve as an analytical device for those engaged in researching educational policy borrowing.

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It has been said that historical research is 'a labour of love limited only by [one's] energy and imagination.' There are four people who I know would have loved reading this four year labour of love: my grandparents, Queenie and David, Bob and Anne. I dedicate this thesis to them.

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Abbreviations

AO	Archives of Ontario – Education Records
ARUC	Annual report of the Normal, Model, Grammar and Common Schools in Upper Canada (titles vary); also known as the Annual Report of the Chief Superintendent of Schools for Upper Canada
DHE	George Hodgins, *Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada, from the Passing of the Constitutional Act of 1791 to the Close of Dr Ryerson's Administration of the Education Department in 1876*, 28 volumes (Toronto: Warwick Bros and Rutter, 1894 – 1910)
JEUC	Journal of Education for Upper Canada
MS	Education Records of the Archives of Ontario – microfilm series

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Egerton Ryerson, 1850

Théophile Hamel, *Portrait of Reverend Dr. Egerton Ryerson*, *ca. 1850 – 1851*, Government of Ontario Art Collection, 622107.

Chapter One

Introduction

In studying foreign systems of education [...] we cannot wander at pleasure among the educational systems of the world, like a child strolling through a garden, and pick off a flower from one bush and some leaves from another, and then expect that if we stick what we have gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant.

Michael Sadler, 1900 [1]

The Canadian system of education [...] makes no pretence of being original. It confesses to a borrowed and eclectic character. The neighbouring states of New York and Massachusetts, the Irish, English and Prussian systems, have all contributed elements, which have been combined with considerable skill, and the whole administered with remarkable energy, by those to whom its construction was confided.

James Fraser, 1866 [2]

I have 'borrowed from all whatever' appeared to me to be 'good,' and have endeavoured to 'perfect,' by adapting it to our condition, 'whatever I have appropriated.'

Egerton Ryerson, 1847 [3]

[1] M. Sadler, 'How far can we learn anything of practical value from the study of foreign systems of education?' Address of 20 October 1900 in G. Bereday,
'Sir Michael Sadler's "Study of foreign systems of education,"' *Comparative Education Review*, 7 (1964) 3, pp. 307 – 314 (p. 310).
[2] J. Fraser, *Report on the common school system of the United States and of the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada* (London: G. Eyre and W. Spottiswoode, 1866) pp. 206 – 207.
[3] E. Ryerson, *Report on a system of public elementary instruction for Upper Canada* (Montreal: Lovell and Gibson, 1847) p. vi.

1.1 Outline

Egerton Ryerson is widely acknowledged as the founder of the modern education system in Ontario.[4] As chief superintendent of schools from 1844 to 1876, he laboured to devise a public educational scheme to meet the demands of a growing population. Immediately following his appointment to office, Ryerson left Canada for Europe and studied foreign educational structures as a precursor to writing a revised school law. The famed *Report on a system of public elementary instruction for Upper Canada* (hereafter referred to as the Report of 1846), written upon his return, commented on features that ought to be the basis of the province's education system. Ryerson's Report of 1846 highlighted commendable foreign models and served as a blueprint for the new school act.[5]

By the time Ryerson retired, the nature of education had been transformed. No longer were one-room schoolhouses attended by itinerant teachers the norm; rather, educational establishments were characterised by the orderly management of able bodies. Ryerson's last significant school law, passed in 1871, made all public schools free. Every child from the ages of seven to twelve years was required to attend school for no less than four months of the year and parents were now legally responsible for making sure that they did.[6] Local superintendents and trustees encouraged their communities to take an active interest in school provisions. They attended examinations, participated at conferences, lectured the residents and inspected their schools. This change may be illustrated from the positive, articulate anecdotes written by school promoters, and the sheer numbers of these records. As the following table shows, not only were more children enrolled but the average length of attendance increased along with the number of facilities.

[4] The area named the province of Ontario would be formally recognised under the British North America Act of 1867. Before then, it was named Upper Canada (1791 – 1841) and Canada West (1842 – 1867). In this thesis, for the purpose of consistency, Ontario denotes all periods.
[5] An act for the better establishment and maintenance of common schools in Upper Canada, *9 Victoria, Chapter XX, 23 May 1846.*
[6] An act to improve the common and grammar schools of Ontario, *39 Victoria, Chapter XVI*, 15 February 1871.

	1846	1876
School age children (5 – 16 years of age)	204,580	502,250
Children registered in the common schools	101,912 (or 49.8%)	465,243 (or 92.6%)
Common school teachers	2,925	6,185
Common schools in operation	2,589	4,875
Pupil-teacher ratio	34.8	75.2
Pupil-school ratio	39.4	95.4
Average number of months schools open	8 ½	11 ½

Table 1: Changes in Ontario's schooling patterns, 1846 - 1876[7]

In 1876, there were two and a half times as many school-aged children in Ontario as there had been in 1846. The number of pupils attending had also more than quadrupled with an overall increase in the number of months schools were open during the year.

Reverend James Fraser, an English commissioner touring North America for the Taunton Commission whose comment was cited at the beginning of this chapter, applauded Ontario's revised school law. However, this was just a fraction of the praise that Ryerson and other Canadian educationalists would receive. At the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, held in the same year Ryerson retired as superintendent, the successes of his initiatives, such as samples of the standardised curriculum, libraries, and architectural plans and designs, were displayed. The purpose was to showcase what Ontario had achieved over the course of three decades. Viewing the displays in amazement, an Australian official asserted that it 'transcend[ed] all his expectations,' while the United States Centennial representative said it was 'complete and admirable.'[8] Mr. Whiting, an English correspondent in Philadelphia, expressed his views:

> Canada astonished me. She makes a great show. In every department she is represented, and well represented, and in the machinery her display is perfectly wonderful […]. Her school exhibit is not only better than that from

[7] ARUC 1876, Table Q, pp. 78 – 80.
[8] G. Hodgins, *Special Report to the Honourable the Minister of Education on the Ontario Educational Exhibit and the Educational Features of the International Exhibition at Philadelphia, 1876* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose and Co., 1877) pp. 25 – 32.

> any state of this country [America], but it is *the only thing which redeems the British school exhibit*; and I have written this home.[9]

Pennsylvania's *Philadelphia Press* equally praised the province's presentation:

> This exhibit is a practical illustration of the method so succesfully adopted across the border for the instruction of youth, and which has so interested the educationalists visiting our great Exposition […]; hitherto little has been known of the work done in this direction, and now to our surprise, we find this colony succesfully competing against the whole world.[10]

The Toronto *Globe* summarised the achievements of Ryerson and the department of education by reporting that '[the Ontario display] was far ahead of any exhibit from any other country.'[11] The tables had now turned. Where Ryerson had once borrowed from other countries, it was now foreign ministers admiring his provincial educational policies and practices.

Nonetheless, it would be erroneous to assume that there was a complete absence of schools or laws prior to Ryerson's time in office. Understandably the pioneer country may not have been equipped to furnish a standardised curriculum or teacher training institutes but it did manage to offer the basics. Children could be educated by family tutors in houses run as private ventures or in larger monitorial schools administered by religious societies. Pupils often learned the three Rs, religion and moral lessons. By 1816, school laws had been passed which laid out basic regulations and a small stipend if those rules were met.

However, by the time Ryerson was appointed as superintendent, the nature of education and indeed of the province had altered. Massive social and industrial changes meant an increase in population with demographic shifts from isolated communities to prosperous cities. A lack of training facilities for agriculture, mechanics and the arts meant that industries were not advancing and pupils were failing to acquire the necessary skills for employment. In some

[9] G. Hodgins, *Special Report to the Honourable the Minister of Education on the Ontario Educational Exhibit and the Educational Features of the International Exhibition at Philadelphia, 1876* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose and Co., 1877) p. 37.
[10] *Philadelphia Press*, 29 June 1876.
[11] G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose and Co., 1877) p. 29.

cases youngsters' wages constituted an essential component of the family income, meaning that parents were unwilling to send their children to school. Moreover, the first measure by government was to provide schools for the children of the elite, rather than facilities for the poor. Even T. Preston, an English gentleman who spent three years in the colony, observed 'the method of its development was replete with fallacy and injustice; attempting as it did to invert the legitimate order of a common inheritance.'[12] Thus, Ryerson became superintendent in an environment where provisions had long existed but were deficient. He needed to frame an educational law that not only resolved these failures but also foresaw aspects that would advance the country. Undeniably, many of his recommendations, often enlightened for the time, were also very controversial for those persons who preferred things to remain as they were.

To assist in his revisions, Ryerson travelled abroad. This practice of seeking comparisons and learning about foreign practices or 'cross-national attraction' was widespread in the nineteenth century. Educational comparativists such as Horace Mann, Henry Barnard and Calvin Stowe of the United States, Victor Cousin of France, Matthew Arnold of England and Tanaka Fugimaro of Japan purposely investigated foreign policies and programmes for possible transferral to their local environment. As Holmes (1981) suggested, these men asked 'how can we select from foreign systems what is good, and perfect it?'[13]

However, few of the pioneers of comparative education were uncritical borrowers. Indeed, the principle itself was questioned for obvious reasons: how can element X in country A become element Y in country B? In America, William Torrey Harris was just one of a number of individuals who declared that each nation 'stamps upon its own ethnical character, and, consciously or unconsciously, perpetuates its own institutions by its

[12] T. Preston, *Three Years' residence in Canada, Volume* 2 (London: Richard Bentley, 1840) p. 109.
[13] B. Holmes, *Comparative Education: some considerations of method* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1981) p. 19.

schools.'[14] Harris, like Michael Sadler, whose well-known comment was cited at the opening of this chapter, maintained that education is a 'living spirit,' an embedded feature of a nation.[15] Therefore, foreign elements cannot arbitrarily be plucked from one nation and applied to another with the expectation that if they are 'put together' a thorough structure of public education might emerge.

It is the paradox created by these three underlying notions that forms the basis of this thesis. These ideas are that educational policy borrowing was a precarious yet prevalent practice, school laws and infrastructure existed prior to Ryerson's appointment, and foreign nations influenced Ontario's education system. This study was guided by four questions:

1. Why was there a need to develop or amend the current state of education in Ontario?
2. Which foreign examples were seen as advantageous for the local context?
3. What debates and discussions occurred following the internalisation of the foreign policies and practices?
4. What can be learned from this study in terms of educational policy borrowing?

Ryerson purposefully travelled abroad to investigate foreign schemes prior to writing his revised school law. His reasons for choosing specific examples as opposed to others, and what people thought of these suggestions are the concerns of the thesis.

[14] W. Harris, *Annual report of the commissioner of education for the year 1888-1889* (Washington, 1891) p. xxxv.
[15] M. Sadler, 'The unrest in secondary education in Germany and elsewhere,' in *Board of Education Special Reports on Educational Studies*, Vol. 9 (London: HMSO, 1902) p. 162.

1.2 Historical overview: Egerton Ryerson

Before proceeding to the literature review, it is important to recognise which facets of this subject are beyond the scope of this study. The accounts of private institutions, Sunday schools and those for children of particular religious affiliations have been excluded. These facilities were managed by independent bodies for specific children or religions. The historical development of universities and accounts of schools for Indian and coloured children or separate (Catholic) schools have also been omitted. Although the presence of these types of establishments was amply discussed during Ryerson's period, there are insufficient links between these institutions and foreign examples. Those familiar with the history of the province will also notice that the clergy-reserve question will be referenced sparingly, as will be the development of education in other Canadian provinces and the rest of the world.[16] This research focuses exclusively on foreign educational policies influencing the 1846 law intended to govern the development of elementary (common) schools in Ontario.

The period covered in this study, 1844 to 1876, corresponds to Egerton Ryerson's period as chief superintendent of education. Ryerson was born in March 1803 in Norfolk County (Ontario). His father had been an officer in the British Army during the American Revolution, while his mother, originally from New Brunswick, was a descendent of the early Massachusetts Puritan settlers. From an early age Ryerson was taught at the local district grammar school, and by age sixteen he had been inducted as an English teacher. When Ryerson was eighteen his father learned that he had joined the Methodist Church and presented him with an ultimatum: recant or leave the family home. He chose the latter and became an usher at the London District School. It was there that Ryerson became both

[16] By the 1791 Constitutional Act, one-seventh of the public lands were reserved for the maintenance of a 'Protestant clergy.' However, where some interpreted it as exclusively intended for the Church of England other religions felt they, too, had a right to the land. The lands were secularised in 1854 and the revenues transferred to the government.

teacher and student. He became familiar with such issues as the rights of the people and the importance of living a fruitful life, ideas that he reiterated during his numerous speeches in later life.[17]

At the age of twenty-two, Ryerson joined the ranks of Methodist minister and became a 'saddle-bag preacher,' serving rural townships around Toronto. Later he was stationed at the Chippewa Indian mission, where, besides preaching, he assisted in building a schoolhouse and taught Indian children. A glimpse of Ryerson's rapport with the Indians is illustrated in a correspondence between William and George Ryerson, his two older brothers:

> On my arrival at the Mission I found Egerton, about half a mile from the village, stripped to the shirt and pantaloons, clearing land with between twelve and twenty of the little Indian boys, who were all engaged in chopping and picking up the brush.[18]

Later in the same letter we learn that Ryerson proposed giving a small reward to every child who attended Sunday school.

From 1829 to 1842 Ryerson held the post of editor of the *Christian Guardian*, the official newspaper of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Under Ryerson's influence, the paper's distribution grew from an initial five hundred copies to three thousand after three years. This made the *Christian Guardian* one of the leading journals of Ontario.[19] Its primary aims were to defend Methodist institutions, educational progress, civil rights and missionary operations. In between Ryerson's role as editor and becoming chief superintendent of education, he travelled to England with the aim of securing a Royal Charter to fund a college. He was eventually successful and the Upper Canada Academy was established. He also continued to

[17] E. Ryerson, 'Opening of the Upper Canada Academy, 21 October 1841,' *DHE* vol. 4, p. 116.
[18] E. Ryerson, *The story of my life: being reminiscences of sixty years' public service in Canada* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1884) p. 69.
[19] Ibid. p. 93.

contribute to the *Christian Guardian*, and in 1833 published 'Impressions Made by My Late Visit to England' on his feelings towards English culture, religion and political affairs.[20]

It was not by chance that Ryerson became involved in public education. He already had a strong voice through his role as editor of the *Christian Guardian*. In 1841, when the Upper Canada Academy was renamed Victoria College, Ryerson was appointed principal. At the opening of the college, Ryerson announced to the congregation that 'a foundation for a common school system in this province has been laid by the Legislature, which, I believe will, at no distant day, exceed in efficiency any yet established on the American continent.'[21] There is no doubt that this statement foreshadowed Ryerson's devotion to providing an exemplary elementary school system for all classes of society. In August of that year, the Wesleyan University of Middletown in Connecticut conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. This was a considerable achievement for a man who had little formal education and was predominantly self-taught.

Three years later, Governor Metcalfe appointed him as superintendent of education. In section **6.2.1** we shall see that Ryerson's selection by Metcalfe was a contentious decision. Regardless of this controversy, it was in the province's schools that Ryerson saw the potential to shape society, founded on peace, order and equal opportunity. Ryerson believed that educated people are the 'best security of a good government and constitutional liberty,' and that ignorant people will become 'the slaves of despots and the dupes of demagogues.'[22] Ryerson's educational philosophy was education for all, for the sake of all.

[20] E. Ryerson, 'Impressions Made by My Late Visit to England,' *Christian Guardian*, 30 October 1833. Ryerson's *Impressions* evoked attacks, specifically by Ontario's Reform party. They felt that Ryerson had written unfavourably of the English party with whom they aligned themselves.
[21] E. Ryerson, 'Opening of the Upper Canada Academy, 21 October 1844,' *DHE* vol. 4, p. 116.
[22] E. Ryerson, quoted in G. French, 'Egerton Ryerson and the Methodist Model for Upper Canada,' in *Egerton Ryerson and His Times*, ed. by N. McDonald and A. Chaiton (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978) pp. 45 – 58 (p. 56).

1.3 Overview of the literature concerning the history of education in Ontario

The body of literature concerning education in nineteenth century Ontario is vast. For a general overview, the works of Donald, Stamp and Audet (1970), Adams (1968), Phillips (1957) and Ross (1896) are an adequate starting point. These sources offer descriptions of the evolution of education beginning in the seventeenth century, and reference major political and social movements that affected provincial governance.[23] More specific to Ryerson's biography are the works of Hall (1976), Burwash (1906), Di Mascio (2002) and Thomas (1969). These authors offer broad historical summaries of the growth of education, and make specific reference to Ryerson as a Methodist minister, the editor of the *Christian Guardian* and a political figure.[24] Complementary to this study was Carlton's (1964) unpublished thesis, which reviewed the links between Ryerson's educational policies and foreign examples. The bulk of the sources used in Carlton's study derived from Hodgins' DHE, the JEUC and the Report of 1846. The thesis excluded entirely the perception of foreign policies and the internalisation of those features.[25]

Many historians have credited different nations, factors and forces as the stimuli for policy change in Ontario. One overarching body of literature focuses on reforms related directly to Ryerson's overseas travels. This is the emphasis in Sissons' two-volume biography entitled *Egerton Ryerson: His Life and Letters* (1939, 1947). For Sissons, education reform may be attributed solely to Ryerson's efforts and his foreign experience.[26] This was also the view taken in Wilson's (1970) chapter in *Canadian Education: A History*, in which he argued that

[23] J. Wilson, R. Stamp and L. Audet *Canadian Education: A history* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1970); H. Adams, *The education of Canadians, 1800 – 1867: the roots of separatism* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1968); C. Phillips, *The development of education in Canada* (Toronto: W. Gage, 1957); G. Ross, *The school system of Ontario (Canada): its history and distinctive features* (New York: D. Appleton, 1896).
[24] J. Hall, 'The educational policy of Egerton Ryerson, superintendent of education for Upper Canada and some contemporary criticisms of that policy' (PhD thesis, McGill University, 1976); N. Burwash, *Egerton Ryerson* (Toronto: Morang & Co., 1906); A. Di Mascio, 'Egerton Ryerson and the politics of education in mid-nineteenth century Ontario' (MA thesis, University of Toronto, 2002); C. Thomas, *Ryerson of Upper Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1969).
[25] S. Carlton, 'Egerton Ryerson and education in Ontario, 1844 – 1877' (PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1950).
[26] C. Sissons, *Egerton Ryerson: His life and letters*, 2 vols. (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1939).

Ryerson's international tour 'sets the framework for the public school system that was evolved over the next three decades.'[27] On the other hand, Putman (1912), who was chief inspector of Ottawa schools between 1910 and 1937, saw Ryerson's suggestions as an adoption of methods already used by the Massachusetts educator Horace Mann. Putman claimed that Ryerson's Report of 1846 'contains comparatively little that is original, being made up of ninety per cent of quotations from Horace Mann's Report and from reports of eminent European statesmen and educators.'[28] This link was also made by Curtis (1992) when he maintained that Ryerson's report 'borrowed its curriculum, teacher training system, and system of inspection from Ireland, its administrative details from New York state and its 'humanistic' philosophy of education from Prussia via Horace Mann.'[29]

A second body of work does not focus on the eclectic mix of European and American practices, but instead refers to specific nations or individuals. This is the approach taken by Duncan (1964), who said that 'in spite of having spent his first fourteen months in office on a tour of Europe […] Ryerson rarely referred to European education [but] on the experience of New York and Massachusetts.'[30] Similarly, Donald Akenson (1999) referenced one particular nation as primarily responsible for the infrastructure: 'fundamentally the great Egerton Ryerson's school network was simply the transatlantic branch of the Irish national system of education.'[31] On the other hand, Balogh's (1997) thesis makes an overly simplistic link to Germany:

> In spite of his admiration for the systems of education in other countries, Ryerson thought very highly about the nature of religious instruction in Germany, German methods of teaching, the quality of German teachers, German Normal Schools, the gradation of schools in Germany, the secondary

[27] J. Wilson, 'Education in Upper Canada: sixty years of change,' in *Canadian education: a history,* ed. by J. Wilson, R. Stamp and L. Audet (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Canada, 1970) pp. 190 – 240 (p. 217).
[28] J. Putman, *Egerton Ryerson: education in Upper Canada* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1912) p. 110.
[29] B. Curtis, *True government by choice men? Inspection, education, and state formation in Canada West* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) p. 62.
[30] M. Duncan, 'American influences on Ontario's elementary school legislation, 1836 – 1850' (MA thesis, University of Rochester, 1964) p. 201.
[31] D. Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario: a study of rural history* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1999) p. 269.

> school system in Germany, and the administrative system of the German school system.[32]

Moreover, Pearce (1988) noted a Scottish influence and Ryerson's particular homage to Lord Brougham. According to this author, several of Ryerson's writings paraphrase Brougham's arguments on scientific and technological progress, the diffusion of knowledge, and against religious exclusivism and party spirit.[33]

Yet another body of work suggests that Ryerson's religious affiliation was the basis of his educational reforms. For Harris (1959) Ryerson was a Christian first, so that 'his religious principles were his first principles.'[34] A similar conclusion was reached by Fiorino (1978) and French (1978), who both viewed Ryerson's educational viewpoint as reflecting Methodist aims to oppose the secularising trends in society.[35] With more people moving away from their religious roots, Ryerson could ensure that basic lessons on truths and morals would be taught in a school system that he designed. A more extreme connection was considered in Yates's (1995) thesis which claimed that despite Ryerson's travels, it was the Methodist polity as proclaimed in Wesley's *Discipline* that helped to structure the organisation of Ontario's department of education.[36]

Lastly, David Onn's (1969) article rightly points out that when Ryerson left for his overseas tour, his mind was not a *tabula rasa* - he had not only travelled abroad before, but he would also have had the knowledge of previous failed (and successful) school plans.[37] For Onn, Ryerson's ideas cannot automatically be credited to the locations that he visited in 1844 but

[32] S. Balogh, 'Ontario educators' observations of the German system of education: 1834 – 1918' (MA thesis, University of Toronto, 1997) pp. 73 – 74.
[33] C. Pearce, 'Egerton Ryerson's Canadian liberalism,' *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 21 (1988) 4, pp. 771 –793.
[34] R. Harris, 'Egerton Ryerson,' in *Our living tradition*, ed. by R. McDougall, 3rd edn (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1959) pp. 244 – 267 (p. 266).
[35] A. Fiorino, 'The moral education of Egerton Ryerson's idea of education,' in *Egerton Ryerson and His Times* ed. by N. McDonald and A. Chaiton (Toronto: Macmillan Company, 1978) pp. 59 – 80; G. French, 'Egerton Ryerson and the Methodist Model for Upper Canada,' in *Egerton Ryerson and His Times*, ed. by N. McDonald and A. Chaiton (Toronto: Macmillan Company, 1978) pp. 45 – 58.
[36] D. Yates, '"Bred in the Bone:" Egerton Ryerson, Methodist polity and educational administration, 1844 – 1850' (MA thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1995).
[37] D. Onn, 'Egerton Ryerson's philosophy of education: something borrowed or something new?' *Ontario History*, 61 (1969) pp. 77 – 86.

attributed to prior experience. Despite the number of times Ryerson's work has been reviewed, exactly which foreign countries are seen as the foundation of Ontario's education system remains a controversial issue.

A second body of literature situates educational reforms in a long trajectory of efforts to respond to political, economic and societal forces. Corrigan and Curtis (1985) have divided this second area of research into two categories: studies that viewed the development of public education as 'impositionist,' and others that regarded it as 'voluntaryist.'[38] For the former, restructuring was the result of government efforts to gain further control of the organisation and administration of public instruction. More than ever before, education was seen as the vehicle to replace the traditional role of family, denominational church and community. To ensure that appropriate norms were followed and values taught, the government sought to tighten the reins on school management.

Katz's (1968) work linked Ontario's educational restructuring to class ideology, noting that schools were to remain 'bureaucratic, racist and class-biased.'[39] Common schools were for the common people, secondary schools for those who could afford it. In this respect, policy makers gained power by making more stringent rules, such as by imposing schooling on the poor or the working class. Similarly, Curtis (1989) stated that 'schooling in a double sense was ruling,' so that the aim of the educational institution was now to provide the moral, intellectual and industrial training of the young.[40] The School Act of 1846, which will be discussed in Chapter Six, put in place what may seem a radical educational centralisation. Curriculum and pedagogy were decided by a centrally appointed board, which exercised its powers to the point of withholding grants from any school refusing to comply. Local superintendents, appointed by the municipal council, were charged with inspecting each

[38] P. Corrigan and B. Curtis, 'Education, inspection and state formation: a preliminary statement,' *Historical Papers*, 20 (1985) 1, pp. 156 – 171 (p. 157).
[39] M. Katz, *Class, bureaucracy, and schools: the illusion of educational change in America* (New York: Praeger, 1975) p. 106.
[40] B. Curtis, 'Representation and state formation in the Canadas, 1790 – 1850,' *Studies in Political Economy*, 28 (1989) pp. 59 – 87 (p. 62).

facility. The power given to these superintendents and the view that they were the representatives of government officials was elaborated by Kaestle (1983):

> Superintendents were more like preachers than bureaucrats. They travelled about […] visiting schools, giving speeches, organizing teachers' institutes, gathering data, and spreading the common-school reform gospel. Some of them wanted more coercive authority, and they worked to create a rough hierarchy of professional supervision.[41]

The shift from local to provincial control was also documented by Gidney and Lawr (1979). They noted that prior to the 1846 law, schools had already functioned independently. Thus, the governmental scheme was a move away from autonomous efforts towards a consolidated body, a feature that many bitterly resented.[42]

The second model, the 'voluntaryist' view-point, is characterised by the efforts of school promoters identifying social problems and considering education as a solution; or, the triumph of the masses over the interests of the elite minority. For this group, educational reform was seen as a solution to societal problems like crime, illiteracy, juvenile delinquency and the lack of proper training and skills. The relationship between education and these issues was a well-known topic, and according to Bellomo (1972), it was among the most pressing social concerns of the nineteenth century.[43] The Victorian years, both in Canada and abroad, witnessed campaigns against ignorance as the source of personal and social deviance.

Houston (1972) suggested that 'this fear of violence and civil unrest, and suspicion of the danger of the uneducated mind in the relative freedom of Upper Canadian society were to provide fertile ground for educational promoters.'[44] In addition, Graff's (1975, 1977) work

[41] C. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic: common schools and American society, 1780 - 1860* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983) p. 115.
[42] R. Gidney and D. Lawr, 'Egerton Ryerson and the origins of the Ontario secondary school,' *Canadian Historical Review*, 60 (1979) pp. 442 – 465.
[43] J. Bellomo, 'Upper Canadian attitudes towards crime and punishment,' *Ontario History*, 64 (1972) pp. 11 – 26.
[44] S. Houston, 'Politics, schools, and social change in Upper Canada,' *Canadian Historical Review*, 53 (1972) 3, pp. 249 – 71 (p. 251); This was a similar tone in A. Prentice, *The school promoters: education and social class in mid-nineteenth century Upper Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977).

quantitatively analysed the relationship between crime and illiteracy in Ontario jails. His studies confirmed a high connection between these factors.[45] However, modern literature is only authenticating a well-recognised historical issue. In 1851, the Toronto *Globe*'s chief publicist predicted:

> Educate the people and your gaols will be abandoned and your police may be disbanded; all the offences which man commits against his neighbour and against his own peace will be comparatively unknown […]. If we make our people intelligent, they cannot fail to be prosperous; intelligence makes morality, morality industry [and] industry prosperity.[46]

The connection between crime, illiteracy and schooling as a resolution was enunciated by many. This topic will be elaborated upon in section **4.4**.

Although the impositionist and voluntaryist models do adequately explain education reform, an additional explanation may also account for the changes: that is, reforms as the natural results of the reconstruction of a colonial lifestyle and administration into that of an independent responsible government. This is the argument made by Wilson (1970), who identified geography, colonialism, the religious affiliation of the inhabitants and the structure of government as natural precursors to educational reformation.[47] The early pioneer years were characterised by diverse, isolated settlements driven by specific religious affiliations. Those in power were men with strict loyalty to the British connection and their institutions. However, the introduction of responsible government in connection with economic and social shifts meant that schooling needed amending. Johnson (1968) points to those same four influences as prompting modification in addition to ideas emerging from the United States.[48] It is only to be expected that people in Ontario would look to their southern neighbours to gain insight and might possibly expect or anticipate similar reforms at home.

[45] H. Graff, 'Literacy and social structure in the nineteenth century city' (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1975); H. Graff, 'Crime and punishment in the nineteenth century: a new look at the criminal,' *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 7 (1977) 3, pp. 477 – 491.
[46] *Globe*, 11 December 1851.
[47] J. Wilson, 'The Ryerson years in Canada West,' in *Canadian education: a history*, ed. by J. Wilson, R. Stamp and L. Audet (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1970) pp. 214 – 240.
[48] F. Johnson, *A brief history of Canadian education* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1968).

For example, several American states already had higher education institutes and free schools supported by taxed property. For these authors, social history affected school policies.

The current literature shows numerous angles that may be identified as formative features for policy innovation in nineteenth century Ontario. This thesis accepts that foreign examples influenced the province's educational policies. It also acknowledges the religious influence on Ryerson's philosophy and the importance of a Christian education. It would be absurd to think that Ryerson, a devout Methodist minister, would be in favour of a sectarian scheme. However, a third factor, the internal shifts (political, economic and social) also prompted reform. Society was evolving - education could no longer be left as a private affair, but needed to be regulated by a central authority.

1.4 Research rationale and significance

This thesis offers three contributions to the field of educational research. Firstly, by investigating the opinion of those in and outside of government, this study will add to current literature documenting the history of education in the province. The opinions in response to the 1846 Common School Act range from the fear of Prussian despotism to admiration and support.[49] The protests and compliments from officials, superintendents, inspectors, teachers, parents, and pupils show the diverse perceptions of using foreign educational policies and practices and offer a reappraisal of Canadian education in the past.

Secondly, through extensive archival research, the study illustrates the manner in which Ontario became a prized model for others in their promotion of universal education. Over the course of four years, over 150,000 documents have been located in the archives and analysed

[49] A. McGregor, 'Egerton Ryerson, Albert Carman and the founding of Albert College, Belleville,' *Ontario History* 63 (1971) pp. 205 – 216 (p. 211).

using the *Picasa 3* image management software. This direct source research was supplemented by the location of documents on the World Wide Web. The investigation revealed the manner in which education matured from its original definition in terms of nepotism and classism into a system promoting unity but valuing nonconformity. Where education once lagged behind, by the end of the century the provincial school policies and procedures had become valuable tools for others in the advancement of education in their own nations.

Lastly, by utilising theories of policy transfer within the fields of education, sociology and public policy, an original conceptual framework is presented. The 'educational policy borrowing conceptual framework' identifies key factors that need to be assessed in reviewing the policy transfer process while also questioning degrees of transfer. The framework provides both macro and micro level analyses, so that the focus is not only on the design of and decision to adopt new educational structures, but it also highlights transition points. This model may serve as a useful tool for those interested in policy borrowing in the field of educational studies.

1.5 Structure and content of thesis

The following three chapters explain the methodological, theoretical and contextual components of the study. Chapter Two illustrates the approach used to ensure a comprehensive and ethical research process. It reviews how the primary documents were collected, and the manner in which they were assessed for validity and reliability. Using *Picasa 3*, all archive images were systematically scanned and coded. This process has developed into a unique method of analysing the material.

Chapter Three reviews the educational policy borrowing literature. The first section will consider policy borrowing in the field of comparative education. Ryerson was one among a

group who deliberately examined foreign nations in their quest to learn from them and improve features within their own context. The work of these pioneers is important because it not only shows the key issues being deliberated, but also because Ryerson quoted these men in his Report of 1846 and in subsequent documents.

The second section of Chapter Three assesses the contemporary policy literature. The terms, the causal mechanisms that triggered the reform process, the individuals involved, and the factors that facilitated or impeded the likelihood of transfer will all be described. Phillips and Ochs's (2004) 'Policy borrowing in education: composite processes' and their 'structural typology of cross-national attraction' will also be introduced.[50] These frameworks served as a guideline in the design of this study, to determine which internal and external aspects needed to be reviewed in order to arrive at a conceptualisation of policy transfer.

Chapter Four will examine the state of society and education in Ontario prior to Ryerson's appointment. Specific historical, political, economic and social features reveal the nature of society and the associated factors that had a direct impact on education. A summary of the key laws and officials will also be presented. Moreover, teacher narratives are included to shed light on the state of education and the inertia they had to overcome.

Chapter Five focuses on Ryerson's Report of 1846. This Report is divided into two sections, and describes the 'principles' that Ontario's new school bill would be founded on as well as the 'machinery' that was necessary to facilitate the process. This chapter will summarise the reasons why specific foreign examples were and were not favoured.

Chapter Six details the debates and discussions surrounding the internalisation of foreign policies. Specific reference will be made to three factors: (1) the role and duties of the chief superintendent and the board of education; (2) free schools supported by property tax; and (3) the use of the Irish National Readers as the approved curriculum. These three pillars of

[50] D. Phillips and K. Ochs, 'Researching policy borrowing: some methodological challenges in comparative education,' *British Educational Research Journal*, 30 (2004) 6, pp. 773 – 784.

the reform were either partially or entirely based on foreign policies, and were both supported and criticised. Primary sources will form the basis of this chapter, illustrating the diverse and polarised responses to these initiatives.

While exploring thousands of sources in Archives Ontario in connection with the policy transfer literature, two additional findings were discovered; these will be summarised in Chapter Seven. Firstly, by the end of the century, Ontario's education system had become a valuable source for foreigners. Where some requested specific documents, others aspired to emulate features of the province's reformed educational policies in their own nations. This discussion of 'reverse cross-national attraction' will examine the correspondences between Ryerson and foreign officials and shed light on his potential influence on international education. Secondly, an original framework has been produced as a result of omissions in the current literature. This framework may serve as a useful analytical device for those engaged in future research on policy borrowing.

The study of education policy borrowing is not a new area of research. It has been practiced for centuries and studied in many fields. However, in comparative education there is lacking an examination that focuses on the entire process: from the initial resolution to amend a policy to the internalisation of the foreign aspect into the native context. Moreover, the literature devoted to the history of education in Ontario is missing a study that focuses on both foreign influences and the environmental factors (social, political, economic) that shape policies. This thesis fills these gaps. Furthermore, as Kendrick *et al.* (1990) agreed, 'for an understanding of present social structures and patterns of action, an understanding of the past is not simply desirable for reasons of conceptual comprehensiveness – a meritorious optional extra, as it were – but is rather a necessity.'[51] The significance of this thesis lies in its review

[51] S. Kendrick, P. Straw and D. McCrone, *Interpreting the past, understanding the present* (New York: Macmillan, 1990) p. 5.

of a historical event by using innovative research tools with the aim of advancing the understanding of educational policy borrowing in the field of comparative education.

Chapter Two

In pursuit of historical research

Archives: *a place where storage meets dreams and the result is history.*

Robert Connors, 1992 [52]

Archive fever: *a kind of mental exhaustion brought about by the fear that, regardless of the amount of time spent in the archives, it is still not enough to give an accurate account of the past.*

Alexis Ramsay *et al*., 2010 [53]

[52] R. Connors, 'Dreams and play: historical method and methodology,' in *Methods and methodology in composition research*, ed. by G. Kirsh and P. Sullivan (Carbondale: Southern Illinois 1992) pp. 15 – 36 (p. 17).
[53] A. Ramsey, et al., *Working in the archives* (Board of Trustees: Southern Illinois University, 2012) p. 3. This quote was influenced by Steedman's use of the term 'archive fever,' the physical condition of Jacques Derrida's theoretical description, C. Steedman, *Dust: the archive and cultural history* (New Brunswick: Rutgers, 2002).

2.1 Introduction

Traditionally, we might characterise historical research as an exclusively library-based endeavour involving copious note-taking in archives. Although this may once have been the common face of documentary research, it is no longer the case. Access to an unprecedented number of texts on the World Wide Web, in addition to innovative research methods, has transformed historical studies. As McCulloch (2004) affirms, these virtual records bring a new age of exciting prospects for library-based studies.[54] The purpose of this chapter is to review the manner in which documents were obtained and evaluated in order to conceptualise educational policy borrowing in nineteenth century Ontario.

As the British Educational Research Association (BERA) does not outline specific methodologies for historical research, determining how to proceed in collecting and revising the material was an important task. Even Edson (1998) remarked that 'there is no single, definable method of historical inquiry.'[55] Consequently, to ensure a complete investigation, this thesis followed the suggested procedures of Cohen and Manion (1980) and Anderson and Arsenault (1998).[56] These authors provide general guidelines to follow while pursuing a historical topic: these are (1) the collection of data, (2) organisation, (3) verification and validation, (4) selection of data, and (5) writing. This sequential way of seeking and reviewing the papers aided in assessing their reliability and validity. It also helped to identify limitations such as the access to sources, of which more will be said below.

[54] G. McCulloch, *Documentary research: in education, history and the social sciences* (London: Routledge Farmer, 2004).
[55] C. Edson, 'Our past and present: historical inquiry in education,' *Qualitative research in education: focus and methods*, ed. by R. Sherman and R. Webb (London: The Falmer Press, 1998) pp. 44 – 58 (p. 51).
[56] L. Cohen and L. Manion, *Research Methods in Education* (London: Routledge, 1980); G. Anderson and N. Arsenault, *Fundamentals of Educational Research* (London: Falmer, 1988).

2.2 The collection of data

In 2007, correspondence with individuals at the Archives Association of Ontario, the Ontario History Society, and Upper Canada College assisted in identifying depositories that might serve useful for this study. The Archives Ontario (Toronto), Archives Canada (Ottawa), Carleton University (Ottawa), and the University of Toronto proved to be the appropriate institutions. Regional archives were not sought because the research questions focus on provincial educational initiatives. On the internet, *paperofrecord.com* holds copies of eighty-nine Canadian newspapers and *Google Books*, *Archives.org*, *Ontariogeneology.org*, *Gutenberg.org* and *Canadiana.org* all contain records from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Approval was not required from the Central University Research Ethics Committee as the study was entirely library-based or using material from these websites, but registration was nonetheless mandatory at Archives Ontario (see Appendix One).[57] The most indispensable sources for this study are listed below.

1. **Correspondence to and from the board of education, 1846 – 1876**

The Archives of Ontario is the repository of thousands of unpublished correspondence sent to the board of education. In three-hundred-and-forty-eight boxes (representing over 50,000 images on *Picasa 3*), foreign nationals, local superintendents, municipal officers, trustees, parents and pupils wrote to Ryerson on school-related matters. The most frequent topics concerned finance issues, arbitration between trustees and teachers, school boundaries, free schools and textbook clarifications. The receipts from building the Normal School and the shipment costs of transporting apparatus, books and artifacts from the United States and Europe to Canada are also in this series.

[57] CUREC (2006) [Internet] Central University Research Ethics Committee Available, *Glossary.* Available from: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/curec/glossary/glossary.shtml> [Accessed 22 November 2007]. Appendix One includes the approval from Archives Ontario to digitalise primary sources and to cite the sources in this study.

Ryerson drafted replies to these letters. While some answers were brief, others included lengthy commentaries clarifying misunderstandings by referencing the school law or official circulars. What makes the series of incoming and outgoing correspondences so remarkable is the size of the archive. Merely in terms of Ryerson's outgoing drafts, each letter is chronologically labelled, amounting to roughly 5,000 to 6,000 letters per year. Armed with this knowledge, one could estimate that there were over 25,000 drafts in total written during Ryerson's period as superintendent.

2. Local superintendents' annual school reports, 1824 – 1877

In 1824, elected school trustees of the eleven districts which formed Ontario at the time wrote to the board regarding the overall condition of education in their sections.[58] Copied into letterboxes, the trustees recorded the number of pupils in attendance by age and sex, the nationality of the teacher, the branches available to study and the titles of textbooks. Under the Common School Act of 1846, local (or district) superintendents became charged with this task. Their annual reports, both eloquent and comprehensive, contain not only those same elements, but also the number and name of their schools, their total visitors each year and the teachers' qualifications. Descriptions of the condition of education such as problems with boundaries, teacher-trustee-parent disputes, religious instruction, and the use of discipline and corporal punishment are frequently found in their appendices. These documents shed a vivid light on schooling, or in some cases, on the educational chaos which existed at the time.

3. Ryerson's annual common and grammar school reports (ARUC), 1846 – 1876

These reports, roughly five hundred pages each, comprised anecdotal and statistical summaries of education in the province in the year concerned. They itemised the number of

[58] These records were first sent to the Board of General Superintendence of Education (1824 – 1833) then to the General Board of Education (1846 – 1850). In 1850, this office was renamed the Department (or Council) of Public Instruction (1850 – 1876). The name changed again following Ryerson's retirement.

children, the classification of pupils in each district, the number of visitors and the public school examinations taken by pupils. Depending on the year, the ARUC may also have included extracts from local superintendents, Ryerson's circulars to municipal councillors, trustees and teachers, examination papers and blank forms for school collectors. Application papers for the Normal School and descriptive catalogues of the apparatus available at the education depository were also part of the reports.

4. Journal of Education for Upper Canada (JEUC), 1848 – 1876

This journal constituted the official medium of communicating with the public. An eclectic mix of topics was discussed such as educational provisions in Asia, South America, Europe and the United States. It also contained advertisements for teaching positions, the latest school apparatus for sale and general suggestions to the public.

5. Documentary history of education in Ontario (DHE) and retired teacher memoirs

In 1896, George Hodgins, then the historiographer for the department and the former duputy superintendent of education, instigated the task of compiling information for a twenty-eight volume book, forming the most extensive survey of the history of education in the province. This work included all the school laws and regulations passed from the eighteenth century onwards, minutes from parliamentary debates, school records, pamphlets, and 'anything that may deem useful in recounting each person's involvement in the schools.'[59] Hodgins also asked superannuated teachers and former pupils to make accounts of their experience. Their letters, regularly humorous, are a breath of fresh air from the heavy rhetoric used in departmental notes. In Archives Ontario, this series occupies over thirty-six metres of microfilm.

[59] G. Hodgins, 'Circular to the chairman and members of school boards in cities and towns of Ontario,' 4 February 1894, MS 914.

6. **Minutes from teacher conventions, exhibitions and local popular press**

Among the documents that contributed to the contextual background and the perception of foreign policies, were the minutes from teacher conventions, associations and exhibitions. Newspapers were also valuable resources because they frequently republished what occurred at these meetings and editors stated their own opinion of the school bill and the process that led to it.

2.3 The organisation of material

The uniqueness of this research stems from the richness of the primary sources obtained and their analysis via a contemporary tool. Over the course of four years, over 150,000 documents were located at Archives Ontario, digitally copied and then coded using *Picasa 3*, a free online digital image management device. *Picasa 3* was chosen because it is straightforward to use – images can easily be transferred, organised, edited, magnified and enhanced. This was particularly useful when the print was faded or dull. Each image, once it had been examined, was labelled with words or expressions to best explain the content. For example, if a letter was written by a teacher on the subject of schoolbooks, it could be tagged as: *teacher*, *textbook*, *arbitration*, *curriculum*, *Irish National Reader*, *American textbook*. Similarly, a superintendent's annual report would not only be tagged as such, but tags would also include the subject: *attendance*, *trustee/teacher arbitration*, *rules and regulations*, *examination* and so on. Appendix Two includes the complete list of words and expressions used while coding documents in *Picasa 3*.

When I first began reviewing these primary sources, it was an exploratory exercise. The archival descriptions of the files were vague, and gave no indication of what people wrote about or whether there would even be any mention of foreign policies. The usefulness of this analysis technique was that when a pattern did emerge, such as the mixed opinions of the

chief superintendent and the board of education, free schools or the Irish Readers, I was able to reconsider these topics chronologically using a diverse range of files created over the course of Ryerson's thirty-two years in office. If I wanted to find out what teachers thought of an initiative or examine official correspondence, I was able to search accordingly. The manner in which the material was organised assisted when discussing the inhabitants' reactions to the new school act; opinion came not just from one or two people but from a handful of residents. I could also compare the interpretation of a school policy between the policy makers and the local residents.

Likewise, I had hoped that by coding all the documents I would find a pattern: for example, that some regions either supported or opposed Ryerson's initiatives. However, not all the letters indicated the district from which they had come and because boundaries were continuously changing, it would be impossible to trace the origins of some of the documents. On the other hand, in some cases I was able to match an incoming correspondence and Ryerson's response. This occurred while tracing the numerous letters between Ryerson and Montreal publishers Armour and Ramsay regarding printing the Irish National Series (see section **6.4.2.3**). Most importantly, however, the coding enabled me to discover a reverse cross-national attraction in education, discussed in Chapter **7.2**.

2.4 The verification and validation of documents

In using primary sources, it is insufficient to accept information unreservedly without taking into account the values, limits or biases embedded within each document. In order to authenticate the credibility of these sources, they must be externally and internally evaluated. An 'external criticism' is concerned with establishing the authenticity of a text. It sets out to uncover forgeries, frauds or distortions of the manuscript by analysing the signature, handwriting or style. According to Platt (1981), circumstances may arise that necessitate a

closer scrutiny, such as when there are internal inconsistencies in style and content or when there are different versions of the same document. External evaluation may also be necessary when the source is of a person with a vested interest.[60]

In this study, Platt's list was especially useful in comparing published documents with their originals. As I obtained original sources from the archives, I discovered that facts and statements in the ARUC, JEUC and DHE were occasionally incorrectly copied. Various words were changed or omitted and sentences were sometimes entirely restructured. Although this type of modification may not seem problematic or misleading, it becomes so when the expressions become more coherent and fluid, or when they entirely exclude detrimental results. Teachers' letters may be edited to seem more logical or reports from those external to the board may be embellished to glorify progress. In this thesis, all attempts have been made to seek original copies. Although their content (in terms of terminologies used, for example) are sometimes a challenge to read, this was how documents were written at that time, and therefore, unless specifically noted, they are copied verbatim.

An internal assessment seeks to evaluate the accuracy of the data in the document, as well as the relationship the author had with the event described. The analysis asks the question: did the author have a stake in how an event should be remembered? Some sources, such as autobiographies or letters for publication, may be an attempt on behalf of the writer to preserve evidence for self-vindication or to enhance their own reputation. On the other hand, some sources are used by a researcher for reasons other than that for which they were originally intended and these may be more honest and objectively accurate.[61]

[60] J. Platt, 'Evidence and proof in documentary research. Some shared problems of documentary research,' *Sociological Review*, 29 (1981) 1 pp. 31 - 52.
[61] G. Elton, *The practice of history*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002).

A number of authors have come up with various questions to carry out this internal evaluation.[62] However, the overarching theme is to check what Scott (1990) terms the factors of 'credibility and representativeness.'[63] The analysis questions whether the evidence is typical of its kind, and if not, whether the extent of its typicality is known. As Larson (2001) pointed out:

> It is important to interpret documents within their historical, situational, and communication contexts. We need to understand the purpose of a document and the events leading up to it in order to interpret its meaning correctly […] applying the formula: who said what to whom under what circumstances and with what purposes.[64]

The significance of this thesis lies in the number of documents consulted and in its breadth of study using material from the well-educated, wealthy and powerful as well as the testimony of the uneducated and poor. According to Cohen and Manion (1980), historical research 'shares the quest for objectivity and the desire to minimize bias and distortion [...] it sets out to describe *all* aspects of the particular situation under study, or as many as are accessible, in its search for the *whole* truth.'[65] Although formal circulars are the easiest to obtain, and school inspectors and trustees were the most likely to write to the department or to newspapers, all efforts have been made to locate material originating from parents, teachers and pupils.

Similarly, it was common in the nineteenth century for newspapers to practice advocacy journalism. Editors were also important members of society who openly supported or criticised different policies. There is no better example of this than Ryerson's appointment to office. Some papers were particularly hostile to his selection, as will be illustrated in Chapter **6.2**. Moreover, although the easiest periodicals to obtain were those from Toronto (the

[62] L. Cohen and L. Manion, *Research Methods in Education* (London: Routledge, 1980); R. Shafer, *A guide to historical method*, 3rd ed. (Homewood: Dorsey Press, 1980) pp. 166 – 167.
[63] J. Scott, *A matter of record, documentary sources in social research* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990).
[64] D. Larson, 'Sources and methods in Cold War history: the need for a new theory-based archival approach,' in *Bridges and boundaries: historians, political scientists, and the study of international relations*, ed. by C. Elman and M. Elman (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001) pp. 327 – 350 (p. 343).
[65] L. Cohen and L. Manion, *Research Methods in Education* (London: Routledge, 1980) p. 44.

Leader, the *Examiner*, and the *British Colonist*), those from small communities were also examined. This allowed a broad review of the topic and ensured that the conclusions drawn were a genuine reflection of public opinion.[66]

2.5 The selection of data: limitations of a historical study

With any research, and particularly with archival studies, there are limitations. Newspapers have commercial motives or political agendas, and private letters, diaries and memoirs are partial in their coverage of the issues of interest. Historical research is only a fractional view of the past, derived solely from surviving records. As Hatch (2002) states:

> Archival materials are often poorly organized and inconsistently maintained, complete sets of documents and records are hard to find, and collections of personal communications and photographs will often be uneven and skewed in certain directions.[67]

Similarly, Sweeting (2005) rightfully cautions that effort needs to be made if one is not to over-rationalise or exaggerate people's accounts of an event:

> Another danger is that the requirements of narrative flow may conflict with a comprehensive perception of the different levels and aspects of education, tempt the writer to resort exclusively to a 'macro-view' of educational developments, and to focus only on top-down initiatives.[68]

Despite any researcher's best attempts to take all factors into account, there are inevitably biases.

Regrettably, several folders at Archives Ontario are no longer open to the public and in other cases many sources, which are after all several hundred years old, are severely stained, faded or illegible. Covers to many of the incoming letters to the board have been removed which means there are no records of who sent the letter, the date or location.

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[66] B. Duffy, 'The analysis of documentary evidence,' in *Doing your research*, ed. by J. Bell (New York: Open University, 2005) pp. 123 – 135 (p. 127).
[67] J. Hatch, *Doing qualitative research in education settings* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002) p. 121.
[68] A. Sweeting, 'The historical dimension: a contribution to conversation about theory and methodology in comparative education,' *Comparative Education*, 41 (2005) 1, pp. 25 – 44 (p. 35).

Ryerson kept a diary which later became part of his autobiography, *Story of my life*. During his first educational tour in 1845, he said that he 'saw Guizot' and met with Pope Pius IX.[69] He dined with the British ambassador and had an interview with the Prussian Minister of Public Instruction.[70] There was also a meeting with Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice, Lord-President of the Privy Council, Ralph Lingen, successor of J. Kay-Shuttleworth, and Sir Henry Ellis, principal librarian at the British Museum.[71] Years later, Ryerson reported that he attended the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society.[72] Records of what transpired at these events would have been exceptionally useful for this study. However, it is impossible to determine whether there are records of these meetings or even if they discussed educational provision.

When I first began this research in 2009, I went to Carleton University and printed all of Egerton Ryerson's annual addresses to the public from microfilm. A year later, I spent three weeks at the North York Central Library in Toronto copying the *Journal of Education for Upper Canada* from microfilm on to a USB storage device. Today, these resources are available for free online. This is the same for Hodgins' twenty-eight volumes of the DHE, the Report of 1846 and nearly half of Ryerson's ARUC. Although this has been very helpful in saving time and money, it creates an entirely new set of challenges. Should materials on the internet be trusted to the same extent as those from libraries? At what point does a researcher stop searching databases in the archives and begin looking exclusively online? Sentilles (2005) writes: 'if an archive is a repository of documents, the World Wide Web has the potential to become a collection of those repositories: an archive of archives.'[73]

[69] E. Ryerson, *The Story of my life* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1884) p. 356, p. 366.
[70] Ibid. p. 364.
[71] Ibid. p. 419.
[72] Ibid. p. 543.
[73] R. Sentilles, 'Toiling in the archives of cyberspace,' in *Archive stories: facts, fictions, and the writing of history* ed. by A. Burton (London: Duke University Press, 2005) pp. 136 – 156 (p. 136).

In Cohen and Manion's (1980) and Anderson and Arsenault's (1998) guidelines, the authors rightfully point to the selection of data as an entirely new step in the research process.[74] They recognise that not all sources can be included. The selection of the sources depends on what is located, the quality of the evidence and the research questions. In collecting material for this thesis, thousands of documents were acquired but only six files predominantly used. This was because these collections encompassed the broadest range of opinions and were the most likely to comment on foreign policies, which was my main research question.

According to Calvert (1991), 'the value of sources depends on their accuracy, completeness, degree of detail and proximity to the event(s) recorded.'[75] If this consideration is taken into account, this thesis has adequately managed to use sources, both official and unofficial, giving first-hand accounts of what was transpiring at the time. In those chapters that review the internalisation of foreign examples, all steps have been taken to locate original sources. Secondary sources were utilised for contextual knowledge, to yield literature about the policy process or where primary documents could not be accessed. When secondary material was retrieved, a compilation of numerous authors from different historiographical schools was consulted in the fields of public policy, sociology and history. This form of 'triangulation,' or seeking material from a number of authors and comparing their accounts, facilitates objectivity.[76] Alternatively, as Olsen (2004) argues, triangulation is not aimed merely at validating information but also at deepening and widening the researcher's understanding of a topic.[77] In adhering to the procedures outlined and acknowledging my

[74] L. Cohen and L. Manion, *Research Methods in Education* (London: Routledge, 1980); G. Anderson and N. Arsenault, *Fundamentals of Educational Research* (London: Falmer, 1988).
[75] P. Calvert, 'Using documentary sources,' in *Handbook for research students in the social sciences*, ed. by G. Allan and C. Skinner (London: The Falmer Press, 1991) pp. 117 - 127 (p. 120).
[76] I. Lustick, 'History, historiography, and political science: multiple historical records and the problem of selection bias,' *American Political Science Review*, 90 (1996) pp. 605 - 618 (p. 615); W. Borg and M. Gall, *Educational research – an introduction* (New York: Longman, 1989).
[77] W. Olsen, 'Triangulation in social research: qualitative and quantitative methods can really be mixed,' in *Development in sociology*, ed. by M. Holborn (Ormskirk: Causeway Press, 2004) p. 1.

own limits, a thorough, or as Verma and Mallick (1999) put it, a ‘true picture’ of the research questions was achieved.[78]

[78] G. Verma and K. Mallick, *Researching education: perspectives and techniques* (London: Falmer, 1999) p. 76.

Chapter Three

A review of the literature on educational policy borrowing

Differences in political and social organization, in habits and manners, require corresponding changes to adapt a system of education to the nation; and, without such modifications, success in the institutions of one country is no guarantee for the same result in those of another.

Alexander Bache, 1839 [79]

Take a lesson from a neighbour, who, in this respect, has shewn himself so much wiser than ourselves.

Victor Cousin, 1838 [80]

I endeavour to collect as many ideas from every source as I can; but I do not copy the expression of any one […] I think it is my duty, and I try to get a general knowledge, and view of any subject that I discuss before-hand.

Egerton Ryerson, 1825 [81]

[79] A. Bache, *Report on education in Europe, to the trustees of the Girard College for Orphans* (Philadelphia: Lydia R. Bailey, 1839) p. 3.
[80] V. Cousin, *On the state of education in Holland as regards schools for the working classes and for the poor* (London: John Murray, 1838) p. 1xvi.
[81] E. Ryerson, *The Story of my life* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1884) 30 March 1825 (p. 42).

3.1 Introduction

The study of policy borrowing is one of the most enduring motifs within the field of comparative education. There is a longstanding history of drawing lessons from positive and negative experiences, or writing about unusual practices in foreign nations. Today the development of cross-national measures of school achievement or questions about further training have led to a greater awareness of these issues, and inevitable local comparisons with what others are doing. As the objective of this thesis is to understand why and how foreign examples have shaped policies and practices in Ontario, it is necessary to review the literature that forms the foundation of this study. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first part will survey the historical background of policy borrowing. Ryerson was among a group of educationalists who travelled abroad to seek novel examples in order to solve failures in their own nations. The work of these activists is pertinent to the history of policy borrowing in comparative education.

The second part of this chapter deals with contemporary literature on the process. A survey of literature in the fields of comparative education, public policy and sociology will define terms, explain the causal mechanisms triggering the process, describe some of the individuals involved, and document the factors that facilitate or impede the likelihood of transfer. This review will pose a number of questions as suggested by Steiner-Khamsi (2004) and her co-authors: why do politicians seek to borrow an education model from elsewhere? What are the stimuli triggering lesson-drawing? What problems do politicians believe would be solved by borrowing a foreign model?[82] To conclude, Phillips and Ochs's (2004) 'Policy borrowing in education: composite processes' and the 'structural typology of cross-national attraction' will be introduced.[83] These frameworks served as useful parameters for this study.

[82] G. Steiner-Khamsi, *The Global politics of educational borrowing and lending* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004).
[83] D. Phillips and K. Ochs, 'Researching policy borrowing: some methodological challenges in comparative education,' *British Educational Research Journal*, 30 (2004) 6, pp. 773 – 784.

3.2 Part One: Historical context of comparative education

3.2.1 Comparative education in the nineteenth century

The 'year one' of comparative education was, it is argued, in 1817 when Marc-Antoine Jullien published *Equisse et vues préliminaires d'un ouvrage sur l'éducation comparée*. In his *Plan*, Jullien critically assessed the state of education in the different countries of Europe and expressed his own ideas as to how the 'incomplete' and 'defective' European educational provision could be improved.[84] According to Noah and Eckstein (1969), Jullien's *Plan* 'is the prime example of work in comparative education motivated by a desire to gain useful lessons from abroad.'[85] Of course, this is not to say that cross-cultural interest began at this point. Foreign visits, whether for religious conversion, trade, military conquest or simple curiosity, had been going on since the early periods of human history. At various times travellers brought back facts, images and comments on similarities and differences between education in their own cultures and in those of the people and children they visited. The works of Brickman (1966) and Jones (1971) chronicle these early developments.[86]

However, the significance of Jullien's work lies in his analytical approach to collecting data and making comparisons. According to Kaloyannaki and Kazamias (2009), his methodology could be described as 'empirico-deductive' and 'qualitative quasi-ethnographic.'[87] They defined it as such because Jullien gathered information from a series of pre-determined questions, analysed the answers and then drew conclusions. Jullien's *Plan* was a significant point in comparative education studies.

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[84] S. Fraser, *Jullien's Plan for Comparative Education* (New York: Bureau of Publications Columbia University, 1964) p. 33.
[85] H. Noah and M. Eckstein, *Towards a Science of Comparative Education* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1969) p. 15.
[86] W. Brickman, 'Prehistory of comparative education to the end of the eighteenth century,' *Comparative Education Review*, 10 (1966) 1, pp. 30 – 47.
[87] P. Kaloyannaki and A. Kazamias, 'The modernist beginnings of comparative education: the proto-scientific and the reformist-meliorist administrative motif,' in *International Handbook of Comparative Education*, ed. by R. Cowen, A. Kazamias and E. Unterhalter (London: Springer, 2009) pp. 3 – 35 (p. 14).

Reports on foreign schools, policies, theories, programmes and procedures proliferated in the nineteenth century. Perhaps the most widely known are those written by the reformers mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, namely Victor Cousin of France, Horace Mann, Matthew Barnard and Calvin Stowe of the United States and Matthew Arnold of England; more will be said about these men below. They sought educational melioration in their own countries and viewed 'selective cultural borrowing' as a means of imitating foreign systems.[88]

Victor Cousin, lecturer in philosophy at the University of Paris and member of the Council of Public Instruction in France, travelled to Prussia to study educational institutions with the intent to achieve better social development through educational amendments. The result of his tour was his *Rapport sur l'état de l'instruction publique dans quelques pays d'Allemagne en particulièrement en Prusse* which according to historian E. Knight (1930) 'is among the most important of all reports on educational conditions in Europe during the second quarter of the nineteenth century.'[89] In his report, Cousin commented on aspects of the legal and institutional framework of the Prussian education system. This included the 'machinery' and 'government' of public instruction, whereby it was the obligation of parents to send their children to school and the duty of each parish to maintain such an institution. It also recommended that a ministry should be established to be responsible for education in France.

The importance of Cousin's report was twofold. Firstly, it made a favourable impression on English and American educational campaigners. Jackson (1926) documented how Cousin's report influenced John D. Pierce and education in Michigan, and Odgers (1947) reported that an English translation of Cousin's report was widely circulated in the United States.[90] Cousin's educational ideology regarded schooling as a public resource which the state was

[88] B. Holmes, *Problems in Education: a comparative approach* (London: Routledge, 1965) p. 11.
[89] E. Knight, *Reports on European education by John Grimscom, Victor Cousin, Calvin E. Stowe* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1930) pp. 117 – 118.
[90] G. Jackson, *The development of state control of public instruction in Michigan* (Lansing: Michigan Historical Commission, 1926) p. 31; M. Odgers, *Alexander Dallas Bache: scientist and educator, 1806 – 1867* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1947) p. 73.

responsible for overseeing.[91] His report was proof that a system of national education was 'not a phantom of the brain, imagined by dreaming philosophers; but a mode of insuring the elementary instruction of all children, which may be established and maintained not less than any army or navy.'[92] The second implication of his report was the encouraging prospect of policy transfer. He was in favour of borrowing so long as it entailed large-scale studies, data collection and surveillance. In his report he stated that 'the true greatness of a people does not consist of imitating nothing from others, but in borrowing everywhere what is good and in perfecting it while appropriating for oneself.'[93] France's Guizot Law (1833) was influenced by Cousin's report.

In the United States, Horace Mann, Henry Barnard and Calvin Stowe are seen as educational pioneers. Mann served as secretary of the board of education in Massachusetts, Barnard was superintendent in Connecticut and Stowe took an interest in Ohio's reforms. These three Americans were driven to study European examples to see whether they could learn anything useful in order to develop American education. Mann's *Seventh Report* (1843), written following a six-month tour of Europe, described among many things the phonetic method of teaching reading, as well as the exemplary approaches to discipline and the competency of Prussian teachers. He noted:

> If we are wise enough to learn from the experience of others, rather than await the infliction consequent upon our own errors, we may yet escape […] those calamities under which some other communities are now suffering. On the other hand […] there are many things abroad which we, at home, should do well to imitate; things, some of which are here, as yet, mere matters of speculation and theory, but which, there have long been in operation, and are now producing a harvest of rich and abundant blessings.[94]

[91] W. Brewer, *Victor Cousin as a comparative educator* (New York: Teachers College, 1971) p. 16.
[92] E. Knight, *Reports on European education by John Grimscom, Victor Cousin, Calvin E. Stowe* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1930) pp. 116 – 119.
[93] Ibid. p viii.
[94] H. Mann, *Seventh annual report of the Board of Education; together with the Seventh Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board* (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, 1844) pp. 20 – 21.

According to Downs (1974), Mann was attracted to foreign countries which filled him with 'an intensive desire of knowing whether, in any respect, those institutions were superior to our own; and if anything were found in them worthy of adoption, of transferring it for our own improvement.'[95] Mann was clearly in favour of foreign examples influencing policies in Massachusetts.

In a similar way, Henry Barnard was interested in establishing a system of what he called 'true national education.'[96] He founded the *Connecticut Common School Journal* which detailed the organisation, administration, history, discipline and statistics of public schools in foreign countries. However, Barnard acknowledged his own reservations about policy borrowing. Concerning the Prussian school system, he stated:

> Admirable as it is as a system, wisely framed in all its details for the school wants of that kingdom, thorough as is the instruction in most particulars which it secures for the great mass of the community, universal as are its benefits, still we do not present it as a model for our imitation.[97]

To this extent, he was a significant comparative educationalist acknowledging the unpredictability of utilising foreign practices to shape elements of the 'home' environment.

Calvin Stowe's report on elementary public instruction in Europe (1837) highlighted the 'national spirit' in Europe which meant that the educational laws were synonymous with a youth's attachment to his native land and its institutions.[98] Regarding the viability of taking elements from foreign nations as the basis of education in Ohio, Stowe remarked:

> The above system is no visionary scheme emanating from the closet of a recluse, but a sketch of the course of instruction now actually pursued by thousands […]. It can be done, for it has been done, it is now done, and it ought to be done. If it can be done in Prussia, I know it can be done in

[95] R. Downs, *Horace Mann: champion of public schools* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1974) p. 88.
[96] H. Barnard, *National education. Systems, institutions and statistics of public instruction in different countries* (New York: E. Steiger, 1872) p. 365.
[97] H. Barnard, 'An exposition of the common school system of Prussia,' *Connecticut Common School Journal*, 1 (April 1839) p. 2.
[98] E. Knight, *Reports on European education by John Grimscom, Victor Cousin, Calvin E. Stowe* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1930) p. 255.

> Ohio. The people have but to say the word and provide the means, and the thing is accomplished.[99]

Stowe's work was perceived to be of such importance that it was distributed to all districts in Ohio, while the administrations of Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Virginia ordered reprints.[100] In his report, Stowe urged Ohio to follow the Prussian example of state-supported education and teacher training.

Englishman Matthew Arnold was particularly concerned with defining 'culture' as an instrument for social amelioration. In his work *Schools and universities on the continent* (1838), he wrote about the development of secondary education in Europe. Along with his fellow comparativists, he felt ambivalent towards educational transfer, notably the dangers associated with cultural borrowing: 'what different conditions and the different character of the two nations must necessarily impose on the operation of any principle. That which operates noxiously in one, may operate wholesomely in the other.'[101] Like the other comparativists discussed above, Arnold recognised education as an embedded feature of a nation so that features cannot always be copied from one context to another with predictable results. In Chapter Five, we shall see how Ryerson quoted Cousin, Mann, Barnard, Stone and Arnold in detail when he was describing which foreign 'best practices' were feasible for the province. Furthermore, Archives Ontario also contains receipts between Ryerson and these educationalists discussing important topics of the nineteenth century. These letters will be discussed in Chapter **7.2**.

In addition to the individuals previously discussed, there were others who were also involved in educational planning and who questioned the process. For example, British traveller John Cunningham wrote in 1818:

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[99] C. Stowe, *Report on the elementary public instruction in Europe* (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, 1837) p. 53.
[100] S. Fraser and E. Brickman, *A history of international and comparative education: nineteenth century documents* (Atlanta: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1968).
[101] M. Arnold, *The popular education of France* (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1861) p. xxx.

> Let the traveller remember that *he is called not to import the principles or habits of foreign nations into his own, but to export to those less favoured countries the principles and practices he has learned at home*.[102]

Leo Tolstoy was also cautious, asking: 'what historical right have we Russians to say that our schools for the people should be like European schools?'[103] William Harris, the United States commissioner of education, shared these views and appreciated that each nation 'stamps upon its system its own ethnical character and, consciously or unconsciously, perpetuates its own institutions by its schools.'[104] Upon visiting England in the mid-nineteenth century Francis Wayland, the fourth president of Brown University, disapproved of imitating the Oxford-Cambridge model because it was 'utterly unsuited to our condition [and these] institutions [were] founded for the education of the medieval clergy.'[105]

An equal concern over the adaptation of foreign education practices appeared in the writing of Russian scholar K.D. Ushinsky who studied several European countries and concluded that 'every nation has its own particular national system of education; therefore, the borrowing by one nation of educational systems from another is impossible.'[106] Ushinsky also questioned whether it was conceivable to have a universal model of education:

> But perhaps it is possible to put together a universal and perfect system by taking from each national system of education whatever is worthy of imitation? Perhaps it is possible to borrow from the Germans the richness of their scientific and philosophical development, from the English the ability to forge the power of intellect and character, from the French their ability to transmit technological knowledge [...] and out of all the different facets of the same concept to create a system of education which, achieving all these aims, would in its functioning attain the highest ideal of human perfection?[107]

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[102] J. Cunningham, *Cautions to continental travellers* (London: Ellerton and Henderson, 1818) p. 28.
[103] L. Tolstoy cited in N. Hans, *The Russian tradition in education* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963) p. 92.
[104] W. Harris, *Annual report of the commissioner of education for the year 1888 – 1889* (Washington, 1891) I, p. xxv.
[105] F. Wayland and H. Wayland, *A memoir of the life and labours of Francis Wayland, DD, LL.D*, Volume 2 (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1867) p. 84.
[106] K. Ushinsky, *On national character of public education*, Reprinted in *Selected works*, K.D. Ushinsky, ed. by A. Piskunov (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975), p. 205. Original work published 1857.
[107] K. Ushinsky, *On national character of public education*, Reprinted in *Selected works*, K.D. Ushinsky, ed. by A. Piskunov, 100–207 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975), p. 205. Original work published 1857, p. 186.

Ushinsky's final conclusion was negative: 'It is impossible to so isolate education that the life surrounding it on all sides would have no influence upon it.'[108] The argument made by these men was that idiosyncrasies do matter, so that educational policies cannot be arbitrarily copied from one context to another.

3.2.2 Stages or periods within comparative education

Within the comparative education literature, Noah and Eckstein (1969) produced a five-stage model characterising the different motives of study.[109] The stages are not discrete in time but they do provide useful contexts in tracing themes within the field. The stages are:

1. Descriptions or *travellers' tales* prompted by simple curiosity.
2. A specialised interest in education through *educational borrowing* with the aim of learning useful lessons from foreign examples.
3. The exchange of information by *international educational cooperation* to better understand foreign systems in the interest of mutual improvements and world harmony among nations.
4. The study of national character and how it shapes education; the dynamics between education and society in a country.
5. A quantitative focus on *social science explanation* in the analysis of educational phenomena.

In terms of the historical accounts discussed above, Jullien would fit into the first stage of Noah and Eckstein's divisions. It is the most primitive form of comparison, with an emphasis on reporting exotic information through descriptions and impressions. Cousin, Mann, Barnard, Stowe and Arnold would belong to the second period or phase, interpreted as 'educational borrowing' or, as Holmes (1965) described it, 'selective cultural borrowing.'[110] The reports written by these administrators, policy makers, advisers and social thinkers were in terms of 'lesson learning,' or seeing what beneficial lessons could be drawn from observations in order to drive educational reform at home.

[108] Ibid. p. 187.
[109] H. Noah and M. Eckstein, *Towards a science of comparative education (*London: Collier-Macmillan, 1969).
[110] B. Holmes, *Problems in education: a comparative approach* (London: Routledge, 1965) p. 11.

In common with Noah and Eckstein, Bereday (1964) described three stages within the field. The first stage, spanning the nineteenth century was inaugurated by Marc-Antoine Jullien, the first scientifically-minded comparative educator.[111] This stage corresponded with the rise of nationalism and the increasing importance of the nation state. For Bereday, the emphasis was on 'cataloguing descriptive educational data and comparison of the collected information [which] was then undertaken to make available the best practices of one country for transplantation to others.'[112] During this period there was an assumption that best practices from abroad could be borrowed.

The second of Bereday's stages occupied the first half of the twentieth century and may be called the period of 'prediction.' During this time educationalists questioned the feasibility of educational borrowing or transplanting. The third phase was the period of 'analysis' involving theory and methods and with an emphasis on systematic comparability and classification. In Bereday's terms, Ryerson would be among the first group who purposefully travelled abroad to engage in policy borrowing. Their desire to learn useful foreign lessons resulted in attempts to resolve failures at home. It was also linked to the pursuit of nationalism. Appropriately at the time, a distinct Canadian identity was beginning to form.

As Noah and Eckstein's and Bereday's stages suggest, there was a turning point in the historical development of comparative education in the twentieth century. This involved a shift from mere curiosity to a more systematic analysis. This idea may be attributed to a well-known paper by Michael Sadler (1900) entitled: 'How far can we learn anything of practical value from the study of foreign systems of education?'[113] Sadler, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds and later Master of University College, Oxford, rejected rash borrowing and maintained that education is the outcome of forces of society: economy,

[111] G. Bereday, *Comparative method in education* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964) p. 7.
[112] Ibid.
[113] M. Sadler, 'How Far can We Learn Anything of Practical Value from the Study of Foreign Systems of Education?' Address of 20 October in G. Bereday 'Sir Michael Sadler's "Study of foreign systems of education,"' *Comparative Education Review*, 7 (1964) 3, pp. 307 – 314.

politics, demography, geography, culture, technology, religion and so on. Because education is embedded in the structure of the nation, it cannot be disconnected from that structure. For instance, despite Sadler's admiration for the German system of education, he maintained that it could not be replicated elsewhere:

> No other nation, by imitating a little bit of German organisation can hope thus to achieve a true reproduction of the spirit of German institutions. The fabric of its organisation practically forms one whole. That is its merit and its danger. It must be taken all in all or else left unimitated.[114]

Sadler's work, and that of others in the twentieth century and beyond is marked by their caution when transplanting policies and practices from one context to another. For some, the most that can be accomplished within the field is to make general comments about education in a nation. For others, only certain factors can be identified. Regardless, after Sadler's (1900) paper there was an acknowledged maxim stressing education as an embedded component of society.

Isaac Kandel's writing also represents a view which holds that there is a strong relationship between education and the state. In order to understand education in a country, the researcher must be knowledgeable about that country's 'national character.' In his *Studies in Comparative Education* (1933) he wrote:

> The comparative approach demands first an appreciation of the intangible, impalpable spiritual and cultural forces which underlie an educational system; the forces and factors outside the school matter even more than what goes on inside it. Hence the comparative study of education must be founded on an analysis of the social and political ideals which the school reflects, for the school epitomizes these for transmission and for progress. In order to understand, appreciate, and evaluate the real meaning of the educational system of a nation, it is necessary to know something of its history and traditions, of the factors and attitudes governing its social organization, of the political and economic conditions that determine its development.[115]

[114] M. Sadler, The unrest in secondary education in Germany and elsewhere' in *Board of Education Special Reports on Educational subjects*, Vol. 9, Education in Germany (London: HMSO, 1992).
[115] I. Kandel, *Comparative Education* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933) p. xix.

Kandel understood the importance of considering each nation's histories, traditions and cultures. He identified 'factors and forces' that shaped education, such as the state's political theory, social philosophy, geographical location, climate, culture, language, literature and music, among other things. Sadler's philosophy was certainly expressed in Kandel's writing so that intangible, spiritual and cultural forces underlined the system of education.

Nicholas Hans followed a similar approach to Kandel, believing that a national education system constituted an outward expression of national character.[116] He considered the purpose of comparative education to be 'to study each national system separately in its historical setting and its close connection with the development of national character and culture [and] to collect data on existing systems of education in various countries.'[117] He classified three different influential groups of factors that affected education: natural factors (race, language, environment), religious factors (Catholicism, Anglicism, Puritanism) and secular factors (humanism, socialism, nationalism). In his article 'Exportation of educational ideas,' Hans further emphasised geography, economy, religion, history, language and political philosophies as factors that must be studied.[118] More importantly, he questioned the transferral of European or Western ideas to other parts of the world:

> Are we Europeans quite certain that we have a moral right to impose our technological civilization, the result of our historical development, upon less developed countries, and are we quite sure that humanity as a whole will benefit by such a submergence of non-European civilizations?[119]

Hans reflected on the difficulties encountered in cross-cultural research and policy transfer.

The approach of Vernon Mallinson was similar to that of Hans because of his emphasis on 'national character,' which he defined as 'a kind of fixed mental constitution that guarantees a common purpose and a common effort from the whole group.'[120] Mallinson identified four

[116] N. Hans, *Comparative Education* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967).
[117] Ibid. p. 7.
[118] N. Hans, 'Exportation of educational ideas,' *Journal of Educational Sociology*, 29 (1956) 7, pp. 274 – 281.
[119] Ibid. p. 281.
[120] P. Jones, *Comparative Education* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1971) p. 70.

main determinants encompassing national character: heredity, national environment, social heritage and education, which in turn is affected by geography, economy, religion, politics and social influences.[121] Therefore, the emphasis within comparative education was on examining both the equivalences and the dissimilarities of national frameworks. He elaborated on this in the following terms:

> By the expression 'comparative study of education' we mean a systematic examination of other cultures and other systems of education deriving from those cultures in order to discover resemblances and differences, the causes behind resemblances and differences, and why variant solutions have been attempted (and with what result) to problems that are often common to all.[122]

This was a comparable approach to that of Joseph Lauwerys, who viewed the objective of comparative education as twofold: first, to seek a theory of general education and explore the philosophical orientations of cultures; and second, to study what other educationalists have done. In this way, helpful ideas may be acquired for one's own environment. However, he too questioned the feasibility of transfer and noted that 'we shall be able to borrow usefully and constructively, only if we understand the basic principles.'[123] Lauwerys later remarked:

> The solutions proposed vary from country to country – inevitably, since they are conditioned and affected by different attitudes and different cultural histories. Even more will there be very great differences in the ways the reforms are described, talked about, justified.[124]

The process by which elements of one system may be implemented in another is not straightforward. Education is a social force in the sense that it reflects the ethos of the people in addition to individual traits such as religion or past history. This section has identified a handful of individuals among a large number who have written extensively on the transfer process in this field. What is important is that their work emphasises the idiosyncratic nature

[121] V. Mallinson, *An introduction to the study of comparative education*, 4th edn. (London: Heinemann, 1975).
[122] Ibid. pp. 10 – 11.
[123] J. Lauwerys, *Opening address: paper presented at the second general meeting of the Comparative Education Society in Europe: General Education in a changing world* (Berlin, 1965) p. 8.
[124] Ibid. p. 22.

of education and a move away from the traditional exotic description towards a greater analysis of the culture in which education is implanted.

3.3 Part Two: Educational policy borrowing and policy analysis

3.3.1 Studying the policy process

Educational transfer occurs along a variety of paths via a range of processes, from the covert dissemination of ideas, concepts and discourse to the overt imposition of concrete models, structures or practices.[125] The purpose of this section is to describe some fundamental components of the policy process, including the way in which it is defined, the key actors (agents) involved, what is transferred (elements), under what circumstances (why) and some explanations that might account for its likelihood of success or failure.

According to Dolowitz and Marsh (1996), policy *transfer* is the action by which actors borrow policies developed in one location to develop programmes and policies within another location.[126] Mossberger and Wolman (2003) see transfer 'as a form of decision making by analogy, using another entity's experience as a source of ideas and evidence.'[127] The term 'transfer' is an umbrella for other synonyms such as *emulation*, whereby knowledge of policy innovations is borrowed from other entities. Similarly, terms such as policy *learning*, *band-wagoning*, and systematically *pinching ideas* imply that transfer is a deliberate and rational activity.[128] Peck (2011) has also suggested policy *mobility* and *mutation* as emergent definitions drawn from critical policy studies.[129]

[125] M. Evans and J. Davies, 'Understanding policy transfer: a multi-level, multi-disciplinary perspective,' *Public Administration*, 77 (1999) 2, pp. 361 - 385.
[126] D. Dolowitz and D. Marsh, 'Who learns what from whom: a review of the policy transfer literature,' *Political Studies,* XLIV (1996) pp. 5 – 24.
[127] K. Mossberger and H. Wolman, 'Policy transfer as a form of prospective policy evaluation: challenges and recommendations,' *Public Administration Review*, 63 (2003) 4, pp. 428 – 440 (p. 428).
[128] A. Newmark, 'An integrated approach to policy transfer and diffusion,' *Review of Policy Research*, 19 (2002) 2, pp. 151 – 178; C. Bennett, 'What is policy convergence and what causes it?' *British Journal of Political Science*, 21 (1991) pp. 215 – 233; G. Ikenberry, 'The international spread of privatization policies: inducements,

Policy *diffusion* is another similar term. It refers to processes (rather than outcomes) and shares an assumption with the transfer literature that governments and policy makers do not learn about policy practices randomly but rather through common affiliations, negotiations and institutional memberships.[130] Diffusion, however, is connected with the chronological and geographical patterns of ideas or practices across settings. It connotes spreading, dispersion and dissemination and may be the result of communication between and among state officials or 'leader pioneer states' that influence 'laggard states.'[131]

Rose's (1993) term *lesson drawing* also fits into this category whereby 'governments search for lessons elsewhere in the assumption that they could be considered effective in their own context.'[132] Rose identified several processes involved in lesson drawing: 'copying' entails 'enacting a more or less intact program' already in effect; 'adaptation' involves 'adjusting for contextual differences'; making a 'hybrid' consists of 'combining elements of programs from two different places'; 'synthesis' is 'combining familiar elements from programs in a number of different places to create new programs'; and 'inspiration' is 'using programs elsewhere as an intellectual stimulus to develop novel programs.'[133] Policy transfer is used as a generic concept which encompasses different aspects and definitions related to the nature of policy development.

In contrast, policy *convergence* refers to the results rather than the process and is 'the tendency of societies to grow more alike, to develop similarities in structures, processes and performances.'[134] It can include policy objectives, instruments or settings and can extend to

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learning, and "policy band wagoning,"' in *The political economy of public sector reform and privatization*, ed. by E. Suleiman and J. Waterbury (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990) pp. 88 - 113.

[129] J. Peck, 'Geographies of policy: from transfer-diffusion to mobility-mutation,' *Progress in Human Geography*, 1 (2011) 25, pp. 1 - 25.

[130] Z. Elkins and B. Simmons, 'On waves, clusters, and diffusion: a conceptual framework,' *Annals*, 598 (2005) pp. 33 – 51.

[131] D. Stone, 'Transfer agents and global networks in the "transnationalisation" of policy,' *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11 (2004) 3, pp. 545 – 566 (p. 547).

[132] R. Rose, *Lesson-drawing in public policy* (New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, 1993) p. 27.

[133] Ibid. p. 30.

[134] C. Kerr, *The future of industrial societies: convergence or continuing diversity*? (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983) p. 3.

supranational organisations, jurisdictions, states, regions or local authorities. Policy convergence therefore describes the end result of policy change over time, and should be seen as a process of 'becoming' rather than a condition of 'being.' It is thus in close proximity to the concept of isomorphism, a process of homogenisation that 'forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions.'[135] However, studies on isomorphism concentrate on the increasing similarity of cultures, organisational and institutional structures, whereas the literature on policy convergence (or transfer and diffusion) focuses on adjustments in national policy characteristics.

In this thesis, the terms transfer and borrowing are used interchangeably. They both imply the process (as opposed to the outcome) and entail the assumption that the attraction and investigation of foreign examples was a voluntary effort rather than being directly imposed. Moreover, transfer literature demands an examination of different stages of the process, including the causal factors for amendments to implementation. These broad definitions are critical considerations in conceptualising education in nineteenth-century Ontario.

3.3.2 Reasons for policy transfer

Policy is made in and is a part of a world that is changing. Modifications are driven by many issues, including large-scale population movements within and between countries, new political, economic, social and religious actions, and technological developments accessible to an increasing proportion of people. Typically, policy transfer analysts refer to two means by which the process takes place; these are known as voluntary or direct/indirect coercive transfer. The first of these is a logical approach to deal with problems that arise as a result of dissatisfaction with an existing policy. When there is approval of the status quo, the

[135] P. DiMaggio and W. Powell, 'The iron cage revisited: institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields,' in *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis*, ed. by W. Powell and P. DiMaggio (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) pp. 63 – 82 (p. 66).

assumption is that there is no impetus for amending existing frameworks. However, when discontent occurs, policy makers search for solutions to alleviate this dissatisfaction.[136] The literature documenting events that can lead to policy transfer include discussions of competition for capital and trade, social and ideational pressure, public or professional criticism, poor performance and new management. Similarly, policy makers may intentionally seek to learn from successful problem-solving activities in other countries.[137]

The second mode by which policy transfer can occur is through direct or indirect coercive transfer. Direct transfer occurs when a government is forced by another government to introduce new elements (constitutional, social, political) against its will. This may be because of economic recession, crisis or defeat in war, whereby regime change creates new constitutions, new market systems of exchange or new taxation codes. However, direct policy imposition is rare. Indirect transfer is more likely. According to Evans (2009), this is a process by which governments are compelled by influential global financial and supra-national institutions, donor countries or transnational corporations to amend their existing policies in order to secure loans or grants.[138] Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) describe the spread of Western monetary policies to Third World countries as an example of indirect coercive transfer.[139]

[136] D. Dolowitz, 'British employment policy in the 1980s: learning from the American experience,' *Governance* 1 (1997) pp. 23 – 42.
[137] Z. Elkins and B. Simmons, 'On waves, clusters, and diffusion: a conceptual framework,' *Annals*, 598 (2005) pp. 33 – 51 (p. 36); C. Bennett and M. Howlett, 'The lessons of learning: reconciling theories of policy learning and policy change,' *Policy Sciences*, 25 (1992) 3, pp. 275 - 294; K. Tews, 'The diffusion of environmental policy innovations: cornerstones of an analytical framework,' *European Environment*, 15 (2005) 2, pp. 63 – 79; K. Holzinger and C. Knill, 'Causes and conditions of cross-national policy convergence,' *Journal of European Public Policy*, 12 (2005) 5, pp. 775 – 796.
[138] M. Evans, 'New directions in the study of policy transfer,' *Policy Studies*, 30 (2009) 3, pp. 237 – 241.
[139] D. Dolowitz and D. Marsh, 'Who learns what from whom: a review of the policy transfer literature,' *Political Studies*, XLIV (1996) pp. 5 - 24.

3.3.3 Policy borrowing and educational studies

In analysing educational policy formulation, Archer (1984) suggested three ways in which new policies are likely to emerge. These are: external transaction, political manipulation and internal initiative.[140] This is a comparable analysis to that in policy studies, as previously discussed. Similarly, Fuller (1991) stated that 'fragile' states adopt models of education following the Western pattern in order to 'signal their commitment to Western-style progress and modernization through mass opportunity and meritocratic rules.'[141] This relationship between aid and borrowing is further reinforced by Steiner-Khamsi (2000) who observed that the introduction of international remedies 'serves as a powerful means to displace contested educational reforms. It helps accelerate the evaluation of policy options and prevents arduous bargaining processes among stakeholders.'[142]

Phillips and Ochs (2004) have identified nine causal factors of policy transfer within the field of comparative education. These are: internal dissatisfaction, systemic collapse, negative external evaluation, economic change or competition, political or other imperatives, novel configurations, knowledge and skills innovation and political change. The *Spectrum of Educational Transfer* (see Figure 1) illuminates the conditions under which foreign policies or programmes may be transferred from one context to another.[143]

[140] M. Archer, *The social origins of education systems* (London: Sage Publications, 1984).
[141] B. Fuller, *Growing-up modern: the Western state builds Third-World schools* (New York: Routledge, 1991) p. 17.
[142] G. Steiner-Khamsi, 'Transferring education, displacing reforms,' in *Theories and methods in comparative education*, ed. by J. Schriewer and B. Holmes (Bern: Peter Lang Publishers, 2000) pp. 155 - 177 (p. 170).
[143] D. Phillips and K. Ochs, 'Researching policy borrowing: some methodological challenges in comparative education,' *British Educational Research Journal*, 30 (2004) 6, pp. 773 – 784.

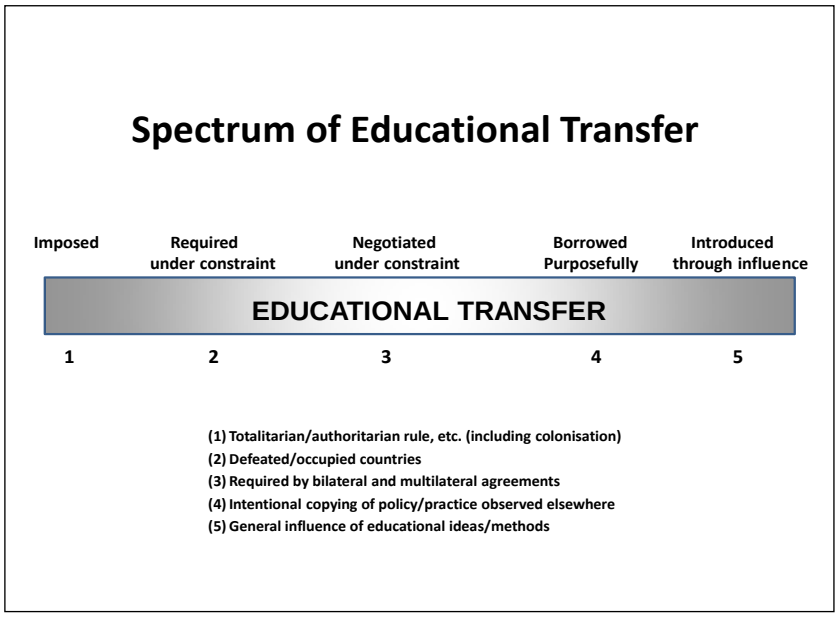


Figure 1: Spectrum of Educational Transfer (Phillips & Ochs, 2004)

As Figure 1 suggests, educational policies and practices can vary from those that are entirely imposed through totalitarian and authoritarian rule, to those that are brought about by the general influence or movement of educational ideas. Case studies that show the range of education policy borrowing include Carnoy's (1974) research on the French colonial systems in Africa,[144] Spreen's (2004) and Jansen's (2004) examination of the outcomes-based education programme in South Africa,[145] Phillips and Ochs's (2002) study of England in the nineteenth century,[146] Shibata's (2004) review of the influence of the United States on Asian countries,[147] and the role of the World Bank in developing countries.[148] These studies have emphasised cross-cultural curiosity, altruistic interest, political motives and economic competition as causal factors for policy borrowing.

[144] M. Carnoy, *Education as cultural imperialism* (New York: Longman, 1974).
[145] A. Spreen, 'Appropriating borrowed policies: Outcomes-Based Education in South Africa,' in *The Global politics of education borrowing and lending*, ed. by G. Steiner-Khamsi (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004) pp. 101 - 113; J. Jansen, 'Importing Outcomes-Based Education into South Africa: policy borrowing in a post-communist world,' in *Educational policy borrowing: historical perspectives*, ed. by D. Phillips and K. Ochs (Oxford: Symposium Books, 2004) pp. 221 - 236.
[146] D. Phillips and K. Ochs, *Towards a structural typology of cross-national attraction in education* (Educa: Lisboa, 2002).
[147] M. Shibata, 'Educational borrowing in Japan in the Meiji and Post-War Eras,' in *Educational policy borrowing: historical perspectives. Oxford Studies in Comparative Education*, ed. by D. Phillips and K. Ochs (Oxford: Symposium Books, 2004) pp. 145 - 165.
[148] P. Jones, 'Taking the credit: financing and policy linkages in the education portfolio of the World Bank,' in *The Global politics of educational borrowing and lending*, ed. by G. Steiner-Khamsi (New York: Teachers College, 2004) pp. 188 - 200.

Perry and Tor (2008) have also linked the neo-institutionalist/social positivist viewpoint as a trigger for educational change.[149] This perspective focuses on the global dissemination and diffusion of principles and institutional ideology. The causal factors are the result of the actions of external forces, so that dysfunctional policies are replaced with best practice models from elsewhere. Studies from this perspective, such as the research by Dale (1999), point to the convergence of education as an outcome of educational culture and globalisation, constructed and propagated through international, cultural and associational forces.[150]

Another viewpoint on the major causal factors of policy transfer is the dependency theory perspective. Wallerstein's (1974) world systems framework has been used in this respect, emphasising the distinctions between the 'haves' and the 'have nots', the northern hemisphere and the southern hemisphere, or the 'core' and the 'periphery.'[151] Education is regarded as a mechanism for producing social inequality in the capitalist world-system, which is further reinforced by globalisation. This theoretical strand is commonly adopted to account for the failed transferred educational projects initiated by donor/aid agencies and developmental organisations or those imposed by external agents.[152]

[149] L. Perry and G. Tor, 'Understanding educational transfer: theoretical perspectives and conceptual frameworks,' Prospects, 38 (2008) pp. 509 – 526.
[150] R. Dale, 'Specifying globalization effects on national policy: a focus on the mechanisms,' *Journal of Education Policy*, 14 (1999) 1, pp. 1-17.
[151] I. Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: capitalist agriculture and the origins of the European world-economy in the sixteenth century* (New York: Academic Press, 1976) pp. 229 – 233.
[152] D. Burde, 'International NGOs and Best Practices: the art of educational lending,' in *The Global politics of educational borrowing and lending*, ed. by G. Steiner-Khamsi (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004) pp. 173-187; R. Irizarry, 'Overeducation and unemployment in the Third World: the paradoxes of dependent industrialization,' *Comparative Education* Review, 24 (1980) 3, pp. 338 – 352.

3.3.4 Who transfers policies? What is transferred and at what level?

The agents involved in the process are the primary actors, institutions and organisations in charge of the policy transfer process. Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) identified six main categories of actors: elected officials, political parties, bureaucrats/civil servants, pressure groups, policy experts and supra-national institutions.[153] Other transfer agents include policy entrepreneurs, salaried employees, central and local government departments, task forces, commissions of inquiry and think tanks.[154] In educational research, Rose (1991) offers additional agents of transfer in the form of epistemic communities or 'invisible colleges' of experts.[155] These are educational specialists, comprising local authorities, national civil servants and professional associations that provide knowledge which acts as a 'trigger for learning' for central policy makers. Similarly, Ketudat and Fry (1981) have written about the role of university research groups and academics as agents in their study of education in Thailand.[156] Finally, Ochs (2005) added networks, league tables, the media and sources of funding to the list. These individuals or institutions set the parameters and endorse the adoption of new policies or programmes.[157]

The transfer of policies, structures or practices is a global phenomenon that can occur at different geopolitical levels and in different arenas. Hulme (2005) has identified three broad levels: international, national and local.[158] At the level of international, transnational or global structures, the exchange of ideas happens across knowledge communities, such as the OECD and the EU, international governing associations and multinational non-governmental

[153] P. Dolowitz and D. Marsh, 'Learning from abroad: the role of policy transfer in contemporary policy-making,' *Governance*, 13 (2000) 1, pp. 5 – 23.
[154] E. Page, 'Future governance and the literature on policy transfer and lesson drawing' paper to the *ESRC Future Governance Programme,* London, 28 January 2000. www.futuregovernance.co.uk.
[155] R. Rose, 'What is lesson drawing?' *Journal of Public Policy*, 11 (1991) 11, pp. 3 – 30.
[156] S. Ketudat and G. Fry, 'Relations between educational research, policy, planning and implementation: the Thai experience,' *International Review of Education*, 27 (1981) 2, pp. 141 – 152.
[157] K. Ochs, 'Educational policy borrowing and its implications for reform and innovation: a study with specific reference to the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham' (D. Phil dissertation, University of Oxford, 2005).
[158] R. Hulme, 'Policy transfer and the internalisation of social policy,' *Social Policy and Sociology*, 4 (2005) 4, pp. 417 – 424.

organisations.[159] The focus is often on the increasing complexity of the 'global policy community' and the rise of generic agendas in education and social welfare. At the national or domestic level, policy ideas and practices are shared across social networks and sectors as well as carried over from previous governments. Lastly, at the inter-organisational level, the movement of ideas and practices can be domestic or international, top-down or bottom-up, and can by-pass the central bodies of domestic authority. Naturally, these levels are not set: knowledge communities (universities, colleges, think tanks, foundations), trans-national advocacy networks and local governing bodies may all involve themselves in the transfer of ideas. Agents from diverse backgrounds may move from one network to another or consult or collaborate with another network community.

A further anomaly in the literature concerns the diverse elements that can be transferred. Bennett's (1991) review focuses largely on the transfer of policy goals, content and instruments.[160] Dolowitz and Marsh (1996), on the other hand, identify seven objects of transfer: policy goals, structure and content, policy instruments or administrative techniques, institutions, ideologies, ideas, attitudes, and concepts and negative lessons.[161] Of course, what is transferred and who is involved in the process is directly influenced by the causal reasons behind the intention of policy transfer.

[159] M. Keck and K. Sikkink, *Activist beyond borders: advocacy networks in international politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).
[160] C. Bennett, 'How states utilize foreign evidence,' *Journal of Public Policy*, 11 (1991) pp. 31 – 54.
[161] 'D. Dolowitz and D. Marsh, 'Who learns what from whom: a review of the policy transfer literature,' *Political Studies* (1996) XLIV, pp. 5 – 24. This is an extension to Dolowitz' initial objects of transfer, including policies, institutions, ideologies or justifications, attitudes and ideas and negative lessons, see D. Dolowitz, 'British employment policy in the 1980s: learning from the American experience,' *Governance*, 10 (1997) 1, pp. 23 – 42.

3.3.5 Determining if policy transfer has occurred

A difficulty often encountered in studying policy transfer is determining whether it has actually happened. This is exacerbated when the researcher does not have access to the primary policy makers. As a result, Colin Bennett (2002) has drawn upon the case study literature and developed a set of pre-requisites to determine whether policy transfer has occurred:

1. It can be demonstrated that idiosyncratic domestic factors are not independently responsible for policy adoption.
2. It can be demonstrated that the adoption is not the result of the effects of similar modernising factors having the same, but separate effects in different states.
3. It can be demonstrated that policy makers are aware of the policy adoptions elsewhere.
4. It can be demonstrated that overseas evidence was utilised within domestic policy debates.[162]

These guidelines emphasise that policy transfer has not transpired if domestic or modernising forces can account for the change. It also excludes instances where nations develop similar policies, or when agents do not make it clear that they used foreign evidence. Thus, in order to conclude confidently that transfer has taken place, Bennett claims that the researcher must have evidence that the agent was aware of and utilised a policy from another example. However, the new conceptual framework that will be introduced in Chapter **7.3** will argue that these features do not necessarily need to be present to denote that transfer has occurred. Moreover, I will argue that policy borrowing involves a wide spectrum of phenomena, ranging from amended policies to direct importation. It may also include universal or modernising forces that influence policy modification, a feature that Bennett excludes.

[162] C. Bennett, 'Understanding ripple effects: the cross-national adoption of policy instruments for bureaucratic accountability,' *Governance* 10 (2002) 3, pp. 213 – 233 (p. 215).

3.3.6 Explaining 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' policy transfer

There is no one-step criterion for analysing the success or failure of policy transfer. Implementation of new policies and programmes creates outcomes unintended by policymakers. As things internalise, more people, institutions and organisations are involved, and this affects the policy process. Evaluation is even more difficult when the original goals are unclear, when the transfer occurs within numerous settings, or where there is a variety of programme designs. Regardless, a number of case studies have documented some of the reasons behind policy transfer failure or success.

According to Ram *et al*. (2007), the rush to transfer when unaccompanied by due reflection on appropriateness and efficacy may result in shallowness, uninformed copying and dismal policy failure.[163] Robertson (1991) and Hulme (2005) both argue that policies that are exceedingly different in their historical or cultural themes may be less likely to be supported than those of a less controversial nature.[164] Of course, policy makers will reduce this complexity by using analogies, wishful thinking and negative images to limit this problem. However, different institutions, cultures and socio-economic circumstances will constrain policy transfer. Likewise, oppositional politics may actively undermine the implemented policy, as could institutional failures such as corruption or clientelism. Messenguer (2005) argues that policy transfer fails when the goals in the originating and borrowing countries are incompatible, or when a policy that was intended to serve one purpose in the originating country serves a different purpose in the borrowing country.[165] Uncertainty with respect to the mechanisms, performance or interaction of policies or programmes in the originating country may also complicate outcomes in the new setting.

[163] M. Ram, N. Theodorakopoulos and I. Worthington, 'Policy transfer in practice: implementing supplier diversity in the UK,' *Public Administration*, 85 (2007) 3, pp. 779 – 803.
[164] D. Robertson, 'Political conflict and lesson drawing,' *Journal of Public Policy*, 11 (1991) 1, pp. 55 – 78; R. Hulme, 'Policy transfer and the internalisation of social policy,' *Social Policy and Society*, 4 (2005) 4, pp. 417 – 425.
[165] C. Meseguer, 'Policy learning, policy diffusion, and the making of a new order,' *Annals* (2005) pp. 67 – 82.

Unsuccessful implementation can equally be the result of policy makers' failing to convince the general public that the problem is caused by 'x' and that 'y' is a possible solution. Alternatively, the policy maker may fail to convince the public that the problem is in fact a real issue. As Hasenfold and Brock (1991) note, 'individuals and organisations resist the implementation of a policy or program because they do not see it as being in their interests.'[166] The policy maker's lack of consultation may result in the new policy being too complex or expensive. Groups may not have been identified, or stigmatising language may have insulted them. Inadequate human resources, weak administrative structures, poor guidelines and vague mandates also provide opportunities for dominant coalitions or competing issues to instigate opposition.[167] Policies that are highly controversial or political between domestic actors may diffuse because they are so contentious. Therefore, the nature of the policy, its feasibility and its political opposition all play a part in the implementation stage. The complexity of a policy or programme affects its transferability; the more complex it is, the harder it will be to transfer.

As Chapter Six will review, even modest alterations in education can lead to substantial unrest and sometimes violence if they are perceived to threaten various groups in society. Change in education requires public consensus and political acceptability to a degree not required in other sectors. It involves teaching children who will eventually become active citizens in the nation. Similar political and bureaucratic systems, technologies, resources, infrastructure and ideology between the original and borrower countries are all factors that will enhance the likelihood of successful transfer. Hall (1993) distinguishes between policy paradigms, policy instruments and settings, arguing that transfer is most difficult for ideas, given their deep embeddedness in the dominant beliefs of domestic actors. In contrast, instruments can be adjusted without necessarily demanding drastic shifts, so that transfer is

[166] Y. Hasenfeld and T. Brock, 'Implementation of social policy revisited,' *Administration & Society*, 22 (1991) pp. 451 - 479.
[167] M. McLaughlin, 'Learning from experience: lessons from policy implementation,' *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 9 (1987) 2, pp. 171 – 178.

more likely.[168] Although the transferability of policies and programmes from one context to another involves many factors, Rose (1993) suggests six hypotheses for successful policy transfer:

1. Programmes with single goals are more transferable than programmes with multiple goals.
2. The simpler the problem, the more likely it is that transfer will occur.
3. The more direct the relationship between the problem and the 'solution' is perceived to be, the more likely it is to be transferred.
4. The fewer the perceived side-effects of a policy, the greater the possibility of transfer.
5. The more information agents have about how a programme operates in another location, the easier it is to transfer.
6. The more easily outcomes can be predicted, the simpler a programme is to transfer.[169]

To be successful, policy makers need to avoid 'obvious pitfalls of cultural bias.'[170] There must be sufficient dialogue not only with officials but at the grassroots level. Holmes (1965) has also concentrated on the importance of understanding the context of both the foreign and the local countries, while Beech (2006) emphasised the significance of the historical traits of the foreign and local systems.[171]

3.4 Concluding remarks: educational policy borrowing literature review

This chapter has reviewed aspects of the historical development of comparative education from the nineteenth century onwards and examined the precariousness of policy borrowing. It then focused on contemporary studies that investigated the causal mechanisms, actors and elements used to interpret and explain the nature of transfer. As this chapter has illustrated,

[168] P. Hall, 'Policy paradigms, social learning and the state: the case of economic policymaking in Britain,' *Comparative Politics*, 25 (1993) pp. 275 – 296.
[169] R. Rose, *Lesson drawing in public policy* (New Jersey: Chatham House, 1993) pp. 132 – 134.
[170] H. Noah and M. Eckstein, *Toward a science of comparative education* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1965); S. Ball and C. Shilling, 'Guest editorial: at the crossroads: educational policy studies,' *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 42 (1994) 1, pp. 1 – 5.
[171] B. Holmes, *Problems in education: a comparative approach* (London: Routledge, 1965); J. Beech, 'The theme of educational transfer in comparative education: a view over time,' *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 1 (2006) 1, pp. 2 – 13.

the manner in which researchers have studied policy transfer are diverse. Some cases record how policy is made, while others focus on why policy is made the way it is. Each of these perspectives is grounded in a particular set of assumptions and offers a different way of understanding, explaining and predicting the process. As Allison (1999) reminds us:

> magnify one set of factors rather than another and thus not only lead analysts to produce different explanations of problems that appear, in their summary questions, to be the same, but also influence the character of the analyst's puzzle, the evidence he assumes to be relevant, the concepts he uses in examining the evidence, and what he takes to be an explanation.[172]

The choice of the framework or theory used to study policy transfer is to a large extent determined by the research questions. It can concentrate entirely on the collection of data or pay exclusive attention to theory. Merton (1957) suggests a 'middle-range theory,' adopting a theoretical framework while applying empirical information to analyse it.[173] Moreover, Cohen *et al*. (2001) suggest that models can be used instead of theory.[174] It is for this reason that Phillips and Ochs's *Policy borrowing and education: composite process* (see Figure 2) was a useful guideline for this study since it illustrates the multilayered, intricacy of the process. Figure 2 represents the model which describes the four stages of policy borrowing: cross-national attraction, decision, implementation, and internalisation/indigenisation. It also identifies the policy problems, focusing on the planning process, the decision in favour of adoption, the legitimisation of the elements and eventually the evaluation of those features.

[172] G. Allison, *Essence of decision: explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Brown, 1999) p. 251.
[173] R. Merton, *Social theory and social structure* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1957).
[174] L. Cohen, L. Manion and K. Morrison, *Research methods in education* (New York: Routledge, 2001) p. 781.

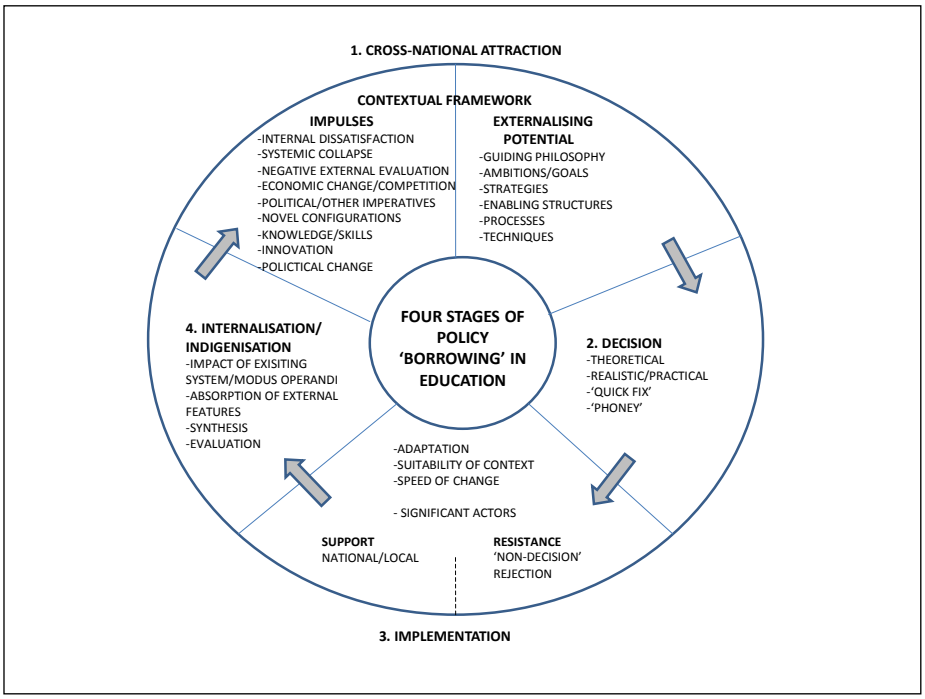


Figure 2: Policy borrowing in education: composite processes (Phillips & Ochs, 2004)

The authors emphasise that the model 'describes an essentially sequential process, with arrows suggesting not causation but temporal linkage.'[175] The framework is suitable for this study because it recognises contextual and macro forces, such as social, cultural, historical, political and economic factors as integral parts of the policy process. The manner in which these stages intertwine and are part of a larger context is a fundamental idea for this thesis.

Phillips and Ochs's (2002) 'Structural Typology of 'Cross-National Attraction' in education includes both the *processes* and the *context* of cross-national attraction in education (see Figure 3).[176] Six foci are identified as factors that influence the attraction of an education system which can then be manipulated by a number of elements. The factors are: guiding philosophy, ambitions and goals, strategies, enabling structures, processes and techniques. Within this framework, various features assist in shaping and influencing the process of educational reconstruction. These features include: philosophical, historical, cultural,

[175] D. Phillips and K. Ochs, 'Researching policy borrowing: some methodological challenges in comparative education,' *British Educational Research Journal*, 30 (2004) 6, pp. 773 – 784 (p. 781).
[176] D. Phillips and K. Ochs, *Towards a structural typology of cross-national attraction in education* (Lisboa: Educa, 2002).

religious, social, national character, political, economic, demographic, geographical, linguistic, administrative and technological. Although all such factors are important, they do not play an equal role. Depending on the circumstances, some features may be more influential than others.

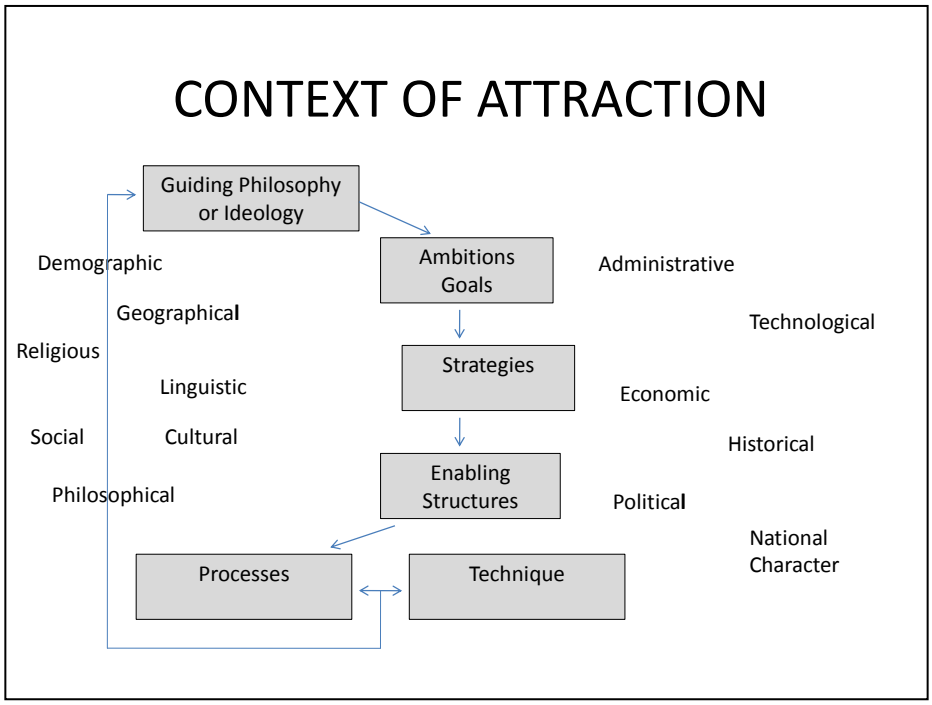


Figure 3: Structural Typology of 'Cross-National Attraction' in Education (Phillips & Ochs, 2004)

The power of the two frameworks shown in Figures 2 and 3 lies in their capacity to enhance the explanations behind the policy process. There is a clear emphasis on learning what factors characterise the system, such as political, economic, and technological underpinnings, and on understanding their consequent effects on social and cultural patterns.

Policy making in education is evolutionary and fluid rather than rational or linear. It is a struggle between advocates of different ideologies and the discourses of key policy makers. These two frameworks encompass the views of the earlier educational comparativists as well as those of contemporary researchers. Policy making demands a comprehensive analysis of

factors and forces that shape schooling in any given nation. In the following chapter, a review of the overarching political, social and economic factors in nineteenth-century Ontario, in addition to the presence of educational infrastructure, laws and personnel will be provided. As education is deeply entrenched in the indigenous culture, to study an education system, one must study the society in which it is embedded.

Chapter Four

Formative influences on education

The people in its vicinity [are] principally composed of worthy but illiterate farmers who are unable to appreciate the advantages of a liberal education, and consequently unwilling to have their children taught anything more than the first elements of learning.

Report of the Western district school, 1828 [177]

Mr. John McDougall was also one of the early teachers in this district, who made his mark on the intellectual faculties of the few scholars who, at that time, were able to attend school […]. This schoolhouse was built largely of clay, pressed together and dried in the sun, there only being timber enough in the building to bind it together. Yet it served its purpose for the time being.

A. McColl, farmer in the county of Kent, 1892 [178]

Does a man wish his sons to swell the dregs of society – to proscribe them from all situations of trust and duty in the locality of their abode – to make them mere slaves in the land of freedom? Then let him leave them without education, and their under-foot position in society will be decided upon.

Egerton Ryerson, 1848 [179]

[177] C. Eliot, W. Berczy and J. Gordon, 'Report of the Western district school 1828,' *DHE* vol. 1, p. 301.
[178] A. McColl, 'Early days in Aldborough, Talbot Settlement, 1816 – 1820,' *DHE* vol. 1, p. 163.
[179] E. Ryerson, 'The importance of education to a manufacturing, and a free people,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 297.

4.1 Chapter overview

Education is an embedded feature of a nation. To study modifications in education one must therefore include a study of the factors and forces that shaped the environment. In the nineteenth century, the question of educational organisation is inseparably connected with more general political, economic and social organisations. This chapter will draw on Phillips and Ochs's (2004) 'Structural typology of 'cross-national attraction' in education,' and chronologically summarise formative influences on education in Ontario.[180] Although each of these topics could warrant a much more extended discussion than is possible here, an attempt will be made to provide a sufficient survey on how these events impacted on future educational initiatives.

4.2 Political and social currents that shaped educational debates

Education in Ontario has been largely moulded by two forces, one British in origin and the other American. It was the relentless control of a miniature British society versus democratic egalitarian ideas as modelled in the American republic that shaped much colonial debate on education. Immediately after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1783, United Empire Loyalists who lived in the United States began to arrive in Ontario. Although they desired to continue to live under the British Crown, they were now also accustomed to principles which had been fostered in the New World, such as schools in each community. Advertisements for instruction subsequently appeared in Ontario newspapers, such as the notice from Mr. and Mrs. Tyler's boarding school in Niagara which offered to 'open their school for young people [...] and the price will be in proportion to the kind of instruction the parents may wish their children to receive.'[181] Mr. William Cooper's school at Toronto (1798) informed the

[180] D. Phillips and K. Ochs, 'Researching policy borrowing: some methodological challenges in comparative education,' *British Educational Research Journal*, 30 (2004) 6, pp. 773 – 784 (p. 781).
[181] 'Schools in existence in Upper Canada during the early part of 1800,' *DHE* vol. 1, pp. 30 – 33.

public that 'those who choose to favour him with their pupils may rely on the greatest attention being paid to their virtue and morals.'[182] Charitable societies also responded by setting up Sunday and missionary schools for native and poor children. An announcement in the *York Gazette* (1796) stated that 'as schools were now opened, ignorance would no longer be tolerated.'[183] The later part of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century were characterised by privately funded, autonomously managed, one-room schoolhouses which provided instruction for a select number of pupils.[184]

John Simcoe, the first governor in the colony, arrived in Ontario in 1792 and strove to make the province a British model. Simcoe, a graduate of Eton and Oxford and a supporter of the Church of England, favored the idea of education for a small number: 'the children of the principal people of this country,' as he put it, 'would eventually become the country's leaders.'[185] Although Governor Simcoe had to relinquish his duties due to ill health, the next incumbent succeeded in setting a portion of the Crown lands set aside for the establishment of a grammar school and a college or university. In the meantime, advanced students could go to Quebec, Montreal or Nova Scotia to further their education. No measures were set up for the common people.

In the early colonial years, education was not considered 'in terms of the enrichment of the personality and the satisfaction of knowledge' but in terms of its utility for certain roles in society.[186] While children of the elite members of society could pay tutors for private instruction or abroad for tertiary education, others received no schooling at all. The reality was that the needs of the pioneers were so immediate that many saw little value in education. M. Smith's *Geographical view of the British possession in North America* (1814) provides a

[182] 'Schools in existence in Upper Canada during the early part of 1800,' *DHE* vol. 1, pp. 30 – 33.
[183] Ibid. pp. 30 – 33.
[184] For a review of when and where the first schoolhouses opened in Upper Canada (1786 – 1833), refer to F. Eames, 'Pioneer schools in Upper Canada,' *Papers and Records* 18 (1919) pp. 91 – 103.
[185] 'Simcoe to Bishop Mountain 30 April 1795,' E. Cruikshank, *The correspondence of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe* (Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1923) p. 349.
[186] B. Bailyn, *Education in the forming of American society: needs and opportunities for study* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1960) p. 19.

good survey of the colony in the early nineteenth century. Born near Philadelphia, Smith immigrated to Ontario in 1808 to benefit from cheap land. His book discussed everything from the types of fish and soil to religion and history. In regards to the town of Sandwich, situated over the river from Detroit (Michigan), Smith found that 'the greater part of the inhabitants of Canada are not well educated, for as they were poor when they came to the province, and the country being so thinly settled for a number of years, they had but little chance for the benefit of schools.'[187] The toil of daily life took precedence.

Edward Talbot, a schoolmaster and later a journalist, published a series of letters on the overall conditions in Ontario. Regarding education, he recollected:

> The great mass of the [Canadian] people are at present completely ignorant even of the rudiments of the most common learning. Very few can either read or write; and parents, who are ignorant themselves, possess so slight a relish for literature and are so little acquainted with its advantages, that they feel scarcely any anxiety to have the minds of their children cultivated […]. They will not believe, that 'knowledge is power.'[188]

Recalling his five year residence, Talbot stated that he had only seen two people with books so that 'the scarcity of books in the country-parts of Canada, is nearly as great as that of pine-apples on the summit of Snowdon.'[189] Talbot also found that as soon as a child turned seven or eight years old, he was 'provided with an *axe*, instead of a *primer*.'[190] This absence of books was also confirmed by the Duc de la Rochefoucault, president of the National Constituent Assembly in France, who visited Kingston (Ontario) in 1795 and found no reading material.[191] Kingston was one of the first settlements in the colony, located on the St.

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[187] M. Smith, *A geographical view of the British possessions in North America: comprehending Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, New Britain, Lower and Upper Canada, with all the country to the Frozen Sea on the north, and Pacific Ocean on the west* (Baltimore: P. Mauro, 1814) p. 52.
[188] Ibid. p. 116.
[189] E. Talbot, *Five years' residence in the Canadas: including a tour through part of the United States of America* vol. 2. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1824) p. 118.
[190] Ibid. p. 96.
[191] F. de la Rochefoucault, *Travels through the United States of North America: the country of the Iroquois, and Upper Canada, in the years 1795, 1796 and 1797: with an authentic account of Lower Canada* (London: R. Phillips, 1799).

Lawrence River between Toronto and Montreal. It was named the first capital of the Province of Canada and served that role from 1841 to 1844.

Another illuminating account of education is found in a report prepared by Robert Gourlay, a Scottish emigrant and later a well-known Canadian politician. This document, published in England in 1822, was based on the answers to a series of thirty-one queries sent to the most prominent men in each municipality. In one entry, Gourlay remarked:

> It has been proposed to have a college in Upper Canada; and no doubt [a] college will in time grow up there. At present, and for a considerable period to come, any effort to found a college would prove abortive. There could neither be got masters nor scholars to ensure tolerable commencement for ten years to come; and a feeble beginning might beget a feeble race of teachers and pupils.[192]

These extracts confirm that those who had the financial means could acquire an education while the remaining school-aged population were left to their own devices. Gourlay's report also alludes to a college being founded before a facility for the general public. This subject will elaborated upon in section **3** of this chapter.

It ought to be noted that with the passage of the Constitutional Act in 1791, the territory which this study focuses on was divided into Upper and Lower Canada. The government of Upper Canada (now Ontario) consisted of a lieutenant-governor, a legislative council appointed by the governor, an executive council similarly appointed and a legislative assembly elected by male voters who met the proper qualifications. The legislative and executive councils were made up of a cohesive clique of men, protesting loyalty to the Crown and to the Church of England who became known as the 'Family Compact.' They not only controlled the economic and political spheres of life but also the social institutions. Many important positions in the colony were controlled by friends of that group, one member being John Strachan, about whom more will be said below. Those who had the

[192] R. Gourlay, *Statistical account of Upper Canada*, vol. 2 (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1822) p. 388. Gourlay began holding public meetings challenging the governmental policies on land ownership. He was charged under the 1804 Seditious Alien Act, jailed, and later banished.

courage to oppose this dominant party, such as the advocates of republicanism or Methodist preachers like Ryerson, were singled out and labelled as disloyal and ignorant. In looking back at how the colony was ruled, it becomes apparent why so many people resented a tight group of men of purely British lineage controlling the activities in Ontario.

4.3 The first school acts in Ontario

In 1799, the Legislature of Upper Canada passed an act to provide an education for orphan children but gave no indication of how this was to be accomplished.[193] The first concrete step to involve the state in educational affairs was taken in 1807 with the passage of the District Public Schools Act.[194] Eight public schools were proposed in each of the eight districts into which the land was then divided, occupying the southern portion of the province. This act remained in force with slight modifications until 1853 when it was superseded by a more comprehensive Grammar School Act.[195] The term 'public school' was used in the traditional sense as current in England, i.e. to refer to the class of great 'public schools' such as Eton. The Lieutenant Governor appointed trustees for each district who were then charged with finding a teacher whose pay was supplemented by a combination of a small government stipend and the pupils' tuition fees. Schoolmasters were invariably clergymen of the Church of England and it was rare to find a Methodist or Baptist teacher. The historian J. Bannister (1960) emphasised this point:

> The schools were undemocratic and soon became class schools attended by those whose parents were members of the Church of England and of the administrative class. This was inevitable. The trustees were chosen from these

[193] An Act to provide for the education and support of orphan children, *39 George III, Chapter 3*, 29 June 1799.
[194] An act to establish public schools in each and every district of this province, *47 George III, Chapter VI*, Clause 5, 10 March 1807.
[195] Subsequent amendments to the Grammar School act included one in 1819 which required annual public examination for each school, annual reports made and sent to the Lieutenant-Governor, and free education for ten students from poorer families to each of the eight grammar schools, *59th George III., Chapter IV*, 12 July 1819.

> classes, and it was but natural that the schools should be looked upon as established for their special benefit.[196]

Students' ages varied from five to seventeen years and instruction included the three Rs, Greek, Latin, history, geography and mathematics. These district schools followed firmly in the Simcoe tradition of schools for the 'sons of gentlemen' and 'nurseries to the university.'[197]

Understandably, many resented the 1807 Act and it came increasingly under attack on the grounds that a disproportionate amount of public money was being spent on education intended for relatively few students. The Midland district submitted a petition to the Legislative Assembly declaring that the grammar schools failed to provide for the educational wants of 'the middling and poorer class of His Majesty's subjects, cast[ing] money into the lap of the rich, who are sufficiently able, without public assistance, to support a school.[198] A similar tone was adopted by the citizens of Williamstown in the Eastern district when they requested that money be granted to them for the benefit of poor children whose parents did not have the means to pay the grammar school tuition.[199] Thus, the Legislature committed itself to an educational anachronism by initially making provision for grammar (or public) and not elementary schools. It was almost a decade before there was a school act intended for the less wealthy residents.

In 1816, agitation over the district schools finally bore fruit. Lieutenant-Governor Francis Gore even referred to schools in his Speech from the Throne:

> The dissemination of letters is of the first importance to every class; and, to aid in so desirable an object, I wish to call your attention to some provision for the establishment of schools in each township, which shall afford the first

[196] J. Bannister, *Early education history of Norfolk County* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1926) p. 69.
[197] J. Strachan to P. Maitland, York October 1828, *DHE* vol. 3, pp. 23 - 24.
[198] J. Hess, D. Wright, S. Hess, J. Trumpour and sixty others, 'Petition of the inhabitants of the Midland District,' 6 January 1812, *DHE* vol. 1, p. 77.
[199] A. Mackenzie, D. Fraser, D. McPherson, P. Ferguson, J. Wright etc., 'Petition of the inhabitants of the village of Williamstown in the township of Charlottenburg, county of Glengarry, Eastern District,' 5 February 1816, *DHE* vol. 1, p. 96.

> principles to the children of the inhabitants, and prepare such of them as may require further instruction to receive it in the district schools.[200]

A select committee was set up which drafted a law for common schools. This was the first evidence on the state's part of its responsibility to ensure facilities for all people. The Act of 1816, lasting four years, contained sixteen sections and allowed residents of a village, town or township to meet together and decide whether or not to establish a school. Three trustees would be chosen by the inhabitants who were then to 'examine into the moral character and capacity of any person willing to become a teacher' before appointing him or her. The school grant was based upon pupils' attendance, the number of which could be no less than twenty. As the government grants did not cover building or maintenance costs, money had to be raised by voluntary contributions. Parents paid different amounts depending on the district and were normally required to supply an amount of firewood during the winter months. The Act of 1816 was for the most part based upon the principle of local control: communities decided whether they wanted a school, the district boards of education were geographically distant from local schools, and the manner of paying for teachers' salaries was left to the freeholders. However, the hiring of teachers was not completely independent. A clause in the Act stipulated that all teachers must be natural-born subjects of Great Britain or have taken an oath of allegiance.[201]

This was not the first time that those governing the colony begrudged Americans. Dating back to 1799, it was government policy 'to exclude [from Upper Canada] schoolmasters from the States lest they should instill Republicanism into the tender minds of the youth of the province.'[202] The War of 1812, fought between Great Britain and the United States with the main fighting occurring along the Canadian border, propagated a good deal of anti-

[200] Gore was Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada from 1806 to 1811. A copy of his speech to the Throne (6 February 1816) may be found in *DHE* vol. 1, p. 94.
[201] An act granting to His Majesty a sum of money to be applied to the use of common schools throughout this province, and to provide for the regulation of the said common school, *56th George III, Chapter XXXVI*, clause 4, 1 April 1816.
[202] D. Wilson, 'The teacher in early Ontario,' in *Aspects of nineteenth-century Ontario: essays presented to James J. Talman*, ed. by F. Armstrong et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1974) pp. 218 – 236 (p. 219).

Americanism which had a lasting effect on education. The governor at that time, Francis Gore, ordered magistrates not to administer the oath of allegiance to any Americans, even ones already resident in the province. American teachers were blamed for rendering education inferior. This was the view of the author of *Three years' residence in Canada* (1839) who claimed:

> Another serious evil arising from the neglect of popular education in Upper Canada, is that throughout the rural district, numerous American adventurers, many of them persons of the lowest grade, are imbued with sentiments the very reverse of friendly to everything that is British, have 'squatted' as elementary teachers, wheresoever they found the field unoccupied; pursuing their speculation with pecuniary profit to themselves, but with anything but advantage to the moral discipline of their youthful pupils.[203]

Traveler Dr. Thomas Rolph, who surveyed education in the West Indies and North America, made a similar destructive remark regarding American teachers:

> It is really melancholy to traverse the Province, and go into many of the common schools; you will find a herd of children, instructed by some anti-British adventurer, instilling into the young and tender mind sentiments hostile to the parent state; false accounts of the late war, in which Great Britain was engaged with the United States: geography setting forth New York, Philadelphia, Boston, etc., as the largest and finest cities in the world; historical reading books, describing the American population as the most free and enlightened under Heaven; insisting on the superiority of their laws and institutions, to those of all the world, in defiance of the agrarian outrages and mob supremacy daily witnessed and lamented; and American spelling books, dictionaries and grammar, teaching them an anti-British dialect, and idiom; although living in a Province, and being subjects of the British Crown.[204]

Even Honourable Sullivan, President of the Legislative Council, reported:

> In many parts of the province the teachers are Americans, for the sake of obtaining employment they have swallowed the oath of allegiance which agrees so ill with them that the rest of their lives is spent in attempts to disgorge it. These men are utterly ignorant of everything English and could not if they tried to instruct their pupils in any of the duties which the connection of the province with England casts upon them. The books they use

[203] T. Preston, *Three years residence in Canada, from 1837 to 1839* vol. 2, (London: Richard Bentley, 1840) p. 416.
[204] T. Rolph, *A brief account, together with observations made during a visit in the West Indies and a tour the United States, together with a statistical account of Upper Canada* (Dundas: G.H. Hackstaff, 1836) p. 262.

> are all American filled with inflated accounts of American independence and the glorious wars with England.[205]

Sullivan's report suggested that an educational system dominated by American teachers and books would produce a disloyal population. Dislike of American teachers and textbooks continued to be a widely debated topic over the course of Ryerson's period in office. In fact, the chief superintendent's defence of excluding American textbooks is almost a replica of Rolph's earlier explanation. This will be elaborated upon in section **6.4.3.1**.

The War of 1812 had further educational implications. Firstly, during the war, garrison schools opened to all students free of charge. For many, this was the first and only instruction they had received.[206] Secondly, the arrival of immigrants from the United States at the end of the war brought a spirit of democracy in the colony. Many of these people had lived in settlements with prosperous schools. In Talman's (1946) volume on *Loyalist Narratives,* he underlined the social mixture of the emigrants to Ontario:

> It appears that the Loyalists of New York had within their ranks persons of all social positions […] of all grades of intelligence from the ignorant agriculturalist to the president of the only college in the province […] the party included leaders in culture, religions and society […] many of the solid business men and also much of the brawn and muscle of the common people.[207]

This was a similar remark made by Lower (1947) who explained:

> Because of their type they were important out of proportion to their numbers. Many ministers, doctors – the medical profession pioneered by them – teachers, printers and other professional and technical men were comprised in the later American immigration. The major improvements in nearly all the arts from education to agriculture seem to have come into Canada by this route.[208]

For example, the states of Massachusetts, New York and Connecticut all had a history of schools supported and maintained by property tax (see section **6.3.3**). Reflecting on his

[205] 'Mr. Sullivan's report on the state of the province 1838,' in *The Arthur Papers* vol. 1. ed. by C. Sanderson (Toronto: University of Toronto,1957) p. 151.
[206] W. Canniff, *History of the settlement of Upper Canada, with special reference to the Bay of Quinte* (Toronto: Dudley and Burns, 1869).
[207] J. Talman, *Loyalist Narratives* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1946) p. 25.
[208] A. Lower, *Colony to nation: a history of Canada* (Toronto: Longman, 1947) p. 182.

experience in Boston, Ryerson wrote in the JEUC: 'from the Governor downwards, every man with whom you meet and converse on the subject, refers to the common schools as the glory of the city, the first and most vital interest of the state.'[209] In the Thirteen Colonies, there had also been colleges established, including Harvard (1636), William and Mary (1693) and Yale (1701). What Ontario lacked in education was therefore of concern to these recent migrants.

Despite the significance of the 1816 Act, there were many defects in it. The government allowance of £25 ($100) per school was insufficient, and many had to charge high fees to maintain the building and cover the teacher's salary. Unsurprisingly, many parents kept their children at home. Moreover, the clause stipulating that a common school could be built wherever twenty pupils were located meant that numerous schools were erected that later proved to be unsustainable. In April 1819, the *Christian Guardian* announced that 'in one or two districts, it must be confessed, that all the good which might have been anticipated has not been produced.'[210] In John Morris's 'Essay', contributed to the *Kingston Gazette* (1818), he described how difficult it was to educate the pupils due to the 'whimsical, ignorant and discontented parents.'[211] Even Gourlay's report included a letter by the superintendent of Grimsby: 'the state of education is also at a very low ebb, not only in this township, but generally throughout the district.'[212] Because the law failed to meet basic requirements, families often took no interest in sending their children to school. Furthermore, the fact that schools were to such a large extent based on local initiative meant that communities could decide whether or not to support them.

An additional aftermath of the lack of government support was that a number of communities established their own privately-run schools. Where some focused on providing

[209] 'Practical lessons on education from Boston,' *JEUC* 4 (1851) 153.
[210] J. Strachan, *Christian Guardian*, April 1819, *DHE* vol. 1, p. 122.
[211] J. Morris, 'Essay,' *Kingston Gazette* 1818, *DHE* vol. 1, p. 134.
[212] 'W. Crooks to R. Gourlay, 12 January 1818,' R. Gourlay, *Statistical account of Upper Canada*, vol. 2 (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1822) p. 433.

for poor children, others concentrated on the type of teacher (American, German, etc.) or a particular curriculum.[213] At the same time, an increasing number of elite private schools were being founded, including one run by John Strachan. Strachan arrived from Scotland in 1799 as a personal tutor for the children of members of the legislative council. Through contacts, he rose to occupy a dominant position in the Family Compact. Strachan believed that the purpose of education was to form moral character while developing affection for the British Monarchy. When Lieutenant Governor Maitland arrived in the colony in 1818, he and Strachan both favoured the Bell-Lancaster movement which was gaining popularity in England. These two men played important roles in founding the Upper Canada Central School at York (1820), which followed Bell's monitorial system. Unlike the Lancaster system, this framework was in accordance with the established Church of England.

In 1824 Strachan became the chairman of the first general board of education (officially the Board of General Superintendence of Education) whose five members were either Anglicans or affiliated with the Church of England. This was a new clause supplemented from the 1816 Common School Act. The board was charged with supervising school finances, controlling teacher appointments and choosing textbooks.[214] However, the board's actions were criticised. The opponents focused on the fact that its participants were all members of the Family Compact, and pointed to its use or misuse of the province's funds. William Lyon Mackenzie, the leader of the Rebellions of 1836, objected to the 'permanent public provision out of the province's funds [of $600 a year] for purchasing Episcopalian books and tracts to convert the youth of the colony to the established faith.'[215] Mackenzie's actions prompted

[213] Among the new elite private schools was the Ernestown Academy founded in 1811. The inhabitants of the Midland district formed a school society in 1815 for poor children and taught according to the Lancastrian system. One of the promoters even went to England to hire a teacher. The reality was that children in specific towns or those who could pay fees were assured some form of education, while others were not.
[214] An act to make permanent and extend the provisions of the laws now in force for the establishment and resolution and regulation of common schools throughout this province, and for granting to His Majesty a further sum of money to promote and encourage education within the state, *4th George IV, Chap. VIII*, 19 January 1824.
[215] *Colonial Advocate,* 3 July 1828.

drastic changes in provincial affairs, and will be discussed in section **5** of this chapter. Another critic was equally specific in his charges:

> I am informed that Dr. [Strachan] purchased six hundred copies of Dr. Bell's System of Education at one time. There being only one school of that kind in the province, it is thought that so many copies of that book were not wanted. And it appears very suitable, and what might have been expected, that from a grant made from the funds of the province books suitable for all denominations of Christians would have been obtained; but those only which are peculiar to the Church of England have been obtained.[216]

The school being referred to was Upper Canada Central School. It was the only school established in Ontario which followed the Bell system, and it operated for twenty-four years (from 1820 to 1844). Equally, a committee in the House of Assembly reported that 'the General Board of Education stood for the supremacy of the Established Church in the field of public education even going to the extent of using school land for the endowment of Church of England National Schools throughout the Province.'[217] The focus of these complaints was the school's close affiliation with the Church of England, and the money spent for the exclusive benefit of one school. The general board of education dissolved in 1833.

Despite the board's cessation, Strachan's efforts were immense. Spragge (1946) stated: 'if Ryerson established the educational system in Ontario, a good foundation had been laid in Upper Canada by John Strachan.'[218] He was head of the general board and openly advocated the necessity of providing a religious education. Moreover, it was Strachan's actions that inadvertently pushed Ryerson into the public light. In 1825, Strachan recited a sermon and later published a pamphlet that claimed that the Church of England was the authorised church of the province. Methodist preachers were represented as disloyal Americans, who were not only spreaders of sedition but preached what they neither understood nor cared to

[216] 'Osgood to Colborne, 9 December 1828,' in J. Wilson, 'Foreign and local influences on popular education in Upper Canada, 1815 – 1844' (PhD thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1971) p. 73.
[217] 'Lord Goderich to John Colborne, July 1832,' in *Public education in Upper Canada*, ed. by H. Coleman (New York: Columbia University, 1970) p. 41.
[218] G. Spragge, 'John Strachan's contributions to education 1800 – 1823,' *Canadian Historical Review* 22 (1941) 22, pp. 147 – 158 (p. 158).

learn. Ryerson, who was then a Methodist preacher, immediately responded with a 12,000-word rebuttal published in *The Colonial Advocate*. He not only defended Methodists but challenged Strachan's preference for the special status of the Anglican Church. While this dialogue between the two men occurred almost twenty years before Ryerson was put in charge of public instruction, the arguments that Ryerson made in his rebuttal foreshadowed his future educational philosophy: the need for a universal, common education for all, in conjunction with religious tolerance. Both men publically attacked each other's pretensions for more than forty years. Regardless of these differences, Strachan's contribution to education was significant.

4.4 Early colonial schoolhouses

Correspondence and diaries tell the stories of those who lived through the first educational initiatives. The first schoolhouses were usually built in the centre of a settlement, doubling as the dwelling of the teacher, a shop, a church or a town hall.[219] The building was usually made of timber or clay and when there were furnishings, the seats and writing desks were constructed from logs flattened by axes. There were rarely maps, blackboards or globes. Looking back at the colonial schools, the board of trustees in Toronto reminisced that the buildings were:

> Small, incommodious, badly ventilated, and ill adapted for the purpose of moral and social advancement, through the agency of popular education; children of both sex[es] assembled in one room, and mingled together in one common play-yard – in several cases as many as a hundred young persons were huddled together in a space not fit to accommodate – far less teach – two thirds […] of the number.[220]

[219] A. Harkness, *Iroquois High School, 1845 – 1895: a story of fifty years* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1896).
[220] 'Board of school trustees,' Report of the past history, and present condition, of the common or public schools of the city of Toronto (Toronto, 1859) p. 73.

Others described schoolhouses as 'cold, dark, and dismal,' a 'wretched log hut, or a ruinous building' with poor ventilation.[221] Only after Ryerson's school bills had been passed were measures put in place to ensure that the only function for a school was for instruction. An educational depository was also established in 1850 which supplied textbooks, desks, chairs and architectural designs and layouts.

In many instances, teaching was considered a low-status job, and teachers were seen as inept idlers and charlatans. Peter Russell's (1990) study of occupations in the nineteenth century classified teachers at the same level as servants, labourers and pioneer farmers. At the lowest level were squatters.[222] In C. Costello's memoir, he remarked that there was no 'harder worked class than school teachers, and certainly none worst paid.'[223] Often hired monthly, there was no guarantee that they would have a job the following month and they were obliged to 'board round' with the people of the section if they could not sleep in the schoolhouse. Irene Ireland, who spent thirteen years teaching, lamented her position as 'poor school ma'am' and described her experience in Shawville:

> It may seem strange that the teacher put up with such a state of affairs. But how soon we female teachers learned that in order to be a success in the schools, we must 'take things as we find them' and that people dared (even our own sex) find more fault with us than with male teachers. We were at a disadvantage too, because with our own hands we could not make repairs thereby saving the additional expense – that terrible bugbear to some sections in the county.[224]

The reality was that the small school fund, insufficient to attract or support competent teachers, degraded teaching to a matter of convenience for transient persons who left at the end of a season or as soon as they could find better employment.

[221] W. Johnson, '*Western district board of education report* 1838,' *DHE* vol. 3, p. 214; O. Olmstead, 'Local histories and teaching experiences, n.d.,' AO RG 2-87-0-53; G. Peters, n.d., AO RG 2-87-0-56.
[222] P. Russell, *Attitudes to social structure and mobility in Upper Canada 1815 – 1840* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990) p. 9.
[223] C. Costello, 'Local histories and teaching experiences,' 18 April 1896 AO 2-87-0-27.
[224] Irene Ireland, Shawville, 14 April 1896, MS 914; AO E2 RG 2-87-0-33.

School attendance was another issue. Epidemics of smallpox, cholera, diphtheria, measles, whooping cough and scarlet fever were obviously accepted as inevitable reasons for absence. However, for the most part, parents did not enforce a regular, punctual attendance. One explanation for this was the demands of domestic life which took precedence, especially for the working class. Historians have acknowledged the existence of child labour in nineteenth century Ontario.[225] They have also documented that work of the young constituted a significant portion of the family income. Rev. Rogerann, secretary for the board of trustees in Pretoria, summarised the problem in his district:

> The cause of non-attendance on the part of so many children of school age in this village is in many cases the carelessness of parents and sometimes their cupidity in requiring work of their children when they should be and might be at schools.[226]

Katz, Doucet and Stern (1982) have also pointed to non-attendance as the result of seasonal employment and the general transiency of life.[227] The continual movement of working people meant that many school-aged children lived too short a time at one location to attend school and if they did, it was not for very long. In Davey's (1975) study, which reviewed the link between social conditions, family and schooling, he concluded that irregular attendance was not always the result of large-scale unemployment, but may have been the result of a lack or loss of a parent's job:

[225] H. Bamman, 'Patterns of school attendance in Toronto, 1844 – 1878: some spatial consideration,' *History of Education Quarterly*, 12 (1972) 3, pp. 381 – 410; A. Prentice, *Education and social class in mid-nineteenth century Upper Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977); J. Bullen, 'Children of the industrial age: children, work, and welfare in late nineteenth-century Ontario (PhD Thesis, University of Ottawa, 1989); L. Hurl, 'Overcoming the inevitable: restricting child labour in late nineteenth century Ontario,' *Labour/Le Travail*, 21 (1988) pp. 87 – 121; I. Davey, 'The rhythm of work and the rhythm of school,' in *Egerton Ryerson and His Times*, ed. by N. McDonald and A. Chaiton (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1978) pp. 221 – 254; S. Houston, 'The impetus to reform: urban crime, poverty and ignorance in Ontario, 1850 – 1875' (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1974); D. Gagan, *Hopeful travellers: families, land, and social change in Mid-Victorian Peel County, Canada West* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1981).

[226] M. Rogerann of Petrolea to E. Ryerson, 19 February 1870, AO RG 2-12-159-24.

[227] M. Katz, M. Doucet and M. Stern, *The social organization of early industrial capitalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1982).

> In large part, irregular attendance patterns in the urban areas were the cumulative result of many personal disasters stemming from the instability of the labour market and the incidence of sickness – conditions which intersected most acutely during the winter months.[228]

However, absence should not be generalised exclusively to the middle class or working class people in poor communities. An illuminating account was recorded in Robina and Kathleen Lizar's (1896) manuscript where they included a letter submitted by Dr. Dunlop to the schoolmaster, apologising for the non-attendance of his children 'on the score of turnip-taking and such-like laborious work.'[229] Even educated doctors relied on their children in the field to contribute to the family income.

A second explanation for a certain reluctance to attend school was the common practice of rate bills. Each district charged a different fee for a pupil to go to school. However, it was often too costly for families so that many parents either prohibited their children from attending, or in other cases parents may have agreed to pay, but when it was time to do so they refused. Richard Unsworth, a teacher from Fergus, recalled exactly this problem:

> Whilst teaching in one of the school sections, that I was urgently solicited by the trustees to collect the rates which they were authorised to levy upon the tax payers, in lieu of fees. These amounted to more than twenty five cents per month for each child attending school. Armed with the warrant of the trustee, I went from house to house to inform every rate payer of the amount of his school taxes, and the time it should be paid. In some instances I met with a positive refusal to pay. Others regarded me with astonishment, and wondered at what they called the cool impudence of the demand, seeing that they had no children to send to school, and that, therefore, they had no right to be called upon to pay school rates.[230]

We note here Unsworth's reference to the parents' interpretation of the 'impudence of the demand' at being asked to help pay to school others; this was a central criticism against the free school movement, which will be discussed in section **6.3.2.1**. Another teacher arriving in Oshawa was told by a trustee to put away the maps he hung in his classroom because 'the

[228] I. Davey, 'Educational reform and the working class: school attendance in Hamilton, Ontario, 1851 – 1891' (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1975) p. 285.
[229] K. Lizars, *In the days of the Canada Company: the story of the settlement of the Huron Tract and a view of the social life of the period, 1825 – 1850* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1896) p. 188.
[230] R. Unsworth, 'Reminiscences of superannuated school teachers, 1850,' *DHE* vol. 9, p. 297.

ratepayers might not like such expensive playthings' displayed.[231] Although Ryerson's first school act did not abolish rate bills, it provided better procedures for how authorised collectors, by order of local magistrates, were to acquire the fees.

Lastly, a cause of non-attendance may have been the condition of the school and the relationship between teacher and pupils. Schools, rarely furnished, were cold, dark and difficult to access during the winter months. Rote learning was common and a lack of books meant there was no consistency in lessons, no way of mapping a student's progress and no rules governing what should take place during a typical day. In addition, corporal punishment was common. The memoirs of retired teachers shed light on the type of discipline and its regularity:

> Modes of punishment in the old days were barbarous. It is recorded of one teacher that he sometimes tied the thumb of one hand of a pupil to a string hanging from the roof or ceiling, while the other hand held a book, the pupil meanwhile having to stand on one foot until his task was finished, or his punishment thought sufficient.[232]

James Kelly, who taught for forty years, recalled an incident during his career:

> I was warned by the trustees who intended to put me on my guard that I might possibly have difficulty with some of the young buck-thorns two especially being named […]. The one I convinced of my superior agility in an encounter which he sought by giving him a good ducking in a snow drift […] the other young fellow was not so easily managed […]. He brought some rotten apples in his pocket, and as he was so backward, he had to take his seat on the low bench, opposite to him were the little girls on the other side of the stove. He scooped the rot of the apple out with his thumb and shot it in the girls' faces. I noticed the girls in commotion and looking up […] I caught him in the very act […]. I told him he would have to behave or he would have to take up with a thrashing, [but] he paid no attention to the warning. There was at that time a large beech rod lying somewhere behind me. I grabbed it and was upon him before he could rise from the seat […]. I gave him a complete thrashing […] I had no further trouble in the school.[233]

Following Ryerson's School Act, a recurring topic featured in the JEUC was the discussion of ways to manage pupil behaviour that did not include physical punishment. Furthermore, it

[231] W. Scott, 'Local histories and teaching experiences,' AO RG 2-87-0-62.
[232] D. Boyle, *The history of the township of Scarboro', 1796 – 1896* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1896) p. 185.
[233] J. Kelly, nd, AO F 1207.

was not only the pupils that had to put up with misbehaviour, but teachers as well. Henry Dugdale, who taught near Kingston, remembered enduring student's pranks:

> The winter was very stormy and cold; much snow had fallen which obliged the door shut and the windows up with a good fire in the stove. Suddenly there was a suffocating atmosphere in the room which caused a general coughing and sneezing amongst the pupils till it became intolerable when there was a rush for the outside, some of the younger ones burying their faces in the snow for relief. As soon as order could be obtained and inquiry made as to the cause I found that some of the rude boys had put cayenne pepper on the hot stove which was the cause of the uproar. Could never find out who did it for several years afterwards.[234]

Each teacher's experience differed, but the accounts show the difficulty of managing pupil behaviour and often an entire disrespect for the profession itself. Hired by trustees, there was little guidance for teachers on the rules of school management and few assurances for their own welfare. Perhaps the teacher's inexperience or lack of training added to the plethora of reasons for non-attendance. However, the prevalence of disease, the cost, parental reluctance, child labour, distance and impassable roads all contributed to whether pupils attended their local common school.

4.5 Towards a centralised education system

The decade of the 1830s was a period of intense reform not only in educational affairs but in the province in general. Pakenham (1914) said 'the story of elementary education between 1825 and 1840 is a story of petitions, reports, and doctrinaire proposals, or of captious criticisms and recriminations, and always of legislative inaction.'[235] By the nineteenth century, British North America went from an underdeveloped colony occupied by pioneer farmers, timberers and fur traders to a prosperous nation. The forces of industrialisation and urbanisation dramatically redefined living arrangements, working conditions, social welfare

[234] H. Dugdale, March 1896, MS 6026.
[235] W. Pakenham, 'The public school system,' in *Canada and its provinces*, vol. 18., ed. by A. Shortt and A. Doughty (Toronto: Glasgow, Brock and company, 1914) pp. 277 – 319 (p. 305).

and class relations. Small villages grew into thriving towns where commercial life flourished. Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa and Kingston were the leading cities, and were home to a variety of businesses, hotels, taverns and churches. Communication by post, electric telegraph, road and canal networks linked settlements and as a result of the development of the steam engine, the journey from Canada to England was reduced from one month to ten days.[236]

The rise of industrial capitalism had an important link with public education. Schools began to be seen as tools not only for moral education but also to teach skills useful for the workplace. Michael Cross (1985) clarifies this point:

> Throughout the Industrial Revolution, the reshaping of people accompanied the reshaping of nature, so that the school became as much the symbol of the age as the factory. School systems were created to teach the young, at least in part, the self-discipline necessary for a modern, efficient economy. Children learned to obey clocks and – a vital skill for factory workers – to subdue boredom.[237]

Similarly, examining a private school in Hawkesbury operated by sawmill owners for the workers' children, Gaffield (1982) provided an illustration of the skills that education could teach those who might potentially pursue a career in industry:

> The rhythm and discipline of the classroom were appropriate training for later employment in the sawmill. Sitting in rows, responding to bells, and obeying the teacher were experiences not unrelated to the punctuality, sobriety, and deference desired in sawmill workers. In this context, schooling held a dual promise: the prevention of social disorder associated with idle children; and the preparation, both physical and psychological, of employees for the mills.[238]

It will therefore come as no surprise that education became an increasingly central feature of the emerging urban landscape and of modern life. Instruction on punctuality and obedience

[236] *Emigration to Canada*: *a brief outline of her geographical position, productions, climate, capabilities, educational and municipal institutions, etc.*, 3rd edn (Quebec: John Lovell, 1861).
[237] M. Cross, 'The Canadian worker in the early industrial age,' in *Lectures in Canadian labour and working-class history*, ed. by W. Cherwinski and G. Kealey (St. Johns: New Hogtown, 1985) pp. 37 – 50 (p. 49).
[238] C. Gaffield, 'Schooling, the economy, and rural society in nineteenth-century Ontario,' in *Childhood and Family in Canadian Society*, ed. by J. Parr (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982) pp. 69 – 92 (p. 88).

would be two of the many critical topics that would need to be covered in schools during the shift away from a pioneer lifestyle towards an increasingly commercial world.

In the same way, social aspects were in flux. According to Russell (1990), Ontario as the 'poor man's country' was a popular social myth in the nineteenth century.[239] It was believed that the province held opportunities for the poorer class that the old country did not. This perception may also be found in Charles Barclay's preface to a collection of emigrants' letters home which stated that 'industrious persons with, or without small capitals have a fair prospect of maintaining themselves and their families in comfort and independence by settling in Upper Canada.'[240] Similarly, in T. Sockett's guide to immigration, he found that those who migrated soon 'elevated to a class of society, far above that they before occupied.'[241] The Canadian press also reinforced this idea of Ontario being a haven for the poor. Articles emphasised that it would take only a few years for poor people to be able to live a comfortable life.[242]

In addition to this expectation of an improved lifestyle, those who arrived in Ontario saw the new country as a haven from the rapid progress of the Industrial Revolution, the Highland Clearances or the Irish potato famine. Also, they expected that land could be acquired at a reasonable rate.[243] Conrad and Finkel (2002) estimated that by 1842, one-third of the people in Ontario had been born in the British Isles.[244] Carney (1990) suggests that the population rose from 150,000 in 1825 to nearly a million by 1851.[245] The earliest statistics available in Canada (dating from 1848) demonstrate that the origin of birth of the population derived

[239] P. Russell, *Attitudes to social structure and mobility in Upper Canada 1815 – 1840* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990).
[240] C. Barclay, *Letters from the Dorking emigrants* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1833) p. 5.
[241] T. Sockett, *Emigration, a letter to a member of parliament* (London: Longman and Co., 1833) p. 13.
[242] Several newspapers published letters to poor immigrants which are located in P. Russell, *Attitudes to social structure and mobility in Upper Canada 1815 – 1840* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990).
[243] R. White, *Ontario 1610 – 1985: A political and economic history* (London: Dundurn, 1985); M. McLean, Peopling Glengarry county: the Scottish origins of a Canadian community, *Historical papers/Communications historiques*, 17 (1982) 1, pp. 156 - 171.
[244] M. Conrad and A. Finkel, *Canada: A National History* (Toronto: Longman, 2002).
[245] R. Carney, 'Going to School in Upper Canada,' in *Canadian Education: Historical Themes and Contemporary Issues*, ed. by E. Titley (Calgary: Detseling Enterprises, 1990) pp. 9 - 44.

from Scotland, England, Wales, the United States, Ireland and Germany.[246] Moreover, the prevailing religious denominations were the Church of England (166,340 individuals), Catholicism (118,810), Wesleyan (87,516) and the Church of Scotland (65,762).[247] These figures are of particular interest because they show that nearly half as many people were affiliated with a religion other than the Church of England. With so many people not Anglican, Strachan's sermon proclaiming the Church of England as the established church of the colony simply does not stand up.

The influx of immigrants of different religious and social status was not always enthusiastically received. As we shall see in Chapter Six, many resented having to provide and care for the migrants when they were also dealing with the labours of daily life. In an address by James Fitzgibbon, who was later to become an official in Ontario's Indian department, he urged toleration against ethnic stereotypes:

> Our population being made up of persons of many nations, languages and religions, need we wonder at sometimes hearing the offensive terms of insolent Englishman! Selfish Scot! Savage Irishman! Cunning Yankee! And do not we all know most valuable characters of these several nations?[248]

A particularly powerful antipathy grew towards the Irish who were labelled as careless, improvident, dirty, disorderly and arrogant. John MacTaggart, who worked on the Rideau Canal (Ottawa) with Irish labourers, wrote:

> You cannot get the *low Irish* to wash their faces, even were you to lay before them ewers of crystal water and scented soap: you cannot get them to dress decently, although you supply them with ready-made clothes; they will smoke, drink, eat murphies, brawl, box, and set the house on fire.[249]

[246] Statistics Canada, *Birth places of the people, 1848,* <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/98-187-x/4151286-eng.htm> [Accessed 11 November 2011] (Appendix 3).
[247] Statistics Canada, *Population by religions*, 1848' <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/98-187-x/4151286-eng.htm> [Accessed 11 November 2011] (Appendix 4).
[248] J. Fizgibbon, *Weekly Register*, 24 July 1823.
[249] J. Mactaggart, *Three Years in Canada*: *an account of the actual state of the country in 1826 – 8*, vol. 2 (London: Henry Colburn, 1829) p. 244.

Similarly, in a chapter of Moodie's (1852) work, Irish immigrants were described as violent 'sun-burnt, vicious uneducated barbarians [and] perfectly destitute of shame.'[250] Even retired teacher D. McAlphine wrote that the Irish settlement was the poorest one that he ever taught.[251] Resentment of Americans had now also been extended to the Irish. While recent studies have rejected the view of the poor Irish migrant, the negative perception at that time was problematic. They often entered the province without funds and congregated in shanty towns or were sent to rural Canada to begin anew as farmers.

In addition to increased immigration, so too was there a rise in criminal activity. Where some saw crime as the result of migration, others pointed to an absence of morality. Youngsters not attending schools came to be seen as 'street Arabs' whose parents were indecisive about requiring them to attend school.[252] Wise and Brown (1972) claim that these migrants often settled in cities such as Toronto and Kingston which resulted in 'anarchy and bloodshed' and an increase in crime in those areas.[253] Like their counterparts in the United States and Britain, observers in Ontario were convinced that juvenile delinquency was the result of a complex set of social conditions including poverty, urbanisation, illiteracy and a lack of moral teaching. To prevent criminality, education was the solution.

The growth of industries and urban centres changed the way of life for many settlers. As they became less self-sufficient, there was an increased need for specialised urban services such as schools. By the middle of the nineteenth century, public opinion called for better educational provision. The common school act of 1820, amended from the similar bill four years earlier, reduced the annual legislative grant from £6000 to £2500. The money continued to drop for the next seven years. Even Strachan's efforts towards establishing National Church of England schools failed (see section **4.3**). Complaints surfaced about rote

[250] S. Moodie, *Roughing it in the bush, or, life in Canada*, 1852 Vol. 1 (London: Richard Bentley, 1852) p. 11.
[251] D. McAlphine of Fair Valley, 9 April 1896, MS 6026.
[252] S. Houston and A. Prentice, *Schooling and scholars in nineteenth-century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1991) p. 306.
[253] S. Wise and R. Brown, *Canada views the United States – nineteenth-century political attitudes* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1972) pp. 39 – 40.

memorisation and the impersonal education. Another major issue was the absence of a qualified teaching profession. Montreal's *Courier* proclaimed that 'the recognized modes of teaching have too often been shamefully inefficient and empirical; and the teachers here, and in the lower departments of education, more especially, are disgracefully incompetent even to the empirical drudgery which they professed to undertake.'[254] Many considered teaching a last resort so that they often left after one term or as soon as they found a school where they could be paid more. In a series of articles written by Jesse Hurlburt, a teacher and acting principal at Upper Canada Academy (later renamed Victoria College), he noted that except for the 'slave' state of Kentucky, Ontario was the lowest in the scale of educating countries.[255] Even a Select Committee in government pointed out 'the astounding fact that less is granted by the Provincial Legislature for educating the youth of 300,000 people than is required to defray the *contingent* expenses of one Session of Parliament.'[256] Thus, the desire for better school provision was voiced by both administrators and residents.

To respond to the numerous defects, a number of education bills were introduced that were intended to raise standards. Among them was William Buell's (1831) bill for the promotion of common schools. He suggested that the control of each local school should be merged into a township board which was authorised to make the rules and regulations. It also suggested a district board of education, consisting of five members to be chosen by a board of electors. In many ways, the reforms that Buell recommended were similar to those in Ryerson's own school act, such as representatives being chosen by the community. However, Buell's bill was not accepted. A second significant bill was brought forward by Mahlon Burwell (1832), framed on the basis of features of the school laws in New York. This bill laid out the principles of collegiate institutes or a superior class of grammar or high schools, and suggested a common school fund. It provided for the election of township

[254] '*Courier*, July 1838,' *DHE* vol. 3, p. 136.
[255] J. Hurlburt, 'Importance of Education to British North America,' *DHE* vol. 4, p. 160.
[256] 'Report of the Select Committee, 1832,' in *A history of Upper Canada College, 1829 – 1892*, ed. by A. Mercer and G. Dickson (Toronto: Rowsell and Hutchinson, 1893) p. 20.

school commissioners and laid down regulations for the distribution of money. Again, however, Burwell's bill did not proceed.

Lastly, Charles Duncombe, an American-born doctor, left Canada for the United States in 1835 to observe the American educational infrastructure. The following year he returned with a report calling for a revamped education system. He wrote about the importance of local assessment, elective school boards, non-sectarian religious instruction, female education and the creation of normal schools. Duncombe said that 'in all free governments the welfare and safety of the government depend upon the national character of the inhabitants, and that national character depends upon their national education.'[257] Duncombe proposed a common school bill in which one of the clauses suggested that inhabitants should be taxed according to their property. Despite the many positive features that this bill contained, it was not accepted by the Legislative Council, which had to contend with more pressing matters raising political unrest.

The Rebellions of 1836-1837 led by William Lyon Mackenzie had a lasting effect on the political makeup of the colony. Mackenzie, then the editor of the *Colonial Advocate*, was a reformer and a member of the House of Assembly and also an opponent of the Family Compact who was frustrated with its extended influence over social and economic affairs. In 1835, Mackenzie presented to the House of Assembly a report from the 'Committee on Grievances' which led to a confrontation between him and his adversaries.[258] While the *coup d'état* did not result in any great physical changes, the ideas which emerged marked a turning point. The British government sent Lord Durham to investigate the causes of the revolts. In his report back to parliament, which was then made public, he wrote on the conditions at the time:

[257] C. Duncombe, *Report upon the subject of education, made to the Parliament of Upper Canada, 25 February 1835* (Toronto: M. Reynolds, 1836) p. 11.
[258] One of Mackenzie's adversaries was Ryerson which stemmed following his *Impressions* (1833), written after Ryerson's trip to England. In that work, Ryerson wrote unfavourable of the Radical movements of Hume and Attwood, to which Mackenzie aligned with. For a review of this subject, see Ryerson's *Story of my life* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1884).

> The people may raise enough for their own subsistence, and may even have a rude and comfortless plenty, but they can seldom acquire wealth; nor can even wealthy land-owners prevent their children from growing up ignorant and boorish, and from occupying a far lower mental, moral and social position than they themselves fill […]. Even in the most thickly peopled districts, there are but few schools, and those of a very inferior character; while the more remote settlements are almost entirely without any.[259]

The Rebellions of 1836 to 1837 were not exclusively linked to the defects of the political structures, owing at least as much to the growing educational crisis.

Durham's report set in motion a course of events that had a lasting effect on education and on the country generally. He suggested the dissolution of the infamous Family Compact, since he felt the members of the cabal monopolised affairs so much that it affected growth and expansion. His other significant recommendation was a responsible government, an administration accountable to the people. The Executive Council (or cabinet) should be chosen by the elected representatives of the people rather than by the Governor, and their decisions would need the support of the majority of the Legislative Assembly. After Durham's report the Act of Union (1840) was effected. The Provinces of Upper Canada became known as Canada West while Lower Canada became Canada East.

4.6 The Act of Union

A year after the Act of Union, the first school law was passed. Lord Sydenham, who was then the Governor, was determined to devise a unified school jurisdiction for both provinces in keeping with the recommendations of Duncombe's report. The Act established a permanent school fund and a liberal salary for a chief superintendent, a new feature of the educational framework. There were also regulations for examining teachers and distributing

[259] J. Lambton (Earl of Durham), *Report on the affairs of British North America* (Toronto: Robert Stanton, 1839) p. 79.

funds to towns and cities. However, as soon as the law was passed, its failure became all too apparent.

According to Adams (1968), this is 'the most tendentious political act in the history of Canadian education.'[260] At the time, there was only one legislative enactment related to elementary schools in Lower Canada, which had been passed in 1834, when there were three in Ontario. The new Act made no provisions for the different circumstances, population, language and traditions of each province. In May 1842 the vice-chancellor of Upper Canada, the Honourable R. Jameson, was nominated as the *ex officio* superintendent of education with appointed assistant superintendents for Canada East, Dr. Jean-Baptiste Meilleur, and for Canada West, Reverend Robert Murray. However, the role of assistant superintendent was technically that of a clerk in the Provincial Secretary's office; therefore these men had no real executive authority of their own. It was also this Act that permitted schools to be established on the basis of a religious faith different from that of the majority. Therefore, it was this Act that included the clause responsible for the dual school system of Quebec and for 'separate schools' in Ontario. Equally, the Act made no reference to incorporating religious and moral teaching in schools. Interestingly, Ryerson claimed to have been originally offered the position of assistant superintendent by Lord Sydenham, the Governor at the time of the Act of Union (1840). Ryerson said that Sydenham felt that he 'might be more usefully employed for this country than in my present limited sphere.'[261] At that time, Ryerson was principal of Victoria College. However, as a result of Sydenham's unexpected death, the new incumbent offered the position to Reverend Murray, who was then minister of the Church of Scotland in Oakville.

Several committees reviewed the problems brought by the Act and in 1843 a revised school bill for Ontario was completed. This bill was known as the Hincks Act after its sponsor

[260] H. Adams, *The education of Canadians 1800-1867: the roots of separatism* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1968) p. 37.
[261] E. Ryerson, *Story of my life* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1884) p. 342.

Francis Hincks. Education provisions were divided between the provinces into the Education Office East and the Education Office West, and trustees were given back the power at a local level to hire and fire teachers. Township superintendents were introduced who were able to divide and distribute funds and inspect schools. There was even a provision for each township to establish a model school. However, like the previous act, the revisions were problematic. This school law, imitating the state of New York and William Buell's school bill, did not leave alternative options for supporting schools and paying teachers' salaries. Moreover, township superintendents, a position above school commissioners, were a redundant, expensive office. There were no uniform courses of study or textbooks, no accepted standards of qualification for teachers and no method of paying for the proposed teaching training. Thus, this revised school act was also deficient.

4.7 Egerton Ryerson's appointment as superintendent of education

In 1843 the University of Toronto required the immediate services of a mathematics professor. It was recommended that Reverend Murray, then one of the assistant superintendents, fill that position. The new Governor, Sir Charles Metcalfe, suggested that Ryerson replace Murray in that role. Metcalfe and Ryerson had corresponded previously, and on one occasion, Metcalfe sought Ryerson's advice on the proposed revision of the University of Toronto's constitution. Recalling that incident, Ryerson stated:

> Sir Charles Metcalfe sent for me to consult me in regard to the University Bill, as I was connected with one of the Colleges. I explained to His Excellency my views, and added that the educational condition of the country at large was deplorable, and should be considered in a system of public instruction, commencing with the common school and terminating with the university; being connected and harmonious throughout, and equally embracing all classes without respect to religious sect or political party.[262]

[262] E. Ryerson, *Story of my life* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1884) p. 345.

Ryerson was then formally offered the position of superintendent. However, as suggested earlier, his appointment was not without controversy, with criticism focusing on the manner in which Metcalfe presented him with the position. Although Metcalfe was popular when he first arrived in Ontario, the relationship between him and his councillors quickly deteriorated. Metcalfe began making appointments, such as Ryerson as superintendent of education, without the support or advice of his councillors. Arbitrary decisions made by important members of government were the chief complaints made by the reformers such as Mackenzie. They were fed up with an elite group of men from England dictating provincial affairs without the input of the House of Assembly.

As a result, many councillors resigned over Metcalfe's decisions. Of his own accord Ryerson published nine papers which defended Metcalfe's initiatives, stating that the governor had not acted in a manner against the principles of responsible government.[263] However, the fact that Ryerson was appointed by this man whom so many opposed, and the fact that Ryerson defended his actions provoked lasting criticism. As we shall see in Chapter **6.2**., one cannot see the parallels between disapproval of the chief superintendent and the board of education as being directly linked to the aversion against Ryerson's appointment by Metcalfe, not to the educational scheme itself.

Like his predecessors, Ryerson had no problems with seeking examples from other countries.[264] He had already travelled to the United States and England on behalf of the Methodist party and as principal of Victoria College and he was aware of current educational problems. In a letter addressed to Mr. Higginson, Metcalfe's personal secretary, Ryerson said:

[263] E. Ryerson, *The Hon. R. B. Sullivan's attacks upon Sir Charles Metcalfe refuted by Egerton Ryerson: being a reply to the letters of "The Legion"* (Toronto: Office of the *British Colonist*, 1844).
[264] In the 1830's, Buell and Duncombe's proposals were based on foreign schemes (see section 4.5 of this chapter).

> If possible I should like to cross the Atlantic, and examine the various methods of teaching of elementary school books, and the modes of using them, of libraries, of the entire system of government and its working, in grammar, classical and other public schools in England, Scotland, and on the continent of Europe.[265]

Although there was a longstanding history of educational acts and independently run schools, these measures no longer dealt with the changing landscape. The teaching profession was poorly regarded, and those who did teach remained unqualified. School attendance was low: people did not value education, parents required their children to contribute to the family income, schools were too far away, and the buildings were unattractive and poorly ventilated. Those children who did attend were failing to acquire appropriate skills for employment. An increase in immigration also meant expansion in the cities and the creation of new, poorer communities. Children who did not attend school were labelled as 'street Arabs' who gained no sympathy from their more affluent neighbors. In the same respect, many wealthy residents did not consider educating the poor to be their problem. Ryerson needed to address these issues. By travelling abroad and investigating systems of education in other nations, he hoped to take the best features of foreign nations and devise a new provincial system of public education. This would also enable him to defend his suggestions and show that what he recommended were features already successfully practiced worldwide.

[265] 'R. Ryerson to Mr. Higginson, 26 July 1844,' *DHE* vol. 5, p. 110.

Chapter Five

Foreign influence and education in Ontario

Doubtless the Rev. Mr. Ryerson is preparing to astonish the world by his educational researches in Europe and the United States. It will be a subject of no small amusement to watch his pranks. We shall no doubt hear of his visiting all the most celebrated Continental schools and are astonished he did not call at Oxford and Cambridge. He could no doubt have given them some excellent hints!

The *Globe*, 29 April 1845 [266]

In 1848 I arrived at Ottawa where I took a First class for the district of Dalhousie. I well remember when Dr. Ryerson was in Europe searching out a school system that would suit the circumstances of Canada, and therefore, claim to have learned something of the progress of education in the land of my adoption.

G. McGill, school teacher, 1871 [267]

The recommendations I may venture to submit, are not rash novelties or crude speculations, but the result of the largest experience, and the deepest investigations on the part of the best judges resident in both hemispheres and under different forms of civil government.

Egerton Ryerson, 1846 [268]

[266] Editorial remark, *Globe*, 29 April 1845
[267] G. McGill, teacher in section No. 1 Wallace, county of Perth to E. Ryerson, 1871, AO RG 2-12-177-57.
[268] Report of 1846, p. 9.

5.1 Introduction

Following Ryerson's appointment in November 1844, he left for his educational tour abroad. This trip had the specific aim of procuring information to 'provide proper school books; to establish the most efficient system of instruction; to elevate the character of both teachers and schools; and to encourage every plan and effort to educate and improve the youthful mind of the country.'[269] Ryerson visited and examined the educational systems of twenty nations including the eastern part of the United States, England, Belgium, France, Italy, Bavaria, Austria, Switzerland and the German 'states' because they had a longstanding history of public instruction.

Upon his return, Ryerson prepared the Report of 1846. The Report was initially published as a parliamentary paper and in 1847, 3,000 additional copies were printed and distributed in pamphlet form. The importance of this document was that soon after its publication Ryerson drafted his first common school bill. According to Wilson (1970), the Report 'provides the most comprehensive statement of [Ryerson's] philosophy of education […] and sets the framework for the public school system that was evolved in the next three decades.'[270] This chapter will review the fundamental features of the Report of 1846. It will outline the principles that Ryerson ascribed to education and the foreign examples that influenced these decisions.

A scrutiny of the Report reveals that much of the text derived from the works of American and European educators. Ryerson quoted at length from Victor Cousin's *Report on the state of public instruction in Prussia*, Calvin Stowe's *Report on elementary public instruction in Europe* and Horace Mann's *Seventh Annual Report.* He also quoted the statistical account written by F. Hill, Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons in Scotland, a report to the Poor Law

[269] Report of 1846, p. 5.
[270] J. Wilson, 'The Ryerson years in Canada West,' in *Canadian education – a history*, ed. by J. Wilson, R. Stamp and L. Audet (Prentice Hall: Scarborough, 1970) pp. 214 – 240 (p. 217).

Commissions written by J.C. Blackden of England and from the published works of Thomas Wyse, a member of the British parliament who wrote on education reform. Even the American Alonzo Potter's *School and schoolmasters* was excessively copied. While reading the text, it is often difficult to distinguish between Ryerson's own thoughts and those of the foreigners he borrowed from. Despite this confusion, there is little doubt that Ryerson included the work of others to justify why certain practices would or would not be favourable for Ontario. By incorporating a substantial number of foreign narratives, Ryerson hoped to demonstrate that what he suggested was not radical or speculative but the result of investigations and testimonies from individuals in both hemispheres and under diverse forms of government. The text also provides a bird's eye picture of the character of popular education in Europe and the United States. In the prologue of the Report, Ryerson wrote:

> In availing myself as far as possible of the experience of other countries, and the testimony of their most enlightened educationalists, I have not lost sight of the peculiarities of our own country […]. Prussia herself, before adopting any important measure or change in her system of public instruction, has been wont to send school commissioners into other countries, to collect all possible information on the subjects of deliberation. France, England, and other European governments, have done the same. Three enlightened educationalists from the United States have lately made similar tours in Europe, with a view of improving their own system of public instruction.[271]

Throughout the Report and indeed his career, Ryerson emphasised that what he strived for was not altogether original, but was an application of tried, tested and accepted educational policies from foreign nations.

The Report of 1846 was divided into two sections. Section One sought to define education, and to elaborate on the 'principles' on which it ought to be founded. These principles were (1) *universality,* (2) *practicality,* (3) *religion and morality,* (4) *branches of elementary knowledge* and (5) *intellectual and physical powers of man*. Section Two described the 'machinery' to facilitate the principles. The 'machinery' referred to the body of educational

[271] Report of 1846, p. iv.

policy covering (1) *gradation of schools,* (2) *teachers and teacher training institutes,* (3) *textbooks,* (4) *control and inspection,* and (5) *the role of the individual and the public*. These subjects will be discussed below.

5.2 Part One: The principles on which education ought to be founded

5.2.1 Principles one and two: universal and practical education

The first two themes that Ryerson laid down were that the scheme adopted for Ontario must be *universal*, giving elementary instruction to all, and *practical* in the sense of providing a good fit for the responsibilities of everyday life. In the past, the masses had sacrificed schooling at the expense of private institutions for the rich. There were extreme differences between rural and urban schools, and in many cases the curriculum, if there was one, was outdated. For that reason, Ryerson set out to redefine education so that it meant:

> Not the mere acquisition of certain arts, or of certain branches of knowledge, but that instruction and discipline which qualify and dispose the subjects of it for the appropriate duties and employments of life, as Christians, as persons of business, and also as members of the civil community in which they live.[272]

Ryerson expanded this definition by alluding to the foundation of education as being:

> Broad as the population of the country; and its loftiest elevation should equal the highest demands of the learned professions; adapting its gradation of schools to the wants of the several classes of the community, and to their respective employments or professions, the one rising above the other – the one conducting to the other; yet each complete in itself for the degree of education it imparts; a character of uniformity, as to fundamental principles, pervading the whole; the whole based upon the principles of Christianity, and uniting the combined influence and support of the government and the people.[273]

To support these definitions, Ryerson suggested that education would guarantee three matters. Firstly, education was a tool to promote citizenship, social mobility and nationalism. It was a way for the inhabitants of a nation to come together and educate their children for

[272] Report of 1846, p. 9.
[273] Ibid. p. 9.

their own growth and for the benefit of society in general. The examples drawn from foreign countries collectively defended this argument. Ryerson quoted French foreign minister and later Prime Minister (1847 – 1848) François Guizot in his circular to primary teachers:

> Universal education is henceforth one of the guarantees of liberty, order, and social stability. As every principle in our [French] government is founded on justice and reason, to diffuse education among the people, to develop their understandings, and enlighten their minds, is to strengthen our Constitutional Monarchy and secure its stability.[274]

For Guizot, education ensured national cohesion and unity. This was a comparable statement to the views of M. Girardin, education inspector of the French government to Austria, who believed that the safety of a constitutional state could only be guaranteed if the citizens were educated.[275] The account of Archbishop Whately, one of the architects of the Irish National education system, also expressed his opinion of this feature, and his remarks were copied into the Report:

> If the lower orders are to be the property, the slaves of their Governors, and to be governed not for their own advantage, but entirely for the benefit of their rulers, then, no doubt, the more they are degraded towards the condition of brutes, the more likely they are to submit to this tyranny. But if they are to be governed as rational beings, the more rational they are made the better subjects they will be of such a government.[276]

Lastly, regarding education in Great Britain, Prussia, Spain and the United States, F. Hill, Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons in Scotland, wrote in his concluding remarks:

> So powerful is education as a means of national improvement, that, with comparatively few exceptions, the different countries of the world, if arranged according to the state of education in them, will be found to be arranged also according to wealth, morals and general happiness.[277]

Foreign experiences emphasised that education should not be left to individual choice. Governments needed to be actively involved in framing laws and setting out guidelines to ensure uniformity and standards. In Ontario, although there had been a history of independent venture and private schools, this was now unsatisfactory. Elementary instruction

[274] Report of 1846, pp. 160 - 161.
[275] Ibid. p. 19.
[276] Ibid. p. 20.
[277] Ibid. p. 11.

under government responsibility had previously been accomplished in Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Bavaria, Saxony, Austria and Russia. For Ryerson, there was no reason why it could not also be enacted in Ontario.

The second investment that education provided for was increased productivity and industry. The scheme that was currently in place in Ontario was for poor children to be taught the three Rs; those of the wealthier class followed an extended curriculum, and there was a handful of mechanical and agricultural institutes in the city for a select few. Instructing poor children or those from agricultural families in a trade was not the norm. However, Ryerson's own preference for providing a broad education for all, regardless of social status, was strengthened during his travels. To defend this point, Ryerson reviewed the works of Mr. Escher of Switzerland and his report to the Poor Law Commissioners of England, as well as Horace Mann's *Seventh Annual Report*. Escher spent time observing Italian labourers who were unable to think critically:

> Italians, who, though with the advantage of greater natural capacity than the English, Swiss, Dutch or Germans, are still of the lowest class of workmen. Though they comprehend clearly and quickly any simple proposition made, or explanation given to them, and are enabled quickly to execute any kind of work when they have seen it performed once, yet their minds, as I imagine from want of development by training or school education, seem to have no kind of logic, no power of systematic arrangement, no capacity for collecting any series of observations, and making sound deductions from the whole of them.[278]

Ryerson also quoted Escher regarding the importance of acquiring basic skills:

> In the present state of manufacturers, where so much is done by machinery and tools, and so little done by mere brute labour […] mental superiority, system, order, punctuality and good conduct, qualities all developed and promoted by education, are becoming of the highest consequence […]. The better educated workmen are distinguished, we find, by superior moral habits in every respect.[279]

[278] Report of 1846, p. 15.
[279] Ibid. p. 16.

Horace Mann's enquiry into labour and industry supported the idea of education as a mechanism for augmenting productiveness. Ryerson quoted Mann on this subject:

> The result of the investigation is the most astonishing […]. Processes are performed not only more rapidly, but better […]. Those who have been blessed with a good common school education, rise to a higher and higher point in the kinds of labour performed, and also in the rate of wages paid, while the ignorant sink like dregs to the bottom.[280]

Likewise, Ryerson observed that people were wealthier when schooled. Referring to Swiss residents, Ryerson described them as 'naturally the least productive,' yet Switzerland had become a prosperous and advanced nation because their children attended school.[281] Ryerson also quoted Reverend W. Gilly, a vicar in Northumberland who reported to the Poor Law Commission of England and observed that prudence and proper Christian character in his district were the result of education.[282] It was from this evidence that Ryerson inferred the importance of a sound, practical education for everyone, from agriculturalists to mechanics.

The third factor that was guaranteed by education was a reduction in crime and delinquency. These issues were popular themes in the nineteenth century (see section **4.4**). Again, foreign reports reassured Ryerson that schooling addressed these problems:

> The history of every country in Europe may be appealed to in proof […] that pauperism and crime prevail in proportion to the absence of education amongst the labouring classes, and that in proportion to the existence and prevalence of education amongst those classes, is the absence of pauperism and its legitimate offspring.[283]

In justifying these statements, the Report included evidence about the relationship between crime and illiteracy. Alonzo Potter, professor of moral and intellectual philosophy and economy in the United States, observed:

> Nearly nine-tenths of all the pauperism actually existing in any country may be traced directly to moral causes; such as improvidence, idleness, intemperance, and a want of moderate energy and enterprise. Now it is hardly necessary to add that education, if it be imparted to all the rising generation,

[280] Report of 1846, p. 17 - 18.
[281] Ibid. p. 18.
[282] Ibid. pp. 12 - 13.
[283] Ibid. p. 11.

> and be pervaded, also, by the right spirit, will remove these fruitful sources of indigence.[284]

In England, F. Hill found that education was best in the northern agricultural districts and worst in the south, while simultaneously the extent of crime and violence in these areas also followed the same order.[285] A comparable conclusion was drawn by Blackden in his report to the Poor Law Commissioners. He found that lower crime rates in particular countries were in direct relation to whether children in those countries had received an education.[286] Ryerson's foreign travels confirmed that where education reached all, it cultivated the mind and promoted order, punctuality, good conduct and superior moral habits. These were all desirable aspects for Ontario.

Practical systems complemented a universal one. In Prussia and France, it was seen as the right of the child and the duty of society for an education for all to be provided. The state regarded parental decisions not to send children to school as irresponsible and liable to penalty. Echoing that tone, Ryerson articulated that the parent or guardian:

> Owes duties to his child, he owes duties to society. In neglecting to educate, he wrongs the child, dooms him to ignorance, if not vice, to a condition little above that which is occupied by horses and oxen; he also wrongs society by robbing it of an intelligent and useful member, and by inflicting upon it an ignorant or vicious barbarian.[287]

Ryerson also quoted Scottish philosopher Dugald Stewart, who recognised that instruction in languages and sciences was of little use if 'we are inattentive to the habits [the children] acquire, and are not careful in giving to all their different faculties.'[288] For Ryerson, a universal education was not only an effectual preventative of crime, it also guaranteed social stability, increased productivity and industry. This universal provision already existed in European nations, where Ryerson recorded that 'from Poland to Siberia, and from the White Sea to the regions beyond the Caucasus, including the Provinces recently wrestled from

[284] Report of 1846, p. 14.
[285] Ibid. p. 12.
[286] Ibid. p. 12.
[287] Ibid. p. 181.
[288] Ibid. p. 57.

Persia, there are the beginnings of a complete system of common school instruction for the whole people.'[289] For Ryerson, in a young and growing province like Ontario, overwhelmed with the poor of other countries, the provision of a universal education was of the utmost importance.

5.2.2 Principle three: religious and moral instruction

The third feature that Ryerson stressed as a factor that should shape public instruction was that of religious and moral training. At the heart of Ryerson's notion of common Christianity was a desire to create in people a predisposition to act in accordance with moral principles. Ryerson approvingly quoted French historian and social philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville:

> The *moral education*, that is *the proper discipline* of the *dispositions* and *affections* of the mind, by which a reverence for the Supreme Being, a love of justice, of benevolence, and of truth, are expanded, strengthened, and directed, and the conscience enlightened and invigorated, must have its basis deeply and surely laid in childhood.[290]

Ryerson wanted a scheme where all children were taught basic religious and moral tenets such as tolerance, charity and respect. The Bible could serve as a textbook for its historical accuracy and its lessons on truth, justice and love.

This issue of religious and moral instruction was perhaps the most controversial. As discussed in section **4.6**, the 1841 School Act authorised separate schools for Catholic children, and provided no regulations on the use of the Bible as a teaching instrument. Having separate schools was denounced by many, including Ryerson at first, who felt that it created class antagonism. Although the statute authorising religious segregation would not be omitted in the 1846 School Act or in any thereafter, Ryerson concentrated on the importance of religious instruction in schools by noting two foreign examples: the damaging

[289] Report of 1846, p. 7.
[290] Ibid. p. 28.

consequences of excluding these exercises (using experience in the United States as evidence) and the possibility for religious instruction to be accomplished in an inclusive manner (calling on evidence from France, Prussia and Ireland).

American educationalists supported the deplorable results of eliminating all forms of moral and religious training in schools. For example, the American writer Dr. Channing regarded it as unorthodox for people to be taught without the basic facts of virtue and religion.[291] Likewise, Professor Stowe's examination of Prussian schools mentioned that teachers 'spurned with contempt' at the suggestion that religious training be excluded:

> In regard to the necessity of moral instruction, and beneficial influence of the Bible in schools, the testimony was no less explicit and uniform. I inquired of all classes of teachers, and of men of every grade of religious faith, instructors in common schools, high schools, and schools of art, the professors in colleges, universities, and professional seminaries, in cities and in the country, in places where there was uniformity, and in places where there was a diversity of creeds, of believers and unbelievers, of Catholics and Protestants; and I never found but one reply: and that was, that to *leave the moral faculty uninstructed, was to leave the most important part of the human mind undeveloped*, and to strip education of almost everything that can make it valuable; and that the Bible, independently of the interest attending it as containing the most ancient and influential writings ever recorded by human hands, and comprising the religious system of almost the whole of the civilized world, is in itself the best book that can be put into the hands of children to interest, to exercise, and to unfold their intellectual and moral powers.[292]

In addition, Stowe's report emphasised teachers' views about excluding religious instruction in schools:

> Every teacher whom I consulted repelled with indignation the idea that moral instruction is not proper for schools; and spurned with contempt the allegation, that the Bible cannot be introduced into common schools without encouraging a sectarian bias in the matter of teaching; an indignation and contempt which I believe will be fully participated in by every high-minded teacher in Christendom.[293]

[291] Report of 1846, p. 31. Channing was a Unitarian preacher in the United States in the early nineteenth century.
[292] Ibid. pp. 37 - 38.
[293] Ibid. p. 38.

Ryerson cited Alonzo Potter, an American bishop and a professor of Union College, in his influential book *School and Schoolmasters*:

> Unbounded pains are now taken to enlighten a child in the first principles of science and letters, and also in regard to the business of life. In the meantime, the culture of the heart and conscience is often sadly neglected; and the child grows up a shrewd, intelligent, and influential man, perhaps, but yet a slave to his lower propensities.[294]

These American declarations highlighted the evils of moral neglect, and the dangers of rendering pupils to the level of a 'slave' by omitting moral and religious instruction. Ryerson also included a remark from Thomas Wyse, who declared that 'no legislator who is truly wise, no Christian will for a moment think, for the interests of society and religion, which are indeed only one, of separating Christianity from moral education.'[295]

The Report of 1846 then focused on how to successfully incorporate a religious curriculum without compromising the doctrines of any party. The provisions in France, Germany and Ireland served as examples for this purpose. In France, the government took the position of not avowing itself the head of a sect, instead taking the stance of a supporter of Christianity who protected all forms of Christian worship. This religious tolerance was the result of French authorities experiencing the 'deplorable consequence' of leaving religious instruction out of schools in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As a result of a 'purely godless system of public instruction,' authorities sanctioned the use of the Holy Scriptures in primary and secondary schools.[296] The Report quoted M. Dumont, whose essay won first prize from the French Academy:

> Elle (la France) n'a pas proclamé une religion de l'État, ce qui eût été mensonge, sous une forme du governement où les grands corps de l'État sont les représentans directs de l'opinion publique; mais elle a assuré protection et secours à tous les cultes chrétiennes, et ainsi, sous ce rapport, elle s'est tenue dans le vraie.[297]

[294] Report of 1846, pp. 31 – 32.
[295] Ibid. p. 34.
[296] Ibid. p. 24.
[297] Ibid. pp. 40 - 41.

What the French example showed was an example of a nation that had originally forbidden the subject of religion, but later reverted to making it part of the curriculum.

This branch of education and the use of the Bible in Prussian schools were recorded by Horace Mann:

> Nothing receives more attention in the Prussian schools than the Bible. It is taken up early and studied systematically. The greater events recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; the character and lives of those wonderful men who from age to age were brought upon the state of action, and through whose agency the future history and destiny of the race were to be so much modified; and especially, those sublime views of duty and morality.[298]

Prussian teachers were trained to embrace the doctrines espoused in the Holy Scriptures and to incorporate the Bible throughout their lessons. Moreover, children were never compelled to attend the spiritual lessons against the will of their parents. Ryerson summarised his thoughts regarding Prussian religious instruction as follows:

> Here is neither laxity nor compromise of religious principle; here is the establishment and administration of a system on the part of government which is founded upon the fundamental principles of Christian truth and morality, but which interferes not with the dogmas and predilections of diversified sectarianism; and here is a co-operation of members of different religious persuasions in matters which they hold and value in common […] as legislators or merchants, agriculturalists or soldiers.[299]

The emphasis in the Prussian example was the teachers' support for using the Bible in lessons, and on the manner in which religious instruction was codified in that nation's laws.

Like France and Prussia, the Irish example illustrated how schools could incorporate religious instruction via cooperation between members of dissimilar sects. After several unsuccessful attempts at integrating spiritual and literary teaching in Ireland, in 1831 a Board was formed to resolve the problems. It consisted of members of the Churches of England, Scotland and Rome, and it recommended that on a certain day of the week, ministers of the

[298] Report of 1846, p. 38.
[299] Ibid. p. 42.

different persuasions should catechise the children of their respective faith. Regarding this provision, Ryerson noted:

> The children of the Irish National Schools [are] not only taught the elements of a secular education, but they are instructed in the fundamental principles of Christian truth and morals; and facilities are afforded for their being taught the Catechism and Confessions of the religious persuasions to which they severally belong.[300]

The Board then published a series of biblical histories to aid with instruction. Thus, children of the Irish National Schools were not only provided with the elements of a secular education, but were also instructed in the codes of Christian truth and morals.

The examples of France, Prussia and Ireland verified that moral and religious instruction could and should be in the curriculum. It was respected by the citizens and reinforced by law. Ryerson summarised his thoughts on this subject in Ontario:

> By religion and morality I do not mean sectarianism in any form, but the general system of truth and morals taught in the Holy Scriptures. Sectarianism is not morality. To be zealous for a sect and to be conscientious in morals are widely different […]. To teach a child the dogmas and spirit of a sect, before he is taught the essential principles of religion and morality, is to invert the pyramid, to reverse the order of nature.[301]

The manner in which this had been accomplished was illustrated by examples from European nations, while the problems with omitting it were exemplified by the United States. It ought to be noted that Ryerson's school bill of 1846 did not make the Bible or prayer compulsory. Later, prayer was encouraged to mark the opening and closing of school, and it was recommended that the Ten Commandments should be repeated once a week. However, these actions were never mandatory. Parents also had the right to remove their children from school when religious instruction was taking place, as was the case in Prussia. The system Ryerson set out was Christian, not sectarian, and secured both individual and denominational rights.

[300] Report of 1846, p. 45.
[301] Ibid. pp. 22 – 23.

5.2.3 Principles four and five: intellectual and physical branches of knowledge

After defining the aim and scope of a national education system and giving it a religious base, the Report summarised which subjects should be taught in the elementary schools. While the basis of education was formed by the three R'-s, reading, writing and arithmetic, the curriculum would also embrace physical training, Christian instruction, spelling, grammar, geography, bookkeeping, algebra, geometry, history, music, linear drawing, astronomy, physiology, philosophy, chemistry, agriculture, civil government and political economy. Although these subjects may seem standard for today, their embodiment in the curriculum for the common class was impressive and progressive. Ryerson reiterated that he considered every topic to be practical and connected with the duties and affairs of life. A training in one department let to superiority in another:

> The branches of knowledge which it is essential that all should understand, should be provided *for all*, and taught to all; should be brought within the reach of the most needy, and forced upon the attention of the most careless. The knowledge required for the scientific pursuit of mechanics, agriculture and commerce [must] be provided to an extent corresponding with the demand, and the exigencies of the country; while to a more limited extent are needed facilities for acquiring the higher education of the learned professions.[302]

Ryerson's proposed syllabus was intended to provide practical skills for the common people. For each subject, Ryerson referenced the fact that it was already part of at least one foreign curriculum. For example, gymnastics was taught in the finest British, German and French schools, and history was 'universally acknowledged [as] a branch of instruction in the elementary schools of the most enlightened countries.'[303] Similarly, Professor Stowe's report emphasised the efficacy of linear drawing in Prussian schools: 'all learn enough of drawing

[302] Report of 1846, pp. 9 – 10.
[303] Ibid. p. 138.

to use it in the common business of life, such as plotting a field, laying out a canal, or drawing a plan of a building.'[304]

Regarding natural philosophy, Ryerson noted that it was in the German curriculum and was in the process of being introduced into the national elementary schools in England.[305] On bookkeeping, Ryerson shared an anecdote from Horace Mann's time in Switzerland:

> On visiting the celebrated agricultural school of the philanthropist De Fellenberg, a few miles from Berne, in Switzerland, I found that every pupil was required to keep an account of his work, receipts, and expense […]. The superintendent keeping a similar account of the affairs of the whole establishment, the expenses of cultivation, and even the products of each field […]. I doubt not but such a system of bookkeeping would be a source of profit, as well as of instruction and pleasure to every farmer who might adopt it.[306]

All familiar with the history of agricultural education will be acquainted with De Fellenberg's immense contribution to the subject. Ryerson's reference to Mann's visit to that institution and its commendable method of instruction perpetuates the idea of universal educational themes discussed in the nineteenth-century.

The value of music was another widely discussed topic. Ryerson noted that it was standard in many American and English institutions. Quoting Her Majesty's Privy Council Committee on Education, the Report of 1846 stated:

> The degrading habits of intoxication which at one time characterized the poorer classes of Germany, are most remarkably diminished (as every traveller in Germany can testify) since the art of singing has become almost as common in that country as the power of speech, a humanizing result attributable to the excellent elementary schools of so many states in Germany.[307]

In this instance, music was considered to decrease anti-social behavior. To emphasise why music was meaningful, Ryerson referred to his own experience:

[304] Report of 1846, p. 124.
[305] Ibid. p. 137.
[306] Ibid. pp. 105 - 106.
[307] Ibid. p. 131.

> My own inquiries in Europe have confirmed in my own mind […] that the ability to learn to sing is universal, and that teaching singing in the school facilitates rather than impedes the pupils in their own studies. In answer to my inquiries, the same facts were stated to me by the teachers of the Normal and Model Schools in London, Dublin, Edinburgh, and Glasgow; and in the greater part of the elementary schools throughout the Kingdom, vocal music forms a part of the daily exercises.[308]

Ryerson's statement on biography and civil government as part of the curriculum seem almost like a precursor of a modern school syllabus:

> Every pupil should know something of the government, and institutions, and laws under which he lives, and with which his rights and interests are so closely connected. Provision should be made to teach in our common schools an outline of the principles and constitution of our government; the nature of our institutions; the duties which they require; the manner of fulfilling them; some notions of our civil, and especially Criminal Code.[309]

Ryerson called attention to the usefulness of these subjects in everyday life. His philosophy is best recounted by quoting his defence verbatim:

> 1. All the subjects enumerated are connected with the pursuits and well-being of the community, and should therefore be made accessible to them in the common schools.
> 2. The apparatus and machinery necessary to teach all the subjects mentioned, are surprizingly simple and inexpensive; and by means of properly qualified teachers, and judicious modes of teaching, every one of those subjects may be taught in little more time than is now wasted in imperfectly learning in many instances next to nothing at all.
> 3. *All the subjects above enumerated, have been and are taught in the elementary schools of other countries*.[310]

The third point, italicised by this author, emphasised that Ryerson's suggestions were not original, but were already widespread in foreign nations. The traditional method of rote learning would be replaced by an inductive or humanistic method of education, which encompassed religion and morality and several branches of knowledge. Moreover, changes in the arts, modes of labour, systems of commerce and the economy made it necessary to re-

[308] Report of 1846, p. 125.
[309] Ibid. pp. 143 - 144.
[310] Ibid. p. 146.

evaluate the programme of studies. Education could no longer be seen as something acquired in an independent schoolroom, but part of a greater system for personal growth and national unity.

5.3 Part Two: the machinery to help facilitate the principles

5.3.1 The gradation of schools

The second part of Ryerson's Report is concerned with the machinery that would be necessary to facilitate the scheme. The first proposed feature was distinguishable, properly classified schools. In the early part of the century, Ontario's school system had often been divided into three parts: the common schools, the grammar schools and the university. However, as Gidney and Miller (1990) described, these terminologies did not always refer to particular sorts of schools; instead they referred to a form of education.[311] Common schools taught elementary subjects like the three Rs whereas grammar schools provided an elementary classical education. Secondary schools were also conventionally associated with the education of the upper and middle classes. The problem with this lack of clearly defined classification was that there was no consistency in instruction. Where some common schools taught the basics, others might include more advanced subjects, depending on the teacher. It also meant that when families moved districts, what their children had been taught in one school was often not transferable to the next.

Ryerson noted in his travels that France and Prussia had specific types of schools with particular courses of study:

> In the carrying out and completion of such a system, the course of instruction in each class of schools would be prescribed, as also the qualifications for admission into each of them, above the primary schools; each school would occupy its appropriate place, and each teacher would have his appropriate work; and no one man in one and the same school, and on one and the same day, would be found making the absurd and abortive attempts of teaching the

[311] R. Gidney and W. Miller, *Inventing secondary education* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University, 1990).

> a, b, c's, reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, (in all their gradations), together with Latin, Greek, and mathematics.[312]

The curriculum in primary schools in both nations involved moral and religious instruction, the three Rs and basic mathematics. There were cabinets filled with minerals and it was usual to find blackboards, maps, globes, models and engravings. In secondary schooling, the subjects extended to linear drawing, land measurement, physical sciences, natural history, geometry and singing. The secondary schools enabled pupils to specialise in different fields, creating a skilled and knowledgeable workforce.

Specifically in Prussia, the gymnasia taught students who intended to enter university. The Real and Trade schools were geared towards those who aspired to be architects, engineers, manufacturers, or who were preparing themselves for the different branches of commerce. Regarding the Prussian system, Ryerson said, 'the system is so complete, practically as well as theoretically, and all the teachers being trained up to the same standard and after the same methods, the country village primary schools are little if at all inferiour to those of the cities.'[313] Moreover, both Prussia and France had a provincial university.

What Ryerson reiterated was the importance of having institutions that complemented one another, all under the direction of qualified teachers. After giving an outline of the variety of classes of schools in France and Germany, the Report proposed the following for Ontario: common or primary schools for every section of a township based on the primary schools of both countries; District Model Schools (later called Industrial schools) which correspond to the German Real or Trade Schools; and finally, District Grammar Schools which would be a combination of the German Higher Burgher Schools, the Gymnasia and the French Communal and Royal Colleges. As previously stated, grammar schools (which later became known as secondary schools) were made part of the provincial system in 1854. With the passing of the 1871 Act, the schools were renamed High Schools.

[312] Report of 1846, pp. 154 - 155.
[313] Ibid. p. 151.

5.3.2 Teachers and teacher training institutes

The second feature that would drive education was better qualified teachers. Ryerson proposed to achieve this by introducing teacher training institutes called Normal Schools. The word *Normal* was employed to express the systematic teaching of the rudiments of learning. Based on the positive effect they had abroad, Ryerson suggested that these institutions raised educators into the level of a profession. With the establishment of these schools, only those who intended to pursue teaching as a career would be admitted:

> Those who are educated for it in other countries regard it as their vocation, become attached to it as do men to other professions, and pursue it during life. In no country where teachers have been regularly trained, has there been any complaint that they have shown an inclination to leave the profession […]. In all countries where school teachers are regularly trained, the profession of teaching holds a high rank in public estimation, so that ignorant and worthless persons could no more find employment as schoolmasters, than they could as professors, or physicians, or lawyers.[314]

Because teaching was a life's vocation, trained teachers did not leave their schools after finding better conditions or a higher salary, and did not view teaching as a last resort en route to a more lucrative career.

The anecdotes of several foreign educationalists illustrated that a teacher training institution produced an *esprit de corps*. M. Guizot, for example, said 'all the provisions hitherto described *would be of none effect*, if we took no pains to procure for the public school thus constituted an able master, and worthy of the high vocation of instructing the people.'[315] This same position was expressed by Victor Cousin, who professed 'that the best plans of instruction cannot be executed except by the instrumentality of good teachers; and the state has done nothing for popular education, *if it does not watch that those who devote themselves to teaching be well prepared*.'[316] In 1837, Alexander Bache, Director of Girard College

[314] Report of 1846, pp. 159 - 160.
[315] Ibid. p. 156.
[316] Ibid. p. 158.

(Philadelphia), was commissioned by the trustees of that college to inspect schools in Europe. His elaborate report, over six hundred pages long, documented the educational institutions of France, Great Britain, Holland, Switzerland and most of the German states. His report remarked that 'when education is to be rapidly advanced, seminaries for teachers offer the means of securing this result.'[317] These individuals confirmed that training institutes were not just fads, but were important for the expansion of the profession. Where teachers were proficient, public perception of their mission increased and they were elevated to the rank of a profession.

Foreign experiences equally demonstrated to Ryerson that when teachers were properly trained, it had a positive effect on the community. They were no longer employed because they agreed to a low salary, but based on their knowledge and the quality of instruction they provided. Ryerson stressed that once an initial training institute was inaugurated, the demand for others would increase:

> Whenever Normal Schools have been established, it has been found thus far that the demand for regularly trained teachers has exceeded the supply which the Normal Schools have been able to provide. It is so in the United States; it is so, up to the present time, in France; it is most pressingly and painfully so in England, Ireland and Scotland. I was told by the Head Masters of the great Normal Schools in London, in Dublin, in Glasgow, and in Edinburgh, that such was the demand for the pupils of the Normal Schools as teachers, that in many instances they found it impossible to retain them in the Normal School during the prescribed course – even when it was limited to a year.[318]

Moreover, foreign examples proved the most obvious benefit: more capable teachers became better educators, and better educators meant better schools. Ryerson pointed out that a good teacher could economise the child's time and advance him much faster than a teacher who was impassive. Samuel Young, superintendent of common schools in New York, confirmed these opinions: 'that a teacher of proper capacity and acquirements, thoroughly educated in a

[317] Report of 1846, p. 158.
[318] Ibid. pp. 161 – 162.

Normal school, can communicate more learning to his pupils in six months, than is usually communicated under the old system of teaching in double that period.'[319]

The Report made further reference to Prussian teachers, their familiarity with the curriculum and their ability to adapt lessons based on the students' needs. They rarely used books, and when they did, lessons were connected to the everyday duties of life. Horace Mann's report was quoted in detail, describing how Prussian teachers held the pupils' attention and stimulated their learning. The children were 'delighted […] the faculties are developed [and] the moral sentiments are cultivated.'[320] Ryerson confirmed this advantageous method of teaching during his visit to Leipzig. He characterised Prussian teachers as dignified, playful and knowing how to manage misbehaviours: 'I never saw one child in tears from having been punished or from fear of being punished.'[321] Ryerson found it admirable that in Prussia, the teachers could command and retain the attention of their classes without using punishment. Students' misbehaviour and teachers' responses, often involving severe punishment, had been a recurring problem (see section **4.4** on discipline). Concluding this part of the Report, Ryerson reiterated:

> What person worthy of being called by the name [teacher], or of sustaining the sacred relation of a parent, would not give any thing, bear any thing, sacrifice any thing, to have his children, during eight or ten years of the period of their childhood, surrounded by circumstances, and breathed upon by sweet and humanizing influences like these![322]

Because those who underwent teacher training became wiser and more familiar with the subjects, they could seek better pay and work conditions. A better relationship between pupil and teacher would follow, leading to a decrease in the use of harsh discipline and more time for instruction. In 1847, with the opening of the Toronto Normal School, all candidates were not only required to submit a letter by a reverend affirming their high moral character, but

[319] Report of 1846, p. 163.
[320] Ibid. pp. 55 – 56.
[321] Ibid. p. 166.
[322] Ibid. p. 169.

they also had to provide proof that they had attained certain skills and that teaching was their intended career for life.

5.3.3 Textbooks

The third component in the revised education scheme was the acquisition of uniform textbooks. At the time there was no body overseeing their purchases so that each community or teacher used whatever book was on hand. It also meant that no one examined the content of the curriculum and evaluated whether it was appropriate or useful. Regarding the current state of the textbooks in use, Ryerson stated:

> The variety of text-books in the schools, and the objectionable character of many of them, is a subject of serious and general complaints. All classification of the pupils is thereby prevented; the exertions of the best teacher are in a great measure paralyzed; the time of the scholars is almost wasted.[323]

The main argument in the Report was the importance of a centralised body to decide on a curriculum.

This policy of regulating textbooks under central management was in place in the United States and in Europe. In New York, the Regents of the University required trustees to select books from a catalogue furnished by them. The Council of the University in France, England's Privy Council Committee and Prussia's Minister of Public Instruction all sanctioned books in a similar fashion. In Ireland, the National Board of Education published a book series at a reduced fee, prepared by experienced teachers. Ryerson believed that 'a mere recommendatory authority in such a body would, I am inclined to believe, be quite sufficient to secure the introduction and use of the proper books in schools.'[324] The people of the countries mentioned above did not oppose governmental bodies endorsing and

[323] Report of 1846, p. 171.
[324] Ibid. p. 174.

authorising certain books, nor did they consider central control an infringement on individual rights.

The Irish National Readers were chosen for use in Ontario's common schools. A complete discussion of why they were introduced will be provided in Chapter **6.4**. Ryerson noted that the series:

> Embrace[d] the whole range of topics which have been recommended in the former part of this report, as proper subjects of common school instruction. They also contain a great variety of information which is as interesting and useful for the common reader, as it is appropriate for the common school.[325]

The Report also noted that the Irish board had prepared specific books on spelling, bookkeeping, farming and reasoning which were used not only in Ireland but also in England, Scotland and in other British colonies.[326]

5.3.4 Control and inspection

The next element that Ryerson expanded on was the importance of regular inspections for schools. This was a difficult task, and one which had been neglected. Ryerson reiterated that a board ought to be involved in educational planning, and individuals should be responsible for ensuring that guidelines were met:

> There is not a state in Europe, from despotic Russia drown to the smallest canton of republican Switzerland, which has not its council, or board, or minister, or superintendent, or prefect of public instruction, exercising an active and provident oversight, co-extensive with the provisions of the law and the community concerned […]. It is now generally admitted, that the education of the people is more dependent upon the *administration*, than upon the provisions of the laws relating to public instruction.[327]

Public instruction in all the foreign countries was managed by boards of education. Inspectors (and later local/district superintendents in Ontario) were hired to prepare

[325] Report of 1846, p. 173.
[326] Ibid. p. 83, p. 106, p. 143.
[327] Ibid. pp. 175 - 176.

regulations, recommend school plans, review teacher qualifications and be accountable for provisions in their districts. This note also referenced the inescapable responsibility of the community in carrying out those provisions, an element that Ryerson noted in the last section of the Report.

Ryerson showed in the Report that school laws in Germany and France would have little effect if it were not for their systems of inspection. A similar case was made regarding the Privy Council Committee in England and the National Board in Ireland, who hired able and vigilant inspectors. However, the example which Ryerson viewed as most worthy was that of Holland. He said 'Holland is inferior to Prussia in its system of Normal Schools; but is probably superior to every other country in the world, in its system of inspection.'[328] Ryerson witnessed firsthand how the inspectors were welcomed into the schools by both teachers and pupils, who regarded and received them, as a friend from whom they expected both instruction and encouragement.

The importance attached to this class of officers may be inferred from the declaration of Van den Ende, founder of the education system in Holland to Victor Cousin. When Cousin visited Holland to research the system of primary instruction, the Dutch Commissioner said to him: 'be watchful in the choice of your inspectors; they are the men who ought to be sought for with a lantern in the hand.'[329] Ryerson recognized the truth of this, and saw its importance in a streamlined education system. He quoted Cousin, who said:

> All the school inspectors with whom I met in the course of my journey, assured me that they had brought about an entire change in the condition of the schoolmaster, and that they had given the young teachers a feeling of dignity in their profession, and had thereby introduced an improved tone and style of manners.[330]

In the 1846 school law, inspectors were now required to a hold a first class teaching certificate or a Bachelor's degree from university. This was a huge step taken because many

[328] Report of 1846, p. 178.
[329] Ibid. p. 179.
[330] Ibid. p. 158.

complaints were sent to Ryerson that a proportion of inspectors were illiterate, having never even attended schools themselves. Now, there were strict requirements. They were authorised to examine textbooks, visit schools and review the modes of teaching. During school meetings, inspectors were to lecture on the importance of education and help clarify any misunderstandings about the school law. No longer were inspectors allowed to be lax or careless in their investigations. They were ambassadors for the board of education and they demanded respect.

5.3.5 Individual efforts

The last item that the Report discussed was the roles of the individual and the public: education could not advance without voluntary efforts. Parents must take a stake in the school, clergymen and magistrates should want to act as school visitors, and each district should invest in libraries. With regard to a partnership between all members of society, Ryerson wrote that 'such a co-operation, universal and hearty, would be productive of innumerable benefits to the rising youth of the land and the interests of education generally.'[331] It was the collective efforts exhibited in foreign countries that reinforced the utility of this idea. Ryerson wrote, 'it is erroneous to suppose that the high state of education in Germany is entirely owing to the provisions of the laws and the exertions of the civil authorities […]. The intercourse of teachers and educators in all parts of Germany, is constant and intimate.'[332] It was this fraternity between state and community that Ryerson wanted for Ontario.

Teacher conferences were another way to unite these efforts. Such symposiums were already held in France, Germany, New York and Massachusetts. They covered a range of subjects including the history of education, and improvements or suggestions for methods of

[331] Report of 1846, p. 185.
[332] Ibid. p. 184.

teaching. Ryerson quoted Mr. Lalor in his prize essay for the London Central Education Society regarding such conferences:

> [Teachers] are induced to come together at proper intervals, and under judicious arrangements, the association would furnish the strongest incentives to their zeal and industry. The sympathies of their common pursuit, the interchange of ideas, the communication of new discoveries, could not fail to make the meeting delightful.[333]

In response to their value, Ryerson made the following statement regarding their formation:

> The holding of such meetings in the several districts of this Province […] I am confident [will] contribute largely to the improvement of teachers, and to excite in the public mind an increased interest in the education of the young. To teachers such associations would be invaluable, and through them to the public at large.[334]

Remarkably, this is precisely what eventually occurred in Ontario. Teacher associations quickly multiplied, and teachers began to discuss a variety of educational topics (see section **7.3.6.1**). To complement the conferences, Ryerson recommended circulating libraries. The government would suggest books and provide a small fund, but the bulk of the money must be raised by the community. Therefore, it was the collaboration and cooperation between the government and the people that would not only guarantee the success of the laws, but the application of them to every school. Ryerson said:

> The establishment and maintenance of a school system is not like the digging of a canal, or the building of a railroad, where the work may be performed by strangers and foreigners. The subjects of popular education are the younger, and the immediate and necessary agents of it are the elder, inhabitants of the country; and if the latter are indifferent and unfaithful to their duty, the former will grow up ignorant, notwithstanding the provisions of the best laws, and the best exertions of the Government.[335]

Education must be seen as a public interest if it is to incite parents to shoulder their social and moral obligations for their children, themselves and society.

[333] Report of 1846, p. 187.
[334] Ibid. p. 187.
[335] Ibid. p. 180.

5.4 Summary of the Report of 1846

When Ryerson set out to investigate the most sophisticated education systems, he wanted to review the components of foreign schemes that would be easily adaptable to the conditions in Ontario. Ryerson stated:

> May the examples of other countries of Europe be adduced in illustration of what may be achieved as to both the cheapness, the thoroughness, the various practical character, and the general diffusion of education, by a proper classification of schools and teachers, their appropriate training and selection by competition, together with an efficient system of inspection over every class of schools.[336]

The Report of 1846 provided an outline of what Ryerson desired as the foundation of education. The information and observations offered by a variety of people were a central part of the document. It described both commendable and undesirable examples of foreign educational policies and practices. The importance of this report was that it not only laid the groundwork for Ryerson's school law but for the content itself. Putman (1912) argued that Ryerson's suggestions were very progressive for the time:

> Almost every subject introduced into Ontario schools during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and many which yet, in the twentieth century, seem to have an insecure foothold, and are by many denominated 'fads,' were included by Ryerson in his memorable Report of 1846, and the arguments he uses in favour of their adoption would not seem out of place if used by an advanced educator of the present day.[337]

Even American journals commented favourably on the Report, including Cincinnati's *Western School Journal* (October 1847) and the *Official Monthly School Journal for the State of New York* (June 1848).[338] Discussion of these documents and others is included in section **7.2.2**.

It is without question that Ryerson recognised the huge nature of the task assigned to him in devising an appropriate scheme for Canada. The aptness of the quotations incorporated in the

[336] Report of 1846, p. 155.
[337] J. Putman, *Egerton Ryerson and education in Upper Canada* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1912) p. 114.
[338] *JEUC* 1 (1848) p. 176 and p. 207.

Report makes it an invaluable source. He showed that his suggestions for the revised law were not entirely innovative or based on untested assumptions, but instead were the result of exploration and reflection:

> In adopting measures so decided for the advancement of the education of the people, the administration of Canada is but following the example of the most enlightened Governments, and, like them, laying the foundation for the strongest claims to the esteem of the country and gratitude of prosperity.[339]

Foreign investigations enabled a strategic comparison of policies, practices, difficulties and successes. The comparisons also reaffirmed the soundness of Ryerson's theories, and demonstrated why certain features would and would not influence Ontario's system. Just before its publication, Ryerson wrote that he intended the four-hundred-page document 'to explain to all parties what I think, desire and intend' for education.[340] The significance of this Report is that much of what was described was later implemented.

[339] Report of 1846, p. 6.
[340] E. Ryerson, *Story of my life* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1883) p. 410.

Chapter Six Part I

The internalisation of foreign examples

We need not say, that the system is unpopular; we need not say, that the whole Act is unpopular; and we need scarcely say, that the one to amend it, is not calculated to remove unfavourable impressions.

Robert Spence, editor of the *Dundas Warder*, 1848 [341]

The present School Act I find is decidedly better than any other heretofore, and […] calculated to give education to a certain class who had been heretofore deprived of it on account to poverty or limited circumstances.

T. Vauston, local superintendent of Escott, 1851 [342]

In availing myself as far as possible of the experience of other countries, and the testimony of their most enlightened educationalists, I have not lost sight of the peculiarities of our own country, and have only imitated distinguished examples of other nations.

Egerton Ryerson, 1846 [343]

[341] R. Spence, *Dundas Warder*, 12 May 1848.
[342] T. Vauston, superintendent of Escott (township of Leeds) to E. Ryerson, *JEUC* 4 (1851) 42.
[343] Report of 1846, p. iv.

6.1.1 The 1846 School Act

Ryerson's Report of 1846 was favourably received by government, and he was subsequently asked to submit a draft of a school bill based on his suggestions. Unlike previous school acts, in this law the superintendent became the chief executive officer of education, appointed by the Governor. Clergymen, judges and wardens became visitors who could stop at any school in their district, question pupils, conduct examinations and advise teachers. Trustees, municipal councils and local superintendents' obligations were more thoroughly defined, and for the first time teachers' certificates were divided into first, second and third categories. The provision was also made for the appointment of a general board of education that was to take charge of establishing a provincial Normal School, assisting with textbook recommendations and the general diffusion of education. The Irish National Readers also became the authorised textbooks for common schools.

The 1846 common school act applied chiefly to the rural schools. The following year, Ryerson designed a second act for cities and towns. In 1850, a new law was passed based on the combination of the two preceding ones. This 1850 Act, similar to the provisions that had gone before, entitled freeholders and householders to decide to form a school, elect three trustees and agree on the manner to fund them. The trustees employed the teachers and determined their salary. Local superintendents, responsible for no more than one hundred schools, were appointed by municipal councils and required to inspect schools, deliver annual lectures and provide comprehensive reports to the chief superintendent. The system was non-sectarian but Christian, and the provision for separate Roman Catholic schools, as first outlined in the 1841 School Act, continued. Only in 1854 did the district grammar schools come under the control of the education department. Up to that time, these schools were managed directly by the executive government.

In framing the 1846 bill, Ryerson stated: 'I have thought there could be no dispute in regard to the provisions which have been embodied in [the] laws.'[344] In order to help explain the new duties prescribed, Ryerson sent circulars to local superintendents, trustees and teachers and prepared a comprehensive special report. Beginning in 1847, he even attended county school conventions to excite the people and clarify any misunderstandings.[345] Moreover, a journal of education was published monthly and sent to all trustees. The expectation was that the revised educational system, based on successful foreign examples, would alleviate former failings and enhance schooling in the province.

The central question of this thesis is: how did people perceive those policies and practices influenced by foreign examples? Also, was there an improvement in schooling following the new school act? Ryerson's ARUC emphatically reported improvements in comparison with former years. He claimed: 'the decrease in the number of school sections and schools, in connection with an increase in the number of pupils attending the schools, argues favourably for the progress of elementary instruction.'[346] This statement was justified by comparing the amount of money raised by the people over the last two years (between 1847 and 1849), which proved 'the true tests of the feelings of the country in regard to the school systems and of the progress of elementary education.'[347] The annual report also recorded that students used the Irish National Readers in no fewer than 1,317 out of 2,727 common schools which was a successful achievement for something that had been implemented so recently.[348] Common school teachers' salaries had also increased over any preceding year, as had the total number of visits made by local superintendents, clergymen, councillors and

[344] E. Ryerson to W. Draper, 3 March 1846, MS 6022.
[345] E. Ryerson, *Special report of the measures which have been adopted for the establishment of a Normal school for Upper Canada; and for carrying into effect generally the Common School Act with an appendix* (Montreal: Lovell and Gibson, 1847) MS 6024.
[346] ARUC 1847, *DHE* vol. 7, p. 151.
[347] Ibid. p. 153.
[348] Ibid. p. 162.

magistrates.[349] Moreover, Ryerson compared educational provisions in Ontario and New York. School expenditure and the number of pupils attending school were higher in Canada. Ryerson claimed 'from what has already been done, I am satisfied the schools in Upper Canada may in four or five years, be made as efficient and potent in all respects as those of the state of New York.'[350]

To support these favourable remarks, Ryerson's first annual report included local superintendents' assessments of progress in their relevant districts. The superintendent of Dalhousie claimed that common schools were 'working quite satisfactorily and our schools are generally open, and better attended, than they were last year.'[351] In Woodstock, the report stated that 'upon the whole our common schools are undoubtedly improving [and] more attention [is] paid to the important subject of elementary instruction than in past years.'[352] The school superintendent of the Midland district, one of the largest of the province, remarked that 'parents now take a far more lively interest in them than formerly. Public examinations of the schools are generally very well attended, especially where there is a good teacher.'[353] Similarly, correspondence from the Bathurst district reported that 'judging more from what I have heard than from my own opinion, common school instruction is becoming, from year to year, better and more efficient.'[354] A similar remark was made by the superintendent of the Prince Edward district, who felt that the schools had improved so much that they really were an inspiration for others.[355] Likewise, in the Victoria district, the superintendent confirmed the general improvement:

[349] In 1846, there were 4,309 visits whereas the total number reported for 1847 was 8,886, therefore a difference of 4,577 visits, 'School visits and attendance for the years 1846 – 1847,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 156.
[350] ARUC 1847, *DHE* vol. 7, p. 159.
[351] D. D'Everardo, superintendent of Niagara (county of Lanark) to E. Ryerson, 25 October 1847, *DHE* vol. 7, p. 129.
[352] W. Landon, superintendent Woodstock (Brock district) to E. Ryerson, November 1847, *DHE* vol. 7, p. 132.
[353] J. Strachan, superintendent of the Midland district, ARUC 1847 p. 21.
[354] J. Padfield to E. Ryerson, February 1848, *DHE* vol. 7, p. 132.
[355] T. Donnelly, school superintendent of Prince Edward district, ARUC 1847 p. 21.

> The number of children attending the schools has increased ten per cent. And the knowledge acquired, whilst there, has increased fifty per cent. The surveillance of a school superintendent adds a wonderful stimulus to the teacher; and the change from the old hum drum system to an intellectual one, has done a world of good.[356]

In the county of Norfolk, Reverend Clarke, who had been the superintendent for six years, even alluded to Ryerson's efforts in his assessement of the school law:

> I am happy to testify that the School Act of 1846, under the efficient provincial superintendence of the Reverend Doctor Ryerson has contributed very much to the advancement of the educational interests of this part of the country. To that gentleman Canada West is much indebted for his able and untiring services. That Act, upon the whole, is regarded with very general favour.[357]

It appears from Ryerson's annual report and a handful of school district assessments that the Common School Act did drastically alter the state of education. The condition and character of schools improved, the number of official visits by various parties increased, and overall there was a general elevation in the morale of the public. Therefore, policies and practices based on foreign examples were, it would seem, successfully internalised.

Regrettably, in reality this was far from the case. An extensive study of all incoming general correspondence to the department of education, as well as coverage in the popular press, exposes feelings of animosity and criticism. Many people and influential public bodies profoundly opposed the policies outlined in the school bill, many of which were related to foreign examples. Referring to the law, the *Dundas Warder* remarked 'as it stands, [the Act] is a monstrous absurdity, complex, expensive and almost impracticable.'[358] The *Perth Courier* wrote that 'the Act, it is clear, does not meet the exigencies to which it relates.'[359] The *Canadian Christian Advocate* even described Ryerson's bill as 'tyrannical':

[356] W. Hutton, superintendent of the Victoria district, ARUC 1847 p. 21.
[357] W. Clarke, superintendent of the county of Norfolk, *DHE* vol. 9, p. 56.
[358] R. Spence, *Dundas Warder*, 22 September 1848.
[359] M. McDonnell, 'The position and prospects of the Bathurst district,' *The Perth Courier*, 15 September 1846.

> It wrests from parents and guardians the right of choice in the descriptions of school books which are to form the minds and characters of their children […]. Shall the people of Canada resign the education of their sons and daughters into the hands of the civil government under the direction of Egerton Ryerson?[360]

The warden of the Newcastle district sent a letter to his counterpart in another section complaining of the 'general feeling of dissatisfaction with the Act, owing in a great measure to the complicated machinery required to carry out its provisions.'[361] There was even disapproval of establishing the teacher training institute. The Gore council, who had a particularly negative reaction to many of Ryerson's proposals, announced that:

> With respect to the necessity of establishing a Normal, with elementary Model Schools in this province, [we] are of opinion that however well adapted such an institution might be to the wants of the old and densely populated countries of Europe, where services in almost every vocation will scarcely yield the common necessities of life, they are so far as this object expected to be gained is concerned, altogether unsuited to a country like Upper Canada.[362]

A similar tone can be found in the minutes of a Colborne district municipal council meeting, in which it is recorded that 'the moneys required to pay for the establishment and support of Normal and Model schools are little less than a waste of so much of the Legislative grant.'[363] As these two extracts reveal, although teacher training institutes may seem like the norm today, they were not always supported.

A survey of complaints in letters submitted to the department of education finds reference to the contentious policies of trustee responsibilities, the division of school sections, arbitration between teachers and parents, financing new schoolhouses, the legality of teacher appointments, applications for poor school funds, establishing libraries, complaints about corporal punishment, discipline and the subjects studied.[364]

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[360] *Canadian Christian Advocate*, 22 December 1846.
[361] Warden of the Newcastle district to the warden of the Eastern district, 29 September 1847, AO RG 2-86-5.
[362] 'Memorial of the Gore district council against the Act of 1846,' 10 November 1847, AO RG 2-12-5-F13-27.
[363] 'Extracts from the minutes of the municipal council, Colborne district,' 8 February 1848, AO RG 2-12-6-3.
[364] According to Hodgins, the leading districts against general features of the school act were the Home and Gore councils. Those that were more or less in favour were the Colborne, Niagara and Midland districts.

However, there were three significant recurring complaints. Firstly, fierce opposition arose concerning the functions of the board of education and the role of Ryerson as head of that body. Many individuals considered the manner in which the board enforced the rules as a form of 'Prussian despotism.' Secondly, there was criticism of the provision of universal, free schools supported by taxed property. Individuals argued that paying for the education of other people's children was unjust. Education should remain the responsibility of parents, not the state. Lastly, people resented having to purchase the Irish National Readers. American textbooks had traditionally been their texts of choice because they were inexpensive and easily acquired.

The objections against (1) the role of chief superintendent and the provincial board of education, (2) the notion of universal free schools for all pupils supported by taxed property, and (3) the Irish National Readers as the authorised textbooks, are worthwhile cases to study in conceptualising educational policy borrowing. These factors were alluded to in the Report of 1846, were partially or entirely based on foreign policies or practices, and were both criticised and supported. In reviewing these subjects, it became apparent that Ryerson addressed these criticisms in a pattern shown in Figure 4: *Internalised foreign examples: steps to end point*. This figure describes the five stages Ryerson used to justify those external policies and practices once they had been adopted.

However, because many letters to the department of education no longer state their location, it is difficult to determine whether they are part of those main adversaries or promoters (see *DHE*, vol. 8).

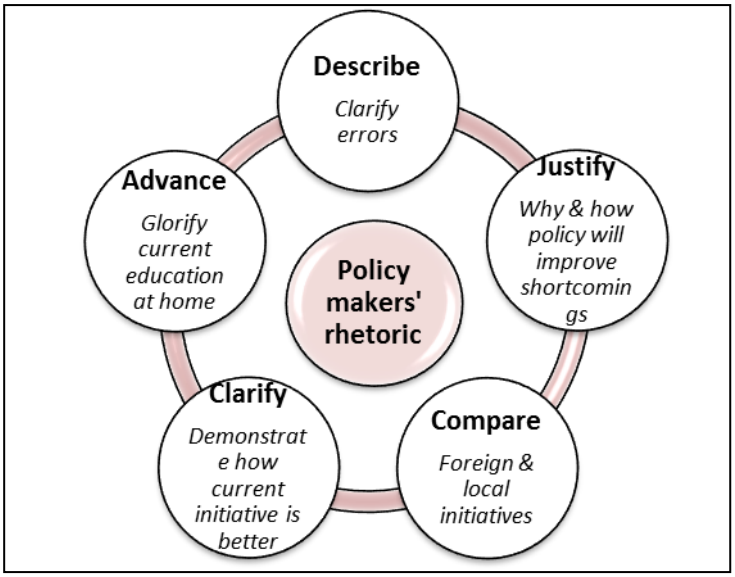


Figure 4: Internalised foreign examples: steps to end point

For each objection, Ryerson first *described* the provision in detail, often alluding to the historical events that led to its incorporation into law. In this first stage, he referenced what was in place formerly, provided descriptions of deprived local experiences, and recounted the history of that same provision in the foreign countries that partially or entirely influenced the practice in Ontario. Next, Ryerson *justified* why this particular feature should become law by elaborating on how it solved preceding failures. Again, he regularly quoted the success of similar initiatives in foreign nations, while also referring to the complaints made by superintendents, teachers and parents. Subsequently, he *compared* and *clarified* which foreign examples were adopted in Ontario and which were not. Finally, Ryerson showed that the province's initiatives were *advanced* and progressive by quoting local and foreign reports. The analysis of his arguments and responses to the criticisms shows how the use of foreign examples shifted once they were internalised into a new context.

The next three sub-chapters will use the figure above to review Ryerson's rhetoric in response to the criticism he received. Over time his arguments developed so that he no longer described what education ought to be based upon, but instead concentrated on defending the choices he had made. Successful local experiences eventually supplemented his justifications. However, foreign examples continued to play a significant role in his defences, despite those foreign policies being a cause of criticism.

Chapter Six Part II

The role of the chief superintendent and the board of education

> [We call for] *the entire abolition of the costly office of the Chief Superintendent […], then the immediate dismissal of Doctor Egerton Ryerson, and then, the abolition of an office from which, here at least, no public advantages have ever been derived.*
>
> Petition from the Gore district, 1846 [365]

> *I have always had pleasure in corresponding with the education office and feel happy to be able fully to approve of the present system of school education introduced by your department and proud that our country enjoys such advantages for obtaining an excellent English education.*
>
> R. Wallice, local superintendent of Oxford, 1852 [366]

> *If municipal councillors are negligent and careless, or act unadvisedly in any, or all, of these matters, corresponding dissatisfaction and confusion must, of course, ensue; and for which the School Law, or Chief Superintendent, is no more to be blamed than is the Constitutional Act, (of 1791) for the consequences of any injurious proceeding, or careless indifference.*
>
> Egerton Ryerson, 1847 [367]

[365] 'Petition from the Gore district,' September 1846, *DHE* vol. 7, p. 201.
[366] R. Wallice, superintendent of the county of Oxford to E. Ryerson, 13 January 1852, AO RG 2-12-12-91.
[367] E. Ryerson, 'Explanatory remarks on the Common School Act of 1846,' *DHE* vol. 7, p. 201.

6.2.1 Introduction

In the 1846 Common School Act, eleven clauses outlined the duties of the chief superintendent. He was to prepare suitable forms and regulations, assist in the decision making about complaints made and submitted to him, and to endorse the adoption of suitable building plans. Ryerson proposed to continue making foreign tours, roughly every five years, to advance the educational interests of the province and learn about new initiatives. The role of superintendent was not under the control of any intervening body, nor was it affiliated with the political party in office; instead it was conferred through the governor's appointment.

The 1846 school bill authorised seven persons, including the chief superintendent, to be members of the board of education. They were to establish a Normal School and furnish the rules and regulations for its management. They were to examine, recommend or disapprove books, and assist the superintendent on questions related to the diffusion of knowledge. By the general school Act of 1850, this board was renamed the 'Council of Public Instruction.' It had nine members and in 1874 this number increased to eighteen members. In 1876, upon Ryerson's retirement, a new ministry of education was formed which then came under the control of the Executive Council, a feature that Ryerson felt was becoming increasingly necessary following the Canadian confederation of 1867.[368]

In the draft of the school bill, Ryerson remarked that 'the board ought to consist of the most competent men in the country, and be a fair representation of the religious feelings of the country, without reference to a political party.'[369] The members of the first council included a bishop, a judge, a newspaper editor and a treasurer who represented numerous religious

[368] Ryerson said: 'some sincere friends of the school system have expressed apprehensions under the new *regime* it might be bought with the pernicious influence of political party. I do not share in such assumption. I have every confidence that the administration of the school system will be strictly impartial and patriotic, and will accord in spirit with its inauguration,' in *Circular to the municipal councils of counties, townships, cities, towns and villages in Ontario*, 29 February, 1876, *DHE* vol. 27, p. 240.

[369] E. Ryerson, 'Letter expounding and recommending the original draft of the present school Act' 3 March 1846, *JEUC* 1 (1848) 38.

affiliations.[370] Ryerson even proposed to John Strachan, his adversary, to represent the Church of England. Strachan, although pleased by the invitation, declined (see section **4.3** on Strachan).

In this sub-chapter, the criticisms denouncing the superintendent and the board of education will be reviewed. The 'Internalised foreign examples: steps to end point' (Figure 5) demonstrates the way in which Ryerson's rhetoric shifted away from merely describing the superiority of their duties towards attesting which foreign aspects did and did not influence their features.

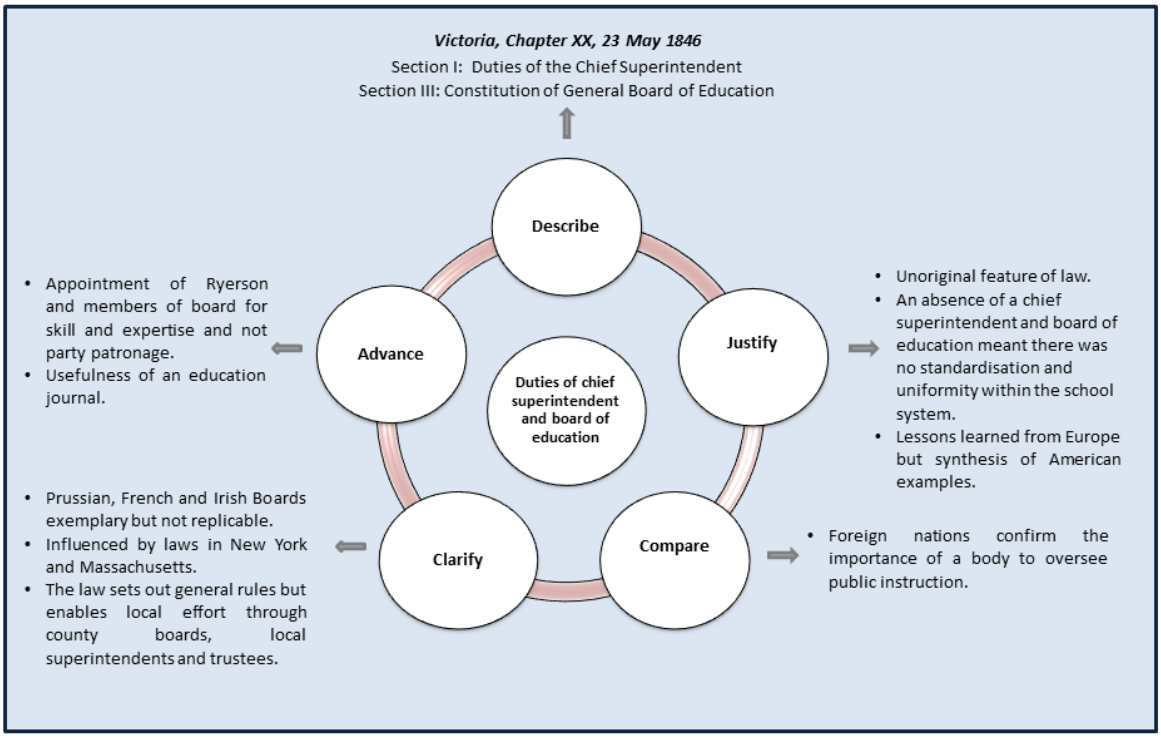


Figure 5: Duties of superintendent and board of education internalised in local context

[370] In 1846, the board consisted of E. Ryerson (Methodist); M. Power, Roman Catholic Bishop of Toronto; H. Grassett, Rector of Toronto (Church of England), S. Harrison, Queen's Counsel judge, J. Morrison, Barrister, MPP, H. Scobie, editor of the *British Colonist*, and J. Howard, treasurer of the county of York. Two more members were added in 1850: Rev. J. Jenning, Presbyterian minister and A. Lillie, Congregational minister.

In this instance, it was sections from school laws in Massachusetts and New York that influenced Ontario's school act. However, these American states *influenced* Ontario's school law, they were not directly copied. It was not the first time that both bodies had appeared in the province. Ryerson defended the law and addressed the numerous condemnations by sending carefully prepared circulars to municipal councils, superintendents, trustees and teachers. In time, letters from these individuals confirmed the usefulness of both entities. Even newspapers that had a history of denouncing Ryerson's initiatives could not help but commend the merits of such an arrangement. It was this arrangement, of a department and superintendent who oversaw management but retained community initiative, which made Ontario's system of education an enlightened scheme.

6.2.2 Complaints against the board and Ryerson as chief superintendent

There is copious evidence that people opposed the appointment of a chief superintendent, with Ryerson as the named official, the creation of a central board in Toronto, and their responsibilities in managing and overseeing school affairs. The department received numerous letters of protest, and denouncements also occupied space in the popular press from all regions of the province. There were three main criticisms: the first was against Ryerson's appointment to office and the general obligations of the board. Secondly, many were critical of the salaries of the men who were appointed. Finally, many thought that the scheme of public instruction was a form of 'Prussian despotism.' These three grievances will be discussed below, first according to their occurrence in the popular press and then in reports made by superintendents, trustees and teachers. All attempts have been made to make it clear whether particular correspondence is from cities, towns or villages.

6.2.1.1 Criticism One: the superintendent's appointment and issues with the board

Robert Spence, editor of the *Dundas Warder* and later a cabinet minister in parliament, took a particularly strong position against both these matters. He wrote in his newspaper that the board was 'universally held to be useless and exceedingly burdensome, and consequently, one that should be abolished.'[371] Spence later argued: 'as to the Chief Superintendent of Education, the country calls loudly for the abolition of his office. It is useless and expensive.'[372] Several years later, the same paper included an article which called Ryerson a 'political harlequin – an enemy to freedom and to Canada.'[373] The *Huron Signal*, a paper from the township of Goderich, declared: 'We have always believed and frequently published our belief that the office of the Chief Superintendent, could safely and profitably be dispensed with. We think it should be *abolished*.'[374] In the *Bathurst Courier*, 'one of the committee' gave his opinion of the chief superintendent and his quest to promote education:

> Doctor Ryerson assumes too much of the *Bashaw* – that he has by such assumption provoked the opposition of many 'intelligent' and 'noble' minds quite as anxious as he is to promote the 'interests,' the 'efficiency' and the 'progress of schools,' and that he has much, very much, to unsay, before they can have confidence in his 'official papers.'[375]

This comment was made in reaction to an exchange of letters between Ryerson and members of the Bathurst district council, who were troubled by certain provisions in the school act.

In the *British Colonist*, a conservative paper from Toronto originally of the Church of Scotland supporters, a resident wrote that 'the whole country would have had the satisfaction of seeing Mr. Ryerson quietly dropped from his present position […]. No man was ever more unpopular than this betrayer of this country's interests.'[376] The *British Colonist* included many insulting articles on aspects that Ryerson recommended. Likewise, in *The*

[371] R. Spence, *Dundas Warder*, 5 May 1846.
[372] R. Spence, *Dundas Warder*, 3 September 1847.
[373] *Dundas Warder*, 21 January 1850.
[374] *Huron Signal*, 10 January 1846.
[375] 'A member of the Bathurst district council,' *Bathurst Courier*, 16 January 1849.
[376] The *British Colonist* was originally published by Hugh Scobie who was subsequently selected as a member of the board of education. 'The New Common School Act,' *British Colonist*, 26 December 1847.

Church, usually a defender of the privileges of the British connection, the editor Dr. Bethune protested against Ryerson's appointment:

> It was an impolitic and a heartless step, as regards the Church of England in this colony, to raise to the office of Superintendent an individual who has thriven upon his political obliquities, and who owes his fame, or rather his notoriety, to his unquenchable dislike to the National Church.[377]

Bethune did eventually change his opinion of Ryerson. However, both men were embroiled for some time in several public debates regarding the clergy reserves.

An article even appeared in England's *The Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet and Plymouth Journal*, which called Ryerson 'an anti-church democrat:'

> The Principal of this college [Victoria] was the Rev. Egerton Ryerson, Editor of the *Guardian* ultra-radical Paper, whose democratic and anti-church views were so extreme […]. Would it be believed that to this same Egerton Ryerson has lately been committed the general superintendency of education throughout the Province of Upper Canada!!![378]

As these statements show, many resented Ryerson because he was not Anglican or affiliated with the Church of England. At that time, party patriotism dominated the affairs of daily life (see sections **1.2** on Ryerson as Methodist preacher and **4.2** on the Family Compact).

In Toronto, in the *Leader*, originally a paper of the Church of England party, the author emphasised that residents should be the ones dictating their own school affairs, not Ryerson:

> The worthy Doctor may be actuated by considerations which may plead as an excuse for his meddling interference in the concerns of others. I may be permitted, however, to say, *en passant*, that our municipal bodies, being composed of citizens of the highest respectability by their moral character, education, and standing in society, should be the best and sole judges of the most suitable appropriation of the money which the Act of the Legislature has placed under their control.[379]

[377] *The Church*, 25 October 1844.
[378] *The Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet and Plymouth Journal*, Truro (England), 18 April 1845.
[379] J. Bruyère, *The Leader*, 9 December 1856.

This was a similar theme developed in a piece in the *Welland Telegraph,* a paper from St. Catherine's, whose author commented on Ryerson's position and his ability to make decisions without conferring with the political party in office:

> Really, our educational machinery is becoming cumbersome, costly and impracticable; and if the present Chief should occupy his position for many years without restraint, and be allowed to ride rough shod over the plainest act of Parliament, the Legislature will be altogether superseded […] and the published edict of Dr. Ryerson will be elevated above the level of a legal statute.[380]

As section **4.7** discussed, Ryerson's appointment was controversial. Ryerson claimed to have been originally offered the position by Lord Sydenham. However, Sydenham's unexpected death meant that there was no proof of this, and the position went to Reverend Murray. After Murray left the post to become a professor, the new governor in the colony, Lord Metcalfe, presented the position to Ryerson. However, people resented this on several levels. Firstly, those who traditionally governed the province, the Family Compact, denounced the appointment on religious grounds. Many considered the Methodist Church to be closely aligned with the United States and republicanism. This was a concern for those who wanted to keep a close British connection. Secondly, people supposed that Ryerson was chosen because he was a friend of Metcalfe. They felt that Ryerson did not have the adequate skills or knowledge for the role. Lastly, because Ryerson was appointed by Metcalfe, people felt that his position and his manner of selection were above the rule of law. The colony was supposed to be enjoying an era of responsible government, with appointments made within the majority party rather than by the Governor's sole authority.

Discontent at Ryerson's nomination by Governor Metcalfe rather than the Assembly was echoed in the *Perth Courier*, which republished a letter from Toronto's *Examiner*:

> It has been objected to the new school bill, that the power of appointing the chief superintendent and the board of education is vested in the Governor *per se* […]. The Governor appoints the chief superintendent, and neither the Chief

[380] *Welland Telegraph*, 7 September 1865, AO RG 2-12-79-30.

> nor Deputy – neither head nor tail, has any direct responsibility to the government of the province.[381]

A more fervent set of remarks appeared in Toronto's *Globe* whose editor, George Brown, was openly opposed to Ryerson's appointment, especially the fact that the position was not affiliated with the party in office, as well as Ryerson's travels in Europe. From year to year, letters between these two individuals increased. In an editorial, Brown asked: 'is it not melancholy that so crooked, so visionary a man as this should be at the head of the literary institutions of the country?[382] In another article, signed 'Junius', the author called Ryerson a political partisan:

> Nor is it flattering to the many learned men of the country that one represented to be of slender attainments in a few common branches of English education, and totally ignorant of mathematics and classics, should be entrusted with the education of the country, many of whose youthful scholars have attained higher knowledge than their chief.[383]

Ryerson had never attended a higher degree institute; instead he was predominantly self-taught. After the introduction of the 1846 law, Brown remarked:

> It was but natural to suppose that an officer whose sole prospects of success are in the confidence and co-operation of the people would have taken some steps to gain that confidence and cooperation, that he would have been desirous by direct communication with superintendents, trustees, experienced teachers and influential persons in the province of ascertaining their views and of obtaining their suggestions as to the best means of promoting the interests of the noble department over which he had been called to preside. But no, it is true he was devising a system of education for Canada, but what had the wants or wishes of the people to do with it? The serfs must receive anything I, their lord and master, may import from the cringing subjects of despotic monarchies. We are more and more convinced from the examination of this report that Mr. Ryerson is not competent for the situation which he occupies.[384]

Brown noted that Ryerson had not adequately sought the advice or gained the support of local residents. The article also alluded to Ryerson taking features from despotic nations.

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[381] *Perth Courier*, 18 August 1846.
[382] *Globe*, 8 May, 1848.
[383] *Globe*, 28 May 1844.
[384] *Globe*, 6 January, 1847.

Even an individual outside the province commented unfavourably on Ryerson's selection. A resident in Quebec submitted the following to *Le Courrier du Canada*:

> Nous voyons quel mal cet officier sans responsabilité peut faire par ses conseils gratuits, conseils donnés par lui quand la fantaisie lui en vient. C'est un officier administratif, placé à la tête du Département de l'Instruction Publique, et qui émet des pronunciamentos et des ukases, sans consulter le moins du monde ses collègues responsables.[385]

The minutes of various district council meetings also disclosed uneasiness with the two positions. At the Home district, the following announcement was issued:

> They cannot but observe, that, whilst a Provincial 'Board of Education' has been formed, for the purpose of giving advice upon school affairs, the power of that board is placed in abject subordination to the chief superintendent of schools; that it is left discretionary with him, by the Act of Parliament, to consult them, or not, upon any educational question, as his inclination, or caprice, may dictate, and be guided, or not, in his decisions, by their advice.[386]

This district objected to the power given to the chief superintendent, who had been nominated by the Governor and who they felt was in no way accountable to the people. Similarly, a resolution at the Gore district council's annual meeting stated:

> That the present school bill is not adapted to the state of the country and the present demands of education; it is inefficient from its unwieldy and cumbersome machinery; is sectarian in its tendency; causes a waste of means, and imposes on those appointed to carry out its enactments, duties so indistinct and laborious as to produce an insuperable apathy […]. We conceive that this has arisen chiefly from the fact, that the framing of the Act has been entrusted to the (chief superintendent), a party, who, from his former advocation did not possess the practical experience in the subject legislated on.[387]

In these above instances, objections were against the power given to the board of education and to Ryerson, and regarding the perception that education was sectarian in nature. Again, each community or newspaper applied its criticisms to a certain area, whether it was because Ryerson had no affiliation with the Family Compact or because he was appointed by

[385] *Le Courrier du Canada*, 24 April, 1857.
[386] 'The Home district report on the common school act of 1846,' 27 January 1848, *DHE* vol. 7, p. 121.
[387] 'Proceedings of the Gore district,' *Dundas Warder* 1847, *DHE* vol. 8, p. 63.

Metcalfe. Regardless, this criticism translated into Ryerson becoming an unpopular figure as superintendent of education.

6.2.1.2 Criticism Two: salaries of the members of the board of education

Another fervent discussion surrounded the salaries of the chief superintendent and his assistants. The Newcastle district called for the abolition of the provincial superintendent because far too many funds went towards his salary.[388] In the Gore district, a memorial sent to the legislature also referred to the superintendent's and clerk's salaries as superfluous.[389] During the passage of the 1850 bill, a debate arose about Ryerson's salary and the value of his services to the country. The editor of the *Tri-Weekly Guide* claimed 'that for years the Rev. Superintendent of Education had been applying to his own private use monies that legally and equitably belonged to the public.'[390] Robert Spence again took a stance on this topic, remarking in his *Dundas Warder* that many had found that the 'part of the first section of the Act, which provides for the salary of the chief superintendent and his clerk, is objectionable, when we consider the present state of the country.'[391] A writer in the *Brockville Recorder* also attempted to show that 'more than one-third part of the government grant for education in Upper Canada is consumed, or lavished, in a manner which is useless.' [392] The chief superintendent and the provincial board of education were among those provisions deemed unnecessary.

In the *North American Semi Weekly*, a newspaper of the radical wing of the Reform party called the Clear Grits, the issue with salaries was also discussed:

> The system is false from beginning to end, and if it were all knocked in the head, and the money that is now wasted in paying £500 a-year to Ryerson,

[388] H. Reid 'Circular of Newcastle district,' 27 September 1847, AO RG 2-12-5-13-11.
[389] 'Memorial to the legislature of the Gore District council against the Common School Act of 1846,' 10 November 1847, *DHE* vol. 7, p. 115
[390] 'The Committee of Public Accounts – Investigation Strangled,' *The Tri-Weekly Guide*, 24 February 1859.
[391] R. Spence, *Dundas Warder*, July 1847, *DHE* vol. 7, p. 200.
[392] *Brockville Recorder*, February 1974, *DHE* vol. 7, p. 200.

> several hundred more clerks, and several thousand for buildings and contingencies, were added to the school fund, and a short simple law framed for the purpose, placing the schools in each county under the management of the county councils, an immense saving and a great benefit to the cause of education would result.[393]

That newspaper also included a letter 'from an observer' calling Ryerson 'venial' and 'illiterate.'[394] The *North American* eventually amalgamated with Toronto's *Globe*.

In the *Globe*, numerous articles appeared and re-appeared regarding the school question. With the passage of the 1850 Act and Ryerson's salary, Brown remarked:

> The debate on Egerton Ryerson's salary, was, we think, just another instance of pandering to the cry of the moment. His salary was sought to be made the same as the Lower Canada Superintendent's. Well, the Lower Canada Superintendent's salary is five hundred pounds, but it would not do to name that sum for Upper Canada.[395]

Even a month after Ryerson's retirement from office, an editorial appeared in the *Globe* calling for an investigation into the 'pecuniary transactions' connected with the educational depository.'[396] Although Ryerson had by then retired, George Hodgins, deputy superintendent, asked the new minister of education, Adam Crooks, to look into the matter. Crooks commissioned an ex-banker to review all accounts, and it came as little surprise that the findings indicated there had been no financial mismanagement.[397]

6.2.1.3 Criticism Three: Ontario's system a form of 'Prussian despotism'

A final set of arguments criticised the manner in which the superintendent and the board carried out their tasks, calling it 'Prussian despotism' in Ontario's schools. In 1859, thirteen years after the school act was introduced, Ryerson recalled how he was represented as having 'plotted a Prussian school despotism for free Canada, and that I was forcing upon the

[393] *The North American Semi Weekly*, 26 July 1850.
[394] *The North American Semi Weekly*, 2 August 1850.
[395] *Globe*, 16 July 1850.
[396] *Globe*, 10 March, 1876.
[397] Adam Cooks instructed Mr. James Brown, an ex-banker, to examine the account of the depository branch of the education department commencing in 1850.

country a system in which the last spark of Canadian liberty would be extinguished, and Canadian youth would be educated as slaves.'[398] What Ryerson remembered was not far off what people perceived.

The *North American Semi Weekly* called the new school bill 'Prussian despotism in its worst form.'[399] That newspaper condemned the control imposed by the board of education:

> In the board of education there is not one practical teacher […] composed of gentlemen having no practical knowledge of school teaching, yet three of these can dictate to all Upper Canada […]. Here is another feature of this system of Prussian centralization.[400]

There was a similar tone taken in Hamilton's *Canada Christian Advocate* which reported: 'Egerton Ryerson is very willing to be dictator. He has ruled the Wesleyan conference and people so long that he now claims the right to rule the government and people of Canada.'[401] That newspaper went on to write:

> In educational as well as in other matters there cannot be too much power placed in the hands of the people. The parents through the trustees should be allowed to manage their own business, without being controlled by a *chief* superintendent of schools and a board of education, all residing in the city of Toronto.[402]

Even at a meeting in the township of Darlington, the local superintendent resolved that: 'the "chief," (if there is still to be one) should not be allowed to interfere with local matters at all, except for securing annual reports for the provincial government.'[403] As has been seen, the criticism focused on the perception that too much power was given to the chief superintendent and the board of education. They resented this feature when education had previously been an autonomous affair.

[398] E. Ryerson, *The Story of my life* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1884) p. 424.
[399] *The North American Semi Weekly*, 27 August 1850.
[400] Ibid.
[401] *Canada Christian Advocate*, 7 January 1850.
[402] *Canada Christian Advocate*, 22 January 1850.
[403] J. Climie, superintendent of the township of Darlingon, n.d.,' *DHE* vol. 9, p. 59.

Yet another link to Prussian despotism referred back to the manner in which Ryerson was appointed by Metcalfe. In Toronto's *British Colonist*, the editor said: 'Mr. Ryerson's idea of a school bill may be expressed in one word – compulsion!'[404] Several years later the editor wrote that 'the sin of Dr. Ryerson was not his going to Prussia, and afterwards, on his return, impregnating our common school system with a uniform and national character […]. The real sin is that he received his appointment from Lord Metcalfe.'[405] A similar tone was taken in the *Dundas Warder* where the editor nicknamed Ryerson 'Leonidas', a comparison made with the hero of Thermopylae:

> The new Act seems to be the creation of an inexperienced theorism, and the collection of sections and parts of sections from several school Acts and Bills, without any clear perception of their relation the one to the other, or their working as a whole […]. And by whom was this astonishing discovery made? […] Was it by the friend of responsible government and liberal institutions? No. It was by Egerton Ryerson! The "Leonidas" of Sir Charles Metcalfe and absolute despotism![406]

As these examples illustrate, the condemnations against Ryerson and the members of the board of education were inextricably intertwined in the political situation at the time. One of the first objections to Ryerson's bill, made by Brown of the *Globe*, was regarding the powers conferred upon the superintendent:

> We have read a draft of the new school bill for Upper Canada […]. We have not been able to go over all its claims, but it contains one objectionable principle, viz.: the appointment and dismissal of the Superintendent is vested in the Governor-General personally and not in the Governor-General with the advice of his Council, as it ought to be. The whole funds from which the school system is to derive support are raised by the people of Canada, and the disposal of them should be subjected to the control of the House through the Executive Council […]. A board of seven commissioners to assist the Superintendent is named, but the Governor may appoint them, or not, and the superintendent may take their advice, or not, and he has also power to prevent interference at any time, for he is only to receive advice on all measures which he may submit to them. The whole of this extensive institution, if the

[404] 'The New Common School Act,' *British Colonist,* 26 December 1850.
[405] 'The Prussian system of education,' *British Colonist*, 8 December 1846.
[406] *Dundas Warder,* 21 January 1850.

> bill passes, will be lodged in the Governor-General personally and in the superintendent, and they may work it for any purpose that suits their views.[407]

In early 1847 a new Governor arrived in the colony. This was the Earl of Elgin, who assisted in carrying out the long-awaited provision of a responsible government. This was achieved, so that in 1848 a new administration was formed under the leadership of Baldwin and Lafontaine. However, before the newly-formed ministry met parliament, the *Globe*'s editor publicly discussed the dismissal of Ryerson from his position as superintendent:

> He has done nothing wrong since his appointment, it is said. We say he has. He spent many months on the continent of Europe and in Britain in amusement or recreation, professing to get information about things which every person knew already [....]. We have had hints of the Prussian system being applicable to Canada.[408]

Again, George Brown openly criticised Ryerson's appointment by Metcalfe, as well as his foreign educational tours.

In 1849, an unusual episode occurred in connection with the school legislation. Ryerson had prepared a new school bill to amalgamate rural, village and city schools under one law. He submitted a draft of the bill which was entrusted to the Honourable Malcolm Cameron, assistant commissioner of Public Works. However, Cameron made changes to the proposed bill without Ryerson's knowledge. It now suggested a sectarian school system, and nearly removed the role of superintendent entirely. The bill was presented, passed and assented to by the Governor General.

As soon as Ryerson learned of this he wrote to Attorney-General Baldwin, expressing his objection to the bill since it was not the one he had originally submitted. Ryerson tendered his resignation over the matter. Baldwin rejected the letter of resignation and responded by expressing his regret, saying he had been unable to fully review the bill. Baldwin had been dealing with more pressing affairs, namely the burning of the Parliament House (1849). The

[407] G. Brown, *Globe*, 14 April 1846.
[408] G. Brown, *Globe*, 29 April 1848.

government decided to suspend the operation of Cameron's Act and asked Ryerson to devise a new law. Before doing so, Ryerson sent circulars to superintendents, teachers and trustees asking their opinion of Cameron's Act versus his previous educational law. The general consensus was that Cameron's bill was defective. Ryerson provided a new bill, the School Act of 1850, which was subsequently accepted.

However, those who supported Cameron's Act aired their views in their newspapers. For instance, the *British Colonist* wrote:

> What are Mr. Ryerson's objections to the new bill? Why, that it places in the hands of the people the power to manage their school affairs; that it knocks on the head the system of centralization, which enabled Dr. Ryerson, under the shadow of two or three stool pigeons dignified with the name of the "Provincial Board of Education," to dictate to the whole of Upper Canada what books should be used in the schools, and prohibit the use of any that did not chime in with his whims, taste, prejudices, bigotry, or superstition. A high and mighty crime has the introducer of the new school bill committed against his Imperial Mightiness, Egerton the Great.[409]

Similarly, a trustee and treasurer wrote to the editor of the *Backwoodsman* questioning the manner in which the board controlled education:

> We pay the piper pretty well for this school system of ours. I have been connected with it, off and on, for many years, and the more I see of it the more convinced I am that a free trade in education would be far more profitable than a government monopoly. Who is most to blame in this matter? I think you will say with me: those at the head of the educational office, whose duty it is to see that the school laws are so framed that people would not be put to this inconvenience. It must have been well known at headquarters that the law was defective.[410]

As demonstrated, both the board of education and the chief superintendent were criticised. Whether it was because education became more centralised or because of the link between Ryerson and Metcalfe, these discussions were passionately debated. Moreover, the grievances voiced in newspapers and personal letters showed that it was not one community in particular that objected, but several.

[409] 'The New Common School Act,' *British Colonist*, 26 December 1850.
[410] J. Carder of Nichol and Pilkington to editor of the *Backwoodsman*, 22 February 1858, AO RG 2-12-24-573.

6.2.3 In defence of the chief superintendent and the board of education

Despite the numerous denunciations, Ryerson staunchly defended the role and duties of the superintendent and the board of education. He made it clear that their responsibilities were sound, helpful in managing school affairs and in no way repressive. Surveying Ryerson's initial circulars and addresses, he first responded to these complaints by alluding to the fact that they were unoriginal components in law, before going on to clarify which foreign examples actually influenced the 1846 school bill. Moreover, the resentment of the salaries of Ryerson and his clerks, and their duties such as establishing a journal, actually served to develop Ryerson's justification of their importance. These four points will be elaborated on below.

6.2.3.1 Defence One: history of the superintendent and board in Ontario

Ryerson reiterated that this was not the first time both entities had been present in Ontario. In a submission to the JEUC, with regard to the protest against any form of department or superintendent, Ryerson responded that 'these objections are put forth, as if the matters objected to were novel monstrosities enacted for the first time in the present school act; whereas precisely the same provisions have existed in our school law.'[411] Similarly, Ryerson's circular, sent to the heads of cities and towns, emphasised the current organisation of public instruction:

> But such a system of schools in a city or town involves one system of management, and, therefore, one authority […]. This is the case not only in the best educated cities in Germany, but also in the chief cities of the neighboring states – such as Boston, New York, Albany, Rochester, Buffalo, etc.[412]

[411] E. Ryerson, 'Two objections to the school Act answered,' *JEUC* 3 (1850) 152.
[412] E. Ryerson, *Circular from the chief superintendent of schools to the heads of city and town corporations*, 15 January 1848.

Concerning the appointment of an individual as leader, Ryerson stated in his circular that 'in every system there must be some head, whether in a school or a nation, whether under a monarchy or a republic, whether of public instruction or public revenues.'[413]

Ryerson's statements are seen to be factual if one reviews former provincial legislature. As early as the 1807 Public (Grammar) School Act, there was an individual responsible for administering educational provision:

> It shall be lawful for the Governor of this Province, by Letters Patent under the Great Seal thereof, to appoint from time to time, one fit and proper person to be Superintendent of Education in this Province, and one fit and proper person to be the Secretary of such Superintendent.[414]

The term 'superintendent' appeared again in the 1824 Act and John Strachan was placed in that position. The term 'chief superintendent' was coined in the 1841 School Act. The secretary of the province (then Vice-Chancellor Jameson) was given this *ex-officio* role, and two assistant superintendents were also appointed; they were Dr. Jean-Baptise Meilleur for Canada East, and Reverend Robert Murray for Canada West. The law required the assistant superintendents to carry out similar functions as those laid down in previous acts: apportion money, and help with the organisation and management of schools.[415] The fifth clause also entailed the following responsibility:

> To prepare suitable forms for making reports and conducting the necessary proceedings […] and to address to the said persons such suggestions as may tend to the establishment of uniformity in the conduct of common schools throughout this province […] with the plans for their improvement, and stating such other matters respecting education generally as the superintendent may deem useful and expedient.[416]

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[413] E. Ryerson, *Circular from the chief superintendent of schools to the heads of city and town corporations*, 15 January 1848.
[414] An Act to establish public schools in each and every district of this province, *47 George III, Chapter VI* Sections III and V, clause IV, 10 March 1807.
[415] An act for the establishment and maintenance of common schools in Upper Canada, *7 Victoria, Chapter XXIX*, Clauses II to VI, 9 December 1843.
[416] An act to repeal certain acts therein mentioned, and to make further provision for the establishment and maintenance of common schools throughout this province, *4th and 5th Victoria, Chapter XVIII*, Act 4 Clause 5, 18 September 1841.

The clauses outlining the duties in that 1841 Act were similar to those in Ryerson's 1846 bill.

Regarding the formation of a more general body of men to oversee education, under the 1807 School Act the governor of the province was charged with appointing no fewer than 'five and discreet persons' to act as members of a district board of education in the eight districts into which the province was then divided. These boards were required to hire teachers by examining their moral character and capacity and negotiating their salary, and they were authorised to make rules for their schools.[417] The 1816 Common School Act extended the responsibility of these district boards by requiring the trustees of schools to produce yearly reports to the boards along with a list of the textbooks in use. The district boards also had full powers to apportion the money for schools.[418] Their responsibilities were extended in subsequent common school acts so that they were later charged with formulating school rules, defining courses of study and resolving all disputes.

As discussed in section **4.3**, a board of education was established by the 1824 Common School Act.[419] This was the first time a general board for the province had been instituted. Under the direction of John Strachan, five men were selected as members. A copy of the minutes of the board's first meeting chaired by Strachan reveals miscellaneous deliberations including a request to launch Church of England schools in the cities of Kingston and Niagara, discussion of the establishment of a seminary (Upper Canada College), additional money for stationery and postage, and so on.[420] They were also permitted to buy books for

[417] An Act to establish public schools in each and every district of this province, *47 George III, Chapter VI* Sections III and V, 10 March 1807.
[418] An Act granting to His Majesty a sum of money, to be applied to the use of common schools throughout this province, and to provide for the regulations of said common schools, *56th George III, Chapter XXXVI*, clause 13, 1 April 1816.
[419] An act to make permanent and extend the provisions of the laws now in force for the establishment and regulation of common schools throughout this province, and for granting to His Majesty a further sum of money to promote and encourage education within the same, *4th George IV, Chapter VIII, Clause II*, 19 January 1824.
[420] 'Minutes of the first board of education meeting,' 14 June 1823, *DHE* vol. 3, p 2.

moral and religious instruction. However, this body was disbanded in 1833 and a central board was reinstated only with Ryerson's school bill.

From the discussion above it appears that Ryerson's defence that both entities appeared prior to the 1846 Act are correct. From the date of the 1807 Bill a superintendent was present, although he did not have as many duties. Likewise, a board of education had been established twenty years before. District boards of education had also been set up as a means of overseeing general educational affairs. Individuals were mistaken if they believed that these units were new and cumbersome, or that their control over school management constituted a form of 'Prussian despotism.' Ryerson's 1846 Act did make these entities responsible for more tasks. However, this was not to regulate matters in a despotic manner, but to ensure uniformity throughout the province, particularly when the purpose was to streamline the system, encourage more pupils to attend schools and standardise the curriculum.

6.2.3.2 Defence Two: ideas from Europe, synthesis of American practices

During Ryerson's travels, he intentionally studied the manner in which Europeans and Americans managed their educational systems. For example, the Report of 1846 detailed the features of the Privy Council in England, the University of France, the Ministry of Public Instruction in Prussia and the Commissioners of Education for Ireland. He studied their infrastructures, such as the general management, how they recommended textbooks, and how they carried out their statistical work. Despite positive references, no single European establishment formed the basis of the Canadian system. Ryerson commented that the Irish system was 'simple, central, magnificent, powerful; its school publications are unrivalled, as its principles are Christian and Catholic' yet it was unsuitable for Canadians.[421] In Ireland,

[421] E. Ryerson, 'Boards of Education – their origin, constitution, and objects,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 50.

the Board of Commissions of National Education enacted the laws, determined how schools should be financed and regulated teachers' salaries. Ryerson said 'it can hardly be expected that the local councils in Upper Canada would be willing to relinquish the powers which they possess in our school system to a central board appointed by the Crown – like that in Dublin.'[422] Similarly, Ontario's board was unlike the French or Prussian structures:

> *The University of France* which stands at the head of the entire system of university, collegiate and primary instruction – presided over by a council of six, and over which council presides a grand master, or minister of public instruction; or as the *Ministry of Public Instruction* in Prussia, which has been separated from that of the state since 1817, and which is divided into several sections, having the oversight and direction of the whole system of education in the kingdom, from the primary schools up the universities.[423]

In Ontario, universities were managed independently from the public school system. With regards to the popular belief that the role and responsibilities of the chief superintendent or the board were like those of similar entities in Prussia, Ryerson declared:

> I have desired nothing Prussian in the Canadian school system but the method of teaching the elementary branches of education, adopted by the German Masters generally, and which is ably and admirably pursued by Messieurs Robertson and Hind in our own Provincial Normal School.[424]

At a public lecture, Ryerson condemned the misinformation surrounding what people perceived as the basis of the school law:

> I have seen in certain of the public prints, a provision of our school law ascribed to Prussia, which was borrowed from the school law of the city of Buffalo; and another provision declared to be incompatible with the rights of man which forms the basis and glory of the common schools of Massachusetts.[425]

The foregoing statements indicate that Ryerson maintained that no single European nation influenced the role and duties of the board, and that he pointed out the erroneous link between Ontario's schools and Prussia. People may have considered the functions of the

[422] E. Ryerson, 'Boards of Education – their origin, constitution, and objects,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 50.
[423] Ibid. pp. 49 - 50.
[424] E. Ryerson, 'Origin of our school law of 1847 for cities and towns,' May 1848, *DHE* vol. 8, p. 80. Thomas Robertson, chosen by the National Board of Education in Dublin, was head master at Toronto's Normal School. He was assisted by Henry Hind who served at the Normal School for six years.
[425] E. Ryerson, 'Lecture on education,' *Ryerson Memorial Volume*, ed. by G. Hodgins (Toronto: Warwick, 1889) p. 83.

board to derive from Prussia owing to the abundant examples cited in the Report of 1846, or the fact that the new board was tasked with taking a more active role in regulating school provisions. However, Ryerson's circulars and outgoing letters emphasised that the clauses of the 1846 School Bill derived from lessons learned in Europe, with the addition of a synthesis of best practices from the United States.

In the first edition of the JEUC, Ryerson's article 'Boards of education – their origin, constitution and objects' pointed to Massachusetts and New York as the blueprint for Ontario's revised law:

> The boards of education of which we propose to speak are those which have become a part of the common school systems from which we have chiefly borrowed […]. The first of these boards was created in the state of Massachusetts in 1837 – an example which has been followed by the state of Maine, while the states of Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont, have followed the New York state model in having a state commissioner or superintendent.[426]

In subsequent circulars, Ryerson pointed to those two states as the basis of Ontario's school bill.

Regarding Massachusetts, in 1837 a board of education was established there for the general diffusion of knowledge. Previously, towns and townships over six square miles in size oversaw their own school affairs: inhabitants were taxed on their property to support and maintain schoolhouses. By the new school act, eight persons including the Governor and the Lieutenant-Governor were nominated as members of the board, and four clauses outlined their duties. The most significant of these was their obligation to collect information on the overall condition of schools. The following year, the Massachusetts legislature approved three supplementary sections to the law: the first compensated its members for their expenses, the second authorised the board to prepare forms and answer enquiries, and the

[426] E. Ryerson, 'Boards of Education – their origin, constitution, and objects,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) p. 50.

third proposed specific duties for the secretary.[427] The Massachusetts board of education, therefore, had nothing to do with the administration of its common school law. Its only object was to amass and diffuse knowledge. In that respect, the successful (Boston) *Common School Journal* was a private periodical. Likewise, the teacher training institute was only established following a donation, at which point the board became responsible for recommending books.

The state of New York, on the other hand, had an appointed general superintendent. Ryerson quoted the legislature regarding the overall duties of that individual:

> At the head of the whole [New York] system – *controlling, regulating, and giving life and efficiency to all its parts, is the chief superintendent*. He apportions the public money among the several counties and towns; distributes the laws, instructions, forms [and] is the ultimate tribunal for the decision of all controversies arising under any of the laws relating to common schools.[428]

Relating to the power of making decisions, the New York law stipulated:

> That, if any person who considers himself aggrieved by any decision made by any school district meeting, or any decision in regard to the altering, forming or refusing to form or alter any school district, or in regard to paying any teacher, or refusing to pay him, or in refusing to admit any scholar gratuitously into any school, on account of alleged inability to pay; or, in fine, *concerning any matter arising under the general school law*, may appeal to the superintendent of common schools, and his decision upon the case is final and conclusive.[429]

The New York state law gave to the superintendent the power to remove any persons from their office.[430] Moreover, the Regents of the University, who consisted of the governor, the lieutenant-governor and twenty other members employed for life, visited and inspected all colleges and academies which received aid from the state. They were also authorised to make the rules and regulations of the Normal School.

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[427] E. Ryerson, 'Boards of Education – their origin, constitution, and objects,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) p. 50.
[428] E. Ryerson 'Two objections to the school Act answered,' *JEUC* 3 (1850) 152.
[429] E. Ryerson, 'Letter expounding and recommending the original draft of the present School Act,' 3 March 1846, *JEUC* 1 (1848) 37.
[430] 'Provisions of the New York State School Law 1843,' *JEUC* 3 (1850) 152.

This would not be the case in Ontario. In the Canadian province, the superintendent had less power than in New York. Although one individual would oversee education, compared with New York, the functions of the former were more liberal. Moreover, even though there was a provision for parties in dispute to appeal to the superintendent who had a responsibility to decide between them, there was no law governing either of these aspects of the superintendent's duties. It was only after the 1853 Supplementary School Act that Ryerson was allowed to appeal to the Superior Courts where he felt that law suits involving school trustees or other school officers were denied a fair trial in their county courts.[431]

With regard to the board of education in Canada, a main responsibility was to ensure adequate diffusion of information and the promotion of schooling, also a chief article in the Massachusetts system. In defending the board, Ryerson stated:

> That in no free country has the superintendent of schools so limited powers as in Upper Canada; that in no free country has the Board of Education as large powers as those which have been conferred upon our Provincial Board; and that the "highest power in the administration of Schools," as well as other "affairs," is the Governor in Council.[432]

Thus, the complaints that the role of superintendent and the board of education derived from the Prussian example were incorrect. Perhaps it was because the Report of 1846 wrote extensively on that nation that people felt it was overly influential. Alternatively, it could have been because people knew that features in the American system derived from Germany. American educationalists had already written favourably on that nation's educational system. Regardless, Ryerson argued that the duties imposed in the 1846 bill were a synthesis of American examples and lessons learned from Europe which were altered to fit the Canadian context.

[431] An act supplementary to the common school act for Upper Canada of 1850, 16th and 17th Victoria, Chapter CLXXXV, 14 June 1853.
[432] E. Ryerson, *JEUC* 1 (1848) 35.

6.2.3.3 Defence Three: the appointment of Ontario's educational officials

As well as clarifying the fact that American examples influenced the responsibilities of the superintendent and the board, two additional complaints illustrated the progressiveness of Ontario's law: the salaries of the members of the board, and the journal of education. By the time the common school law was in effect, Ryerson's own duties and those of the board had increased substantially. This was even more the case by the 1850 school act, when a number of umbrella organisations were formed such as the map and school apparatus depository, the public library and the museum. The purchasing, storing and distribution of authorised textbooks, apparatus and maps to schools all fell under their domain. George Hodgins, then the deputy superintendent, even left for Europe on behalf of the department to obtain books and other material goods for these depositories.[433] By the mid-1850s, many communities had taken advantage of these initiatives. A map of those zones may be found in Appendix Five.

As a result, Ryerson applied for a salary increase for the officers of the board of education. He claimed that not only were their office hours now longer in comparison with the finance, crown law, agriculture and public works departments, the provincial registrar's office and the receiver general's department, but their salaries were less than what officers in similar positions received.[434] Ryerson said nothing about his own salary, which at that time was not equal to those of other heads of public departments.[435] Regrettably for the members of the board, Ryerson's appeal was rejected:

> In considering, therefore, the addition proposed by you to be made to the salary of the deputy superintendent, His Excellency, having in view the fact that you, as head of the department of education, do not, either in position or salary, occupy the same status as the political heads of the various political

[433] G. Hodgins, London August 1867, AO RG 2-23-4.
[434] E. Ryerson, *Acts of the chief superintendent explained and vindicated* (Toronto: Hunter and Rose, 1868).
[435] E. Ryerson to T. Terrill, M.P. Secretary of the Province, 22 July 1857 in E. Ryerson, *Acts of the chief superintendent explained and vindicated* (Toronto: Hunter and Rose, 1868).

> offices, cannot recognize any claim on the part of the deputy superintendent to hold the same position as the assistants of those officers.[436]

What the response indicated was that because the board of education was not associated with a political party, it could not demand the same items as those departments that were so affiliated.

However, the very notion of the chief superintendent or members of the board being appointed (or dismissed) by the governor, rather than the Executive Council, was one that Ryerson praised. Ryerson argued that he and the men on the board were selected because of their proficiency and expertise, not due to their political affiliations. They were independent in their decision making. This was the original reason why he had been appointed by Metcalfe. In an address to the public, Ryerson argued that: 'the virus of party spirit is poisonous to the interests of education […]. Among our American neighbours, I have been assured, that party selfishness and contests have proved one of the most serious obstacles to the progress of their educational system and interests.'[437] In that same address, Ryerson stated:

> Our system of popular instruction stands forth by common consent and suffrage, the exclusive property of no party, and the equal friend of all parties […]. I have stated the fact to several distinguished public men, as well in the United States as in England, and in every instance the comment has been one of admiration of such a spirit in the public men of Canada, and congratulation on the educational and social prospects of the Canadian people under such circumstances.[438]

Those appointed to the board of education were chosen for their skill and competency, not by nepotism, a feature which had previously been common within the Family Compact.

To illustrate the progressiveness of this idea, Ryerson referenced the experience of Americans when unqualified persons became charged with similar posts. In 1849, a private

[436] E. Meredith to E. Ryerson 13 October 1857 in E. Ryerson *Acts of the Chief Superintendent explained and vindicated* (Toronto: Hunter and Rose, 1868) p. 12.
[437] 'Third Annual Address to the people of Upper Canada by the Chief Superintendent,' *JEUC* 4 (1851) 1.
[438] Ibid.

correspondence to Ryerson from A. Johnson, district superintendent in New York, confirmed precisely the damaging effects of an elected official:

> A Whig Board would enchase against the incompetence and dishonesty of a democratic superintendent. A Democratic Board would do the same by a Whig Superintendent. Each party would accuse the other of appointing partisans who would turn their annual tour of inspection into a journey for political evangelism. It was the prejudice thus excited that caused the abolition of the office.[439]

Nearly thirty years later, at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, Honourable White, an education agent in the state of Illinois, could not help but allude to the progress of Ontario's scheme whereby an individual was appointed whose sole task was to oversee school affairs:

> In visiting the educational exhibit of Ontario – a display which found, from its peculiar character, but little competition from our own states – one met men who have been connected for years with the control of her system of schools, men who were at the outset selected because they were fitted for their positions, men who make their plans for their work, and then work to carry them out. They are never deterred from a course which they are certain would be for the advancement of education for fear that it will excite the prejudice of enough voters to control the nominating caucus or political election, and that the people would then retire them from office and so their plans be overturned and their work destroyed.[440]

In relation to how this feature could be implemented in Illinois, White remarked:

> I do not wish to be understood as commending all the features of their [Ontario's] system. Some of them would be no improvement upon our own. But this one of greater permanency of administration, and its independence of the party feeling that prevails at popular elections, might, it seems to me, be profitably adopted by us.[441]

Likewise, Lord Elgin, Governor-General in Canada from 1847 to 1854, commented on the advantages of an appointed superintendent in a report sent to the British government:

> Placed by his position about the strife of parties, holding office by a tenure less precarious than the ministers who surround him, having no political interest to serve but that of the community whose affairs he is appointed to administer, his opinion cannot fail, when all cause for suspicion and jealousy

[439] A. Johnson, superintendent of schools for New York to E. Ryerson, 22 August 1849, AO RG 2-12-7-155.
[440] Report by the Hon. T. H. White, Illinois Educational State Agent,' G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 223.
[441] Ibid. p. 223.

> is removed […]. He is at liberty to constitute himself in an especial manner the patron of those larger and higher interests – such interests, for example, as those of education, and of moral and material progress in all its branches, which, unlike the contests of party, unite instead of dividing the members of the body politic.[442]

Appointing individuals for their political stance rather than their experience and ability sometimes meant that the men who served in these posts were incompetent. This was the case with the 1824 board of education whose members were chosen solely based on their religious connections. With Ontario's revised school law, the superintendent and members of the board were not linked with a political party, nor were they selected because of their religion. As described in the introduction, the men picked in 1846 represented different religious persuasions and political affiliations, yet all were interested in educational affairs. Although Ryerson's original request for an increased salary for the board proved ineffective, it provided an avenue to defend the position and the duties of the chief superintendent and the board of education.

6.2.3.4 Defence Four: usefulness of the Journal of Education

A second element that illustrated the progressiveness of Ontario's system but received complaints was the *Journal of Education for Upper Canada*. There were claims that some refused to collect it at the post office due to lack of interest, and that Ryerson's salary during his one year as editor was too high.[443] Superintendents in Westminster and North Dorchester, London and Lobo stated that residents in their districts were entirely apathetic about procuring it.[444] In Consecor, a trustee reported that one resident intentionally took the journal

[442] 'Lord Elgins' report of the Imperial government on the state of elementary education in Canada,' *JEUC* 8 (1855) 84.
[443] W. Millar, former superintendent of the Eastern district, 23 March 1849 AO RG 2-12-6-F1-8-348; J. Baird, superintendent of Port Hope, 12 February 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-192; Additional remarks regarding discontent over the salary may be found in E. Ryerson *Acts of the chief superintendent explained and vindicated* (Toronto: Hunter and Rose, 1868) p. 28.
[444] N. Clarke, superintendent of Westminster and North Dorchester to G. Hodgins, 17 February 1852, AO RG 2-12-12-468; J. Skinner, superintendent of London and Lobo to E. Ryerson, 8 March 1852, AO RG 2-12-12-793.

before any residents could acquire it because he felt that the content was pitiful.[445] Even the editor of the *North American Semi Weekly* was misinformed about the purpose of the journal:

> The first feature which we notice, is by the new school act, the trustees of each school section are compelled to take a copy of Mr. Ryerson's *Journal of Education*. We say *compelled*, because, he has inserted in the act, a clause, compelling them to take 'some journal devoted to education,' and has had his journal made the only 'medium of official communication to schools trustees […]. Of course, they must take his journal to get the 'official communications.' Again, there is no other journal of education in Canada, therefore they must take his. This is a good specimen of Ryersonian policy.[446]

The reality was that there was nothing in the school act that made the purchase mandatory. With regard to the complaints about salary, Ryerson not only published and edited the journal at his own expense for several years, but when he did receive remuneration, it was a far smaller amount than what the editor of the *Journal of Education for Lower Canada* received, a periodical with a much smaller circulation than the Ontario publication.[447]

As with the other grievances, Ryerson referenced foreign examples. Nations with advanced systems of instruction not only had their own educational periodicals, but they were funded by government.[448] Moreover, complaints against the JEUC were insignificant in comparison with the general consensus. For the most part, local opinion favoured the publication; it was regularly well received and appreciated by the community.[449] H. Warhburn, superintendent of two townships said that the journal did 'much towards the spread of legal knowledge and to parties anxious or interested in the management of school operations.'[450] In Bayham, the superintendent expressed that the journal advanced the interests of his schools 'by awakening the public mind to a sense of the importance of education, enabling the people to appreciate

[445] M. Poole of Consecor to G. Hodgins, 1 August 1849, AO RG 2-12-7-133.
[446] *The North American Semi Weekly*, 27 August, 1850.
[447] E. Ryerson, *Acts of the chief superintendent* (Toronto: Hunter and Rose, 1868).
[448] 'Appeal to the department on behalf of the Journal of Education,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 184.
[449] A. Mann, superintendent of Pakenham to E. Ryerson, 23 January 1869, AO RG 2-12-141-31; G. Mowat, superintendent [no locality written] to E. Ryerson, 3 March 1862, AO RG 2-12-40-19.
[450] H. Warhburn, superintendent for the townships of Lubo and London to E. Ryerson, 25 February 1860, AO RG 2-12-29-98.

the value of its benefit and blessings.'[451] A. Macdonald, superintendent of Moulton and Sherbrook, reported:

> The influence of the Journal of Education I believe to be very great, in connection with our schools. It is eagerly sought after by the teachers; and I know of many school trustees almost innocent of any other reading, and yet who may be seen at many an odd time carefully perusing the pages of this periodical, and apparently desirous of profiting of its contents.[452]

Likewise, in Stephenson, a trustee said that residents cherished the publication.[453] A county clerk in Peterborough requested one hundred copies for his district since it 'has had the happy effect of producing the most favourable impressions on the minds of all who had an opportunity of reading it.'[454] Reverend Stringfellow wrote to Hodgins to say that the journal 'is highly prized by all that receive it and those that don't greatly regret their loss. If it could only come regularly it would greatly stimulate, instruct and encourage all connected with the schools.'[455] Similarly, a committee on school education in the counties of Northumberland and Durham publicly thanked Ryerson for facilitating the diffusion of knowledge by publishing the journal.[456] The value of the journal was equally manifested in Quebec newspapers. From *La Minerve*, the following opinion was received:

> Now y trouvons un foule d'articles du plus grande intérêt, depuis la première page jusqu'à la dernière. Rien comme l'exemple pour faire agir les individus, et il en est de même pour les peuples: *le Journal d'Éducation du Haut-Canada* cite continuellement l'exemple des nations les plus avancées, il montre l'état de l'éducation dans les divers pays; il touche du doigt ce qu'il y a de mieux et il fait un bien inappréciable dans la Province supérieure.[457]

Similarly, *Le Moniteur Canadien* provided their view of the journal:

> Cette feuille, publiée dans le Haut-Canada, remplit toujours habilement sa mission. Toujours elle renferme quantité de matières très instructives et très

[451] S.N., superintendent of Bayham to G. Hodgins, 17 May 1850, AO RG 2-12-8-462.
[452] A. Macdonald, superintendent of Moulton and Sherbrook, 24 June 1870, AO RG 2-12-158-8.
[453] J. Flanes, J. Wingfiled and A. Bayle, Report for Stephenson, 8 February 1871, MS 916.
[454] W. Sheridan, county clerk of Peterborough to G. Hodgins, 5 February 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-179.
[455] C. Stringfellow, reverend in Blanchard, n.d. 'Official return to the Education Department,' MS 916.
[456] 'Extract from the report of the Standing Committee on school education in the united counties of Northumberland and Durham Municipal Council,' 31 December 1851, AO RG 2-12-12-93.
[457] '*La Minerve*, 17 December, 1849,' *JEUC* 3 (1850) 16.

> intéressantes. Ceux qui sont familières avec la langue anglaise devraient se la procurer.[458]

Finally, the *Semeur Canadien* alluded to the journal in the following manner:

> Le Journal d'Éducation du Haut Canada nous paraît bien remplir sa mission et nous pouvons le recommander vivement à ceux qui lisent l'anglais et s'intéressent aux matières don't il traite. Le prix de l'abonnement n'est que 5 chelins par année.[459]

In chapter **7.2** we shall see how that journal, in addition to Ryerson's other publications, became noteworthy and valuable tools for foreign educationalists. The journal was discontinued in 1877, the year after Ryerson retired from office, and was replaced with a new periodical. However, for thirty years it sold between 4,000 and 5,000 copies per month and was sent to each local superintendent. The opinion of individuals outside the province reinforced the journal's contribution to the diffusion of knowledge.

6.2.4 Local responses to the duties of the board and the superintendent

Although there was criticism against Ryerson and the board, with time many individuals acknowledged the importance of a centralised body. Perhaps this was due to the facility of obtaining educational resources from a unified organisation or the fact that the numbers of schools increased. People may also have eventually recognised the value of having individuals appointed to oversee education who were not affiliated with a religion or liable to be dismissed following an election. Regardless, the concerns that first appeared following the 1846 Act, that salaries were too high or that more autonomy should be given to residents, eventually disappeared.[460] A special committee was even set up within the board to ensure that there was no mismanagement of funds:

[458] *Le Moniteur Canadien*, *JEUC* 4 (1851) 61.
[459] *Le Semeur Canadien*, *JEUC* 4 (1851) 61.
[460] Dr. Craigie, former Hamilton trustee wrote a letter to the chairman of the city board of trustees in that city which defended Ryerson's salary. Craigie wrote: 'which of the items of expense can I reduce? I answer, none of them: none of your officers are overpaid,' *JEUC* 4 (1851) 25.

> The system adopted by the department is of so thorough and complete a character, that no funds can by any possibility be received without being checked by proper officers, whose several duties require them to make entries into books, through which every item can readily be traced.[461]

However, it was the reactions of the inhabitants themselves that helped dismiss criticisms and supported the general appointments. The superintendent of South Dumfries noted:

> No complaints are heard towards the procedure of the chief superintendent in educational matters. It is evident his untiring services are increasingly appreciated. May it continue to be so though having done <u>much</u> and enough already to make the name, Dr. Ryerson […]. May the Dr. long be spared, and <u>spared</u> to see the subject of which he is the chief engineer, far transcend all the other systems of education in the world.[462]

The superintendent of West Zorra wrote to Ryerson that 'the Province of Canada certainly owes much to you for your indefatigable labours to promote the cause of education, and it is consoling that the schools now occupy a position which they had not reached in the history of past years in Canada.'[463] Others saw Ryerson's actions as a 'blessing to this province' and his work on school architecture as a valuable contribution to the comfort, convenience and appearance of the common schools.[464] A recent emigrant to Canada, who was also a newly elected trustee in the township of Sandwich, could not help but write to Ryerson to attribute educational progress to his efforts:

> First of all I congratulate the inhabitants of Upper Canada for having such a disinterested zealous gentlemen at the head of the educational department. I have served in Her Majesty's Coast guards as captain for a number of years in Ireland my native country. I have been through most of that Kingdom and also through a great part of England and I do not hesitate to say that […] I have never either met nor overheard of any person who has done more in the good cause than yourself.[465]

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[461] 'Report of the Common and Grammar School Committee of the House of Assembly,' 1 February 1869 Legislative Assembly, MS 917 Reel 2.
[462] E. Clark, superintendent of South Dumfries to E. Ryerson, 17 March 1856, AO RG 2-12-20-514.
[463] J. Lim, superintendent of West Zorra to E. Ryerson, 9 February 1852, AO RG 2-12-15-372.
[464] A. Ferrier, former superintendent of Guelph to G. Hodgins, 21 August 1850, AO RG 2-12-9-218; W. Sheridan to E. Ryerson 'Extracts from the minutes of the Peterborough County Council Chamber,' 4 January 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-36; S. Fuller, County Clerk of Norfolk County to E. Ryerson, 27 December 1851, AO RG 2-12-11-615; A. Backhouse, superintendent of Walsingham to E. Ryerson, 15 May 1852, AO RG 2-12-13-125.
[465] J. O'Hearay trustee in the township of Sandwich to E. Ryerson, 4 February 1859, AO RG 2-12-26-364.

Even while Ryerson was amending school policies, residents recognised the significant changes that he was making.

The improved perception of teachers also reflected well on Ryerson's initiatives. Miss Patience Courtney, a superannuated teacher of Phelpston, thanked officers in the department for 'endeavoring to advance education so much so that the future records of Canada will become a bright light to the dark parts of the world.'[466] John McNamara, reflecting on his experience, felt that teachers and parents were apathetic until Ryerson's school bill, but after it 'Ontario can boast of as perfect a school system, as any country in the world.'[467] John Quinn, who taught for over twenty years in Haldimand, reflected on Ryerson's era as administrator:

> I believe that there was more real progress made during the administration of the late venerable Doctor Ryerson during the 33 years of his administration of office than was made in one hundred years before. He was a most laborious and energetic head superintendent […], now we have about the best school system of any country […], our Ontario system is second to none of any other country.[468]

M. Foran of Hamilton considered Ryerson's tasks 'Herculean', and former teacher Mr. DeCantillon called him a 'worthy patriot' and considered that no material change had been effected until his school law.[469]

Articles in local newspapers also supported these initiatives. In 'A few thoughts upon education,' A. Duncan of Perth wrote 'in Canada the state has interfered in its education, and has made provisions for common and district schools, teaching upon a plan which so far as it has yet developed its character, its promises are fair, and contain the seed of present and future good in the province.'[470] This author was in favour of a central board to manage

[466] P. Courtney, 17 April 1897, MS 6026.
[467] J. McNamara, superannuated teacher of Seaforth to G. Hodgins, 2 April 1896, MS 914.
[468] J. Quinn, superannuated teacher of Haldimand to G. Hodgins, 31 May 1894, MS 6026.
[469] M. Foran, superannuated teacher of Pembroke to G. Hodgins, 11 May 1896, MS 914; P. Courtney, superannuated teacher of Phelpston to G. Hodgins, 17 April 1896, MS 6026; J. DeCantillon, superannuated teacher of Dublin Perth County to G. Hodgins, 19 May 1896, MS 6026.
[470] *The Perth Courier*, 10 August 1847.

educational affairs. In the *Christian Guardian*, of which the original editor was Ryerson himself, the new publisher remarked:

> He founded no cities; he led no armies to victory; he had no special influence on the material prosperity of the land; but in organising a system of public schools, he placed the elements of a sound education within the reach of every boy and girl in this province, he has exercised an underlying influence over the future intellectual life of the country that shall largely determine its place in the scale of civilisation.[471]

Ryerson's original attitude, embracing education for all for the progress of all, had been accomplished. The *Watchman* included a positive remark pertaining to Ryerson's efforts:

> With all the faults of the chief superintendent, I believe no other man has done or could do so much for education here as the Rev. Egerton Ryerson! […] He has stirred the thinking portion of Canada to its very centre on the all important subject of education. Untiring, energetic, vigilant, and sagacious, he has upheaved a mass of lethargy in *this Canada*, incapable of being moved by any less powerful means.[472]

In the *Barrie Herald*, it was noted that 'the system of which Dr. Ryerson is the chief promoter and exponent, we look upon his labours in the cause of education as entitling him to the favourable consideration of the public.'[473] Similarly, a letter to the editor of the *Guelph Advertiser* commented on Ryerson's address at the local school convention:

> The Dr.'s tour will give opportunity of explaining difficulties and removing prejudices which could not be so quickly and satisfactorily effected in any other way; and he has good reason to be proud of the honour which is justly his due – of having laid the foundation of the intellectual, moral and political elevation of his country – in the comprehensive provisions of our school system, which combines to so great an extent the sometimes antagonistic elements of order and liberty.[474]

Regarding general progress, the *Port Hope Echo* paid tribute to Ryerson: 'we rejoice to make a growing improvement in this matter every year; and on the Scriptural principle of giving 'honor to whom honor is due,' we feel called upon to record our humble testimony in favour

[471] *Christian Guardian*, 29 May 1889.
[472] '*Watchman*, n.d. 1851,' *JEUC* 4 (1851) 14.
[473] The *Barrie Herald*, 23 February, 1853, AO RG 2-27-197-0-2.
[474] J.K. to the editor of the *Guelph Advertiser*, 2 February 1853, AO RG 2-12-197-0-2-32.

of Dr. Ryerson.'[475] Similarly, Brockville's *Recorder* noted Ryerson's energy, zeal, ability and untiring industry in promoting education.[476]

Other newspapers, which had a history of disapproving of Ryerson's initiatives, could not help but recognise his contribution to education. The *Daily Colonist* remarked:

> The importance of the department of public instruction cannot be easily overvalued. It is of equal importance to a department of the government; and equal – even perhaps in some respects greater – responsibility attached to it. From these considerations we are rejoiced to see such satisfactory evidence of the efficient discharge of its functions.[477]

On the retirement of the editor of the *Canadian Freeman*, an organ for the Roman Catholic Church which was opposed to Ryerson's views, he referred to the chief superintendent in the following manner:

> The Reverend Egerton Ryerson holds what the civilization of this age terms 'liberal' views; he advocates the advancement of the masses, or educating every one, no matter what his position in society may be [….]. During our entire career we have opposed the Doctor; but we are fully aware how difficult it is to make headway against a man of his ability, holding but one idea and resolved to win […]. We have written column upon column against him, for the past fifteen years. We have tried with all our might to put him down, and yet he is a man for whose talents, resolution and dogged perseverance we have the highest respect, for whose courtesy and gentlemanly bearing towards our co-religionists we offer our acknowledgments.[478]

The editor made it clear that he was not always in favour of Ryerson's decisions, but one thing was for certain: he had advanced the cause of public instruction in the province. Likewise, the editor of the *Globe* objected to Ryerson on political grounds but acknowledged his talents and professional ability: 'we are no admirers of Egerton Ryerson, and we have always thought, and we think still, that the present ministry should have turned him out neck and crop the moment they got into power; but we are free to admit that he is a man of very

[475] *Port Hope Echo*, 22 December 1852.
[476] 'W', The (Brockville) *Recorder*, 7 February 1853, AO RG 2-27-197-0-2.
[477] *Daily Colonist*, 31 December 1852.
[478] *Canadian Freeman, 1876*, *DHE* vol. 25, p. 203.

great talent.'[479] Toronto's *Examiner,* a newspaper that had previously criticised Ryerson, stated:

> The system of Upper Canada finds in the chief superintendent an exponent of no mean abilities. In saying this, we do not profess ourselves admirers of some of the provisions of that system […] but recent events in our educational economy have tended, we must admit, to harmonize his view with popular feeling in this province; and wherever his efforts are directed to the development and preservation of common educational institutions, he will readily have the sympathies and cooperation of the great bulk of the people of Western Canada.[480]

Despite the large number of criticisms, Ryerson defended his role as chief superintendent and the rights and powers conferred upon the board. It was examples from Massachusetts and New York that shaped their duties. However, these features were built upon school laws that had already existed only twenty years before. Although many considered the manner in which the superintendent and the board controlled and regulated education to be 'despotic', Ryerson proved otherwise. This opinion of Prussian influence was most likely the result of lengthy references to this nation's laws and methods of instruction. Similarly, it may have been extrapolated from the obvious move away from autonomous management to a more organised, centralised scheme. Interestingly, the following statement appeared in the *British Colonist* as early as 1847:

> It is now palpable that the board of education part of our school law, which has been filling the imaginations of our contemporaries with images of Prussian despotism, for several months, and which has furnished them with materials for so many crack editorials, in the agitation, is actually borrowed from Boston and not from Berlin.[481]

Ryerson's circulars, speeches and reports emphasised the history of both entities, and demonstrated that the revised rules and regulations, although influenced by foreign nations, were amended to fit the Canadian context. Drawing on his own examples as well as those from local residents, Ryerson showed the importance of the responsibilities of the board and

[479] *Globe,* 16 July 1850.
[480] *Examiner*, 23 February 1853.
[481] *British Colonist,* 16 January 1847.

one individual as head. The department would be uninfluenced and unaffected by the conflicts of political parties, or by the rise or fall of different administrations. Ryerson centralised and professionalised education in the province. His next important task was to convince the people to make schools free.

Chapter Six Part III

Free schools, universal education and property tax

I am not an advocate for free schools for I cannot see why one man should be compelled to educate another man's children when he is able to do it himself.

C. Pettit, local superintendent, 1859 [482]

I heard one of the most able man say he had managed to get along […]. However, since some of his poorer neighbours' children have the blessing of free schools, been able to show him that learning qualifies even children to fill a useful position in society, now he is anxious to have his children educated.

D. Osborne, local superintendent of Kinnebec, 1867 [483]

The method which I believe you will find most efficient, has been thus defined: 'a tax upon the property of all by the majority for the education of all.'

Egerton Ryerson, 1849 [484]

[482] C. Pettit, superintendent for North Gower, Goulbourn and Marlborough to E. Ryerson, 18 March 1859, AO RG 2-12-22-819.
[483] D. Osborne to E. Ryerson, March 1867, AO RG 2-12-108-4.
[484] E. Ryerson, 'Address to the inhabitants of Upper Canada on the system of free schools,' *JEUC* 2 (1849) 1.

6.3.1 Free schools in Ontario

The Report of 1846 outlined the importance of universal education, promoting citizenship, social mobility and nationalism. The foreign nations Ryerson visited linked this initiative to free schools sustained by property tax. In doing so, it improved the overall standard of instruction while decreasing the burden of fees upon the poor, both enlightened steps for the growth of a country. In recounting the history of free schooling, Ryerson remarked:

> I may observe, that this system obtains in the states of New England, where there are the best common schools in the United States. It is also the Prussian and Swiss system […]. I know of none who will object to it but the rich, and the childless and the selfish. Education is a public good; ignorance is a public evil. What affects the public ought to be binding upon each individual composing it. In every good government, and in every good system, the interests of the whole society are obligatory upon each member of it.[485]

Free schools gave poor children the opportunity to receive an education, an opportunity the rich had taken advantage of for years. They removed parents' excuses that it was too expensive to pay for schools, and it meant that part of the money raised by property tax could go towards raising teachers' salaries.

The draft of the Common School Act (1846) included a clause whereby property tax could fund schools. The House of Assembly vetoed that section, despite its approval by the Conservative administration.[486] According to Ryerson, it was 'the poor man's clause, and the clause of the enlightened patriot; and the loss of it inflicted great injury upon the common schools, besides involving trustees in great perplexity and embarrassments.'[487] Several years later, Ryerson remarked that the clause had failed because it had come 'in contact with wealthy selfishness.'[488] Consequently, the Common School Act of 1846 did not establish a property tax to fund schools.

[485] E. Ryerson, 'Origin of the principle of free schools in the Canadian system,' *JEUC* 5 (1852) 24.
[486] According to Ryerson, H. Sherwood (then Attorney General) and J. Cameron (then Solicitor General) approved the free school clause in the draft of the Bill.
[487] E. Ryerson, 'Origin of the principle of free schools in the Canadian system,' *JEUC* 5 (1852) 24.
[488] Ibid.

Four years later, the Common School Act of 1850 rectified the shortcomings of the preceding legislation. This act authorised three possible methods of funding schools: voluntary subscription, rate bill, or by general tax 'according to the valuation of property, as expressed in the assessor or collector's roll.'[489] Commenting on the latter provision, Ryerson said:

> I dwelt at some length on the importance of this principle, and referred to the testimonies of experienced educationalists in different parts of Upper Canada as to the impossibility of ever having good schools, much less rendering them accessible to all the youth of the land, under the past and present system of rate bill – a system which has never been admitted in the state of Massachusetts, where common school education is nearly, if not quite, universal among the poorest classes of the community.[490]

Ryerson hoped that all communities would vote for free schools supported by taxed property. However, like previous educational legislation, those decisions were autonomous. Using Figure 6 as a guideline, this section will review the development of free schools in Ontario.

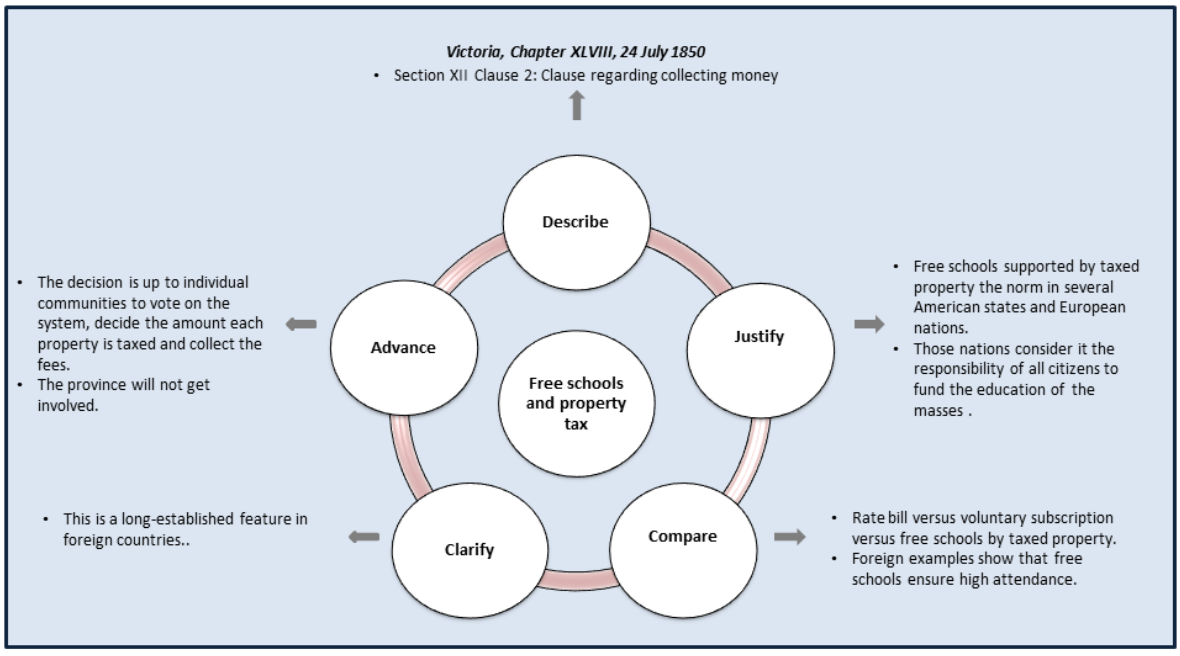


Figure 6: Free schools and property tax

[489] An act for the better establishment and maintenance of common schools in Upper Canada, 13th and 14th *Victoria, XLVIII*, Section 12 clause 9, 24 July 1850.
[490] E. Ryerson, 'Origin of the principle of free schools in the Canadian system,' *JEUC* 5 (1852) 24.

Initially, a survey of the types of criticisms directed against free schools will be presented. To justify why this feature of his educational framework was worthwhile, Ryerson referenced at length the manner in which it was not only highly praised and respected by residents in foreign nations but was codified in their laws. It ensured higher rates of attendance and was actally the preferred method of supporting schools as opposed to rate bills. Despite opposition from many, several Canadian neighborhoods voted in favour of this feature, even before it became part of the 1850 school law. The attainment of the free school principle in these districts was fundamental in influencing adversaries. The 1871 School Act eventually made this feature mandatory, but schools funded by property tax were widespread several decades earlier.

6.3.2 Objections to free schools supported by taxed property

Introducing free schools sustained by taxed property was not a straightforward process. Where some people saw the benefit of providing education for all, others considered it to be an infringement of their rights. Traditionally, the upper classes sent their children to Europe or the United States to be educated, or to private fee-paying institutions. Free schools fostered the idea that schooling was a business when it had always been a private affair. These accounts were illustrated both in the popular press and in letters to the department. However, there were two major sets of criticisms: first, that it was against personal liberties to be forced to pay for the education of others' children; second, that the only way free schools would function was if the principle was made compulsory. These arguments will be presented below.

6.3.2.1 Criticism One: it is unfair to have to pay to school other people's children

The free school question was discussed in the press and in superintendents' and trustees' reports. One of the overarching arguments was that residents did not feel they should be forced to pay for the schooling of others. This was the argument made by R. Craig, a long-time resident of Londsdale, as reported in the *Perth Courier*:

> When the first school act came into force we had several meetings in the village of Lanark concerning its operation; some were for giving it a trial, others objected to it as at once oppressive and unjust, in cases where old settlers had educated their families, and had been at considerable expense in building school houses. I as one, having bore my portion of the expense of erecting four school houses in the township of Lanark, opposed it on the ground that it was unjust. Ultimately our council, being in existence put the act in force. Being one of the original settlers in the township, I feel it a grievance to my old age to pay for the education of the children of people who are better able to educate their offspring when I had mine at school.[491]

Craig's complaint summarises a central issue: he is old, has no extra money and he has already paid for his own children's schooling. Therefore he feels he should not be compelled to pay to school the children of others.

Resistance was equally voiced in the *St. Catherine's Journal*: 'we have paid for the education of our own children, and now let others do the same.'[492] That newspaper reported: 'the only objection, not anticipated, is that a large class of annuitants, not holding a rateable property, yet no doubt deriving, *as all must*, advantages from the education of the country, would escape without paying anything, or at least by paying a *mere* trifle.'[493] In Dundas, Robert Spence again expressed his opposition to the education programme, writing in the *Warder*:

> The support of the common schools now thrown on the inhabitants at large, those sending, paying no more, than those who have no children to send, or who think fit to send elsewhere. The principle now disclosed is unjust,

[491] R. Craig of Lownsdale, township of Lanark to the editor, *The Perth Courier*, 16 March 1847.
[492] *St. Catherine's Journal*, April 1849, *JEUC* 2 (1849) 64.
[493] *St. Catherine's Journal*, February 1848, *JEUC* 2 (1849) 32.

> arbitrary, and inapplicable to the circumstances of Canada, more than this – it is pregnant with the worst evils to the character and efficiency of our public seminaries of instruction.[494]

The editor went on to write:

> It is not just, that the entire burden should be taken off the shoulders of those, who directly receive the benefits from education, and thrown on those who do not directly receive it. If our schools are to be supported by the public that is, they are to be thrown open to all without any cost to those, who receive the direct benefits; and let them be supported from the school lands of Canada […] but let not the burden fall solely on the industrious.[495]

Spence was not in favour of obliging the wealthy to assist destitute children, or the perception that the poor would attend for free without contributing anything themselves.

Toronto's *Globe* also could not help but antagonise the free school issue. In one letter, Brown said 'the common schools are not fit to educate the children of the higher classes of society, and, therefore, these classes ought not to be taxed to support them.'[496] In a separate entry, Brown emphasised the damaging effects the free school movement was having on voluntary establishments:

> The main objection is [that] denominational schools cannot exist beside free schools. So long as we continue to exact payment from parents, so long will efforts be made by the sects to obtain aid from the public funds and private support in order to weaken the common schools, draw away scholars from them, and destroy their efficiency. When the schools are supported entirely by taxation, no such attempts can be met with success. No sectarian school only partially supported by the state can compete with the free institution, and no one would be foolish enough to propose to endow more than one entirely free school […]. The free principle is a deathblow to the attempts of the priests to get the education of the people into their own hands, to train up the children in classes and denominations, to shut them out from free knowledge, and to give them just what pleases their prejudicial views.[497]

The idea that residents would have to pay for free (sectarian) schools would have been exceptionally problematic for those who backed the separate (Catholic) schools, or those who

[494] *Dundas Warder*, 12 May 1848.
[495] Ibid.
[496] *Globe*, 14 February 1852.
[497] Ibid.

supported voluntaryism, the principle that no church or sect should receive state aid in any form but should be supported solely by voluntary contributions.

Another theme concentrated on immigrants. As discussed in section **4.4**, by the 1830s massive rounds of immigration had put pressure on communities. Where some embraced the immigrants' arrival, others resented it, particularly if it meant supporting their children through schools. In the *Ingersoll Chronicle*, one entry asked: 'why should the lads coming from the country be admitted and educated free?'[498] A letter in the *Tri-Weekly Guide* claimed that 'people are too poor [and] there is no money' to establish schools.[499] This was also the focus of the report in Ernestown:

> There is a very strong objection by many of our best men, against a tax for all school purposes, perhaps the objection is greater from the fact, that we have many emigrants arriving yearly amongst us who pay <u>little</u> or no <u>taxes</u> and nearly the whole burthen of supporting the schools by tax would fall on the old population of the country.[500]

Another focus was the position of wealthier residents. In Adolphustown, the superintendent wrote:

> A great proportion of the old inhabitants and wealthier classes here, have educated their children, and consequently are averse to contributing much or being taxed for the support of the schools. The system of free schools therefore is not likely to be adopted in more than one section.[501]

The indifference of the rich was also the reason why free schools failed in O'Rillia:

> There is in general much to dishearten much apathy on the subject among the upper class of society […]. A number of hostile influences [have] also been at work, and greatly hindered the predevelopment of our admirable school system […]. The opposition, however, is great; and the chief argument employed is the apparent injustice of taxing alike those who have and those who have not children.[502]

[498] 'The Grammar School Bill of the Attorney General,' *Ingersoll Chronicle*, 27 March 1863.
[499] 'Our Schools' Letter III,' *The Tri-Weekly Guide*, 1 December 1859.
[500] N. Fellow of Ernestown to E. Ryerson, 4 February 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-169.
[501] J. Watson, superintendent of Adolphustown to E. Ryerson 25 February 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-313.
[502] J. Gasy in the township of O'Rillia to E. Ryerson, 1 March 1852, AO RG 2-12-12-648.

In Richmond, the superintendent also referenced the fact that those of property were hostile towards property tax:

> I have lectured in many parts of this district in favour of taxing for school purposes; [but] many […] had been taught to consider the school act "a damnable bill" [...]. These are influenced by [those who] have a great deal of property and no children to be educated; and they contrive to be chosen councillors for the very purpose of voting against assessment for the support of education.[503]

This remark alluded to the repeated occurance that men who were against the initiative became councillors to ensure that it would not pass. There was also a tendency for the wealthy to encourage their friends and sympathisers to attend meetings and even cross school boundaries to ensure free schools were voted against. The trustee of Sarnia described how the wealthy resisted the principle and 'have influence to raise prejudice in other minds so as to hinder other sections from its adoption.'[504] This was the case in Portland and Prescott, where both superintendents recounted the trustees' inability to obtain all votes in favour of free schools because the rich used their power and influence over the poor and intimidated them.[505]

Newspapers also documented how those of 'comfortable circumstances' did not appreciate their obligation in helping those less fortunate. The *St Thomas Weekly Dispatch* documented:

> Men in comfortable circumstances, carrying on a profitable business, shrink from the important duty, which their relation to the social compact demands of them; and they leave the affairs of the city or town in which they reside, to be managed by men of no education, little honourable feeling and less integrity. They submit, it is true sometimes with a grumble, to the taxes unjustly imposed upon them, by men whose habits and dispositions totally unfit them for the position they occupy; but they forget the very independence they enjoy […], that they may not press too heavily upon those less favoured than themselves.[506]

[503] J. Fload, superintendent of Nepean and North Gower to E. Ryerson, 18 October 1849, AO RG 2-12-7-379.
[504] No name of Sarnia to E. Ryerson, 7 February 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-185.
[505] J. Macdonald of Portland to E. Ryerson, 28 February 1852, AO RG 2-12-12-611; I. O'Sullivan, superintendent of Prescott to G. Hodgins, 28 January 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-124.
[506] 'Reported from the Toronto *Leader*,' *St Thomas Weekly Dispatch*, 20 January 1856.

In the *Port Hope Weekly Guide*, a series of articles appeared on the necessity of educating poor children, written by a person calling himself 'Progress'. In one entry, the author regretfully announced that the residents 'have not learned to set the proper value on education; they are therefore unwilling to go to any expense to obtain it for the people. They are men behind the age, and incapable of fulfilling the trust committed to them.'[507] In this instance, the complaint was in reference to the trustees who were not doing enough to persuade the people to vote for property tax. The letter went on to conclude: 'I love the poor man and desire to raise him in intelligence and wealth to a level with myself and his richer neighbors. I want to provide education for his children and mine; and profitable employment for himself.'[508] An agreement with property tax was not exclusively voiced by those affiliated with the board of education but by the residents themselves. However, as this rich neighbor stated, it was a losing battle.

Letters sent to the department of education equally revealed hostility towards free school proposals. In Windham, the superintendent wrote: 'when I first brought the subject of free schools before the inhabitants of this township, at an annual town meeting, they were almost unanimous in expressing their indignation at what they considered would be a monstrous injustice.'[509] In the Niagara region there was a similar experience so that when the superintendent presented the free school question, it was 'almost universally deprecated.'[510] That superintendent felt that the people were not intelligent enough to understand the importance of the school law.

The local superintendent in Albion also recounted a peculiar incident where it was the teacher who hindered the free school initiative:

[507] *Port Hope Weekly Guide*, 20 December 1859.
[508] Ibid.
[509] D. Freeman, 'Extract from local superintendents' reports 1850,' *JEUC* 4 (1851) 41. A year later, the superintendent wrote to the board stating that a great change had occurred and the free schools were now voted upon, 7 March 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-391.
[510] H. Durken to E. Ryerson, 7 February 1847, AO RG 2-12-5-F12-15.

> The trustees of school section no. 10 Albion desiring to render their school house more comfortable have taken the proper steps to have it done. But a few ignorant, selfish rate payers ha[ve] raised a storm of opposition and abuse – I attended a meeting of the section in order to make things more smooth if possible, when to my surprise I found the teacher had been encouraging the dissatisfaction! Had drawn a petition to the town council to oppose the assessment![511]

Of even more interest was the assertion that a superintendent had challenged the entire idea in itself:

> I cannot but think that, an enactment levying a tax on all children of school age, of say 3d. per month, and making every school free, the balance, if any, being raised by assessment on property, and having the salary and qualifications of teachers fixed, the latter at £75 per annum, would be an improvement on the present system.[512]

The fact that a teacher and local superintendent opposed free schools maintained by taxed property is a vivid illustration of the lack of consensus among residents.

Similarly, trustees' letters sent to the department demonstrated the difficulty often found in convincing voters to agree to the principle. One trustee said: 'I deeply regret that there seems to be misapprehension, and much unfounded prejudice on the subject of free schools.'[513] A trustee in Crawland testified: 'I believe that a large majority of the inhabitants of the several school sections in the township are favourable to the plan but many of them do not like to injure the feelings of their neighbours who oppose it.'[514] In the township of Nichol, the focus of the trustees' report was that the inhabitants saw no benefit to taxing themselves for a new school or for the master's salary:

> More than three fourths of the inhabitants were […] quite opposed to what is termed "the free schools system" and the inhabitants of the northwestern portion of the section, are, if it is possible still more violently opposed to these proceedings as they consider it is most unjust and oppressive to tax them for a new school house and for an equal proportion of a schoolmaster's

[511] J. Esser, superintendent of Albion to E. Ryerson, 5 October 1850, AO RG 2-12-9-358.
[512] J. Eastwood 'local superintendent reports,' *JEUC* 6 (1853) 51.
[513] C. Ormiston, 'local superintendent reports,' *JEUC* 4 (1851) 41.
[514] D. Brown of Crawland to E. Ryerson, 1 February 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-141.

> salary, when it is utterly out of their power to derive almost any advantage from them.[515]

In the township of Cornwall, the consensus was that the 'people have such an aversion to taxation that they would much rather pay three times the amount than to allow themselves to be taxed for the most trifling amount.'[516] This was a similar tone taken by the trustee in Haldimand who said 'ignorance and evil disposition' prevented the free school system from being adopted.[517] However, the most drastic response against the free schools question occurred in the city of Toronto. In summer of 1848, the board of trustees sent a request to the Municipal Council for a sum to be collected for the maintenance of schools in the vicinity. However, that council refused to impose an assessment on the ratepayers beyond the amount required by law, and therefore no property tax was collected. As a result, all the common schools closed for one year.[518]

The correspondence sent to the department and the local press showed that some considered paying for other children's schooling to be 'downright robbery' and a 'war against property', whereas others saw it as unjust to tax persons for the support of a school which they did not patronise or from which their children derived no benefit.[519] Like the dislike of the chief superintendent and the board, opposition to property tax had a lot to do with residents' dislike of being told how to run their schools. Not all agreed that the state should dictate how education should be managed.

6.3.2.2 Criticism Two: free schools and a compulsory clause

Another set of opinions argued that free schools could only succeed if the law made property tax compulsory. Superintendent and trustee reports focused on residents' unwilligness to

[515] J. Latrine of the township of Nichol to E. Ryerson, 15 May 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-636.
[516] H. Gillis, superintendent of Cornwall to E. Ryerson, 25 February 1852, AO RG 2-12-12-569.
[517] J. Greeley, superintendent of Haldimand to E. Ryerson, 5 August 1851, AO RG 2-12-11-88.
[518] This resulted in all common schools closing between 39 June 1848 to 2 July 1849.
[519] W. Summerby, 'Pioneer schools in the county of Prescott,' *DHE* vol. 7 p. 299.

vote in favour of the initiative, whether this was because they were uncomfortable collecting the dues, because they did not consider their houses close enough to the school, or because they felt that it was a private affair. This was the opinion of the superintendent of Aldophustown, who praised the current law but alluded to a compulsory clause:

> Much as we have to admire in the present school law and indeed so far as I am competent to decide it is far more perfect than human institutions generally are; but something more is required to make education not of a secondary, but of paramount importance, and the more I ponder over the progress of education in this part of the country, the more I am convinced that more a stringent law is required to force an ample provision for its support and advancement, and render imperative the maintenance of a system that must assuredly be beneficial to every free county, this would, I think, have a tendency to overcome that narrow minded prejudice of many wealthy people, who provide much for the physical wants of the rising generation while they leave them intellectually to pine for want.[520]

Likewise, Dr. Vervais, superintendent of three townships, suggested a similar provision:

> The free school system shows the true patriotism, the true freedom in giving access to the poor to be educated as well as the rich, and leading every member of our community in the path of virtue. But as the peace and prosperity of Canada depend on the intellectual, moral and religious improvement and as this cannot be accomplished without a free education: therefore the government (protector of all mankind) should pass a compulsory law.[521]

Other reports concentrated on how the most popular people in the district, such as the wealthy or ministers, did not support the initiative and subsequently influenced others to follow. This was precisely what occurred in the townships of Beverly and Oxford:

> The present system, though it has born some good fruits, is inconvenient and unsatisfactory. There have been many instances, certainly, where the majority of the people have decided for free schools; but in nearly every instance there is left a disappointed and bitter minority, who frequently fill the school and the section with animosities and hatred, sometimes even affecting the peace of Christian churches.[522]

[520] J. Watson, superintendent of Adolphustown, 1 March 1855, AO RG 2-12-18-1152.
[521] J. Vervais, superintendent of Sandwich, Rochester and West Tilbury to E. Ryerson, 21 February 1853, AO RG 2-12-15-512.
[522] Anonymous, local superintendent in the township of Oxford, *JEUC* 6 (1853) 11; J. Porteons of Beverly to E. Ryerson, 9 February 1866, AO RG 2-12-86-57.

The superintendent in Norfolk pointed to the clerics as accountable for the failure of free schools in his district:

> A common evil grows out of the free school system, as now adopted. Respectable ministers are opposed to it, and often a sharp contention ensues which paralyzes the best efforts for a time. Indeed taxes, on the whole, are more agreeably paid when imposed by some other authority than that of neighbour taxing neighbour.[523]

Similarly, Ancaster's superintendent reported that because the trustees were illiterate and had no schooling themselves, they failed to show the residents the importance of the initiative:

> The shameful mismanagements and ignorant and arbitrary conduct of many of our school section boards as now constituted are beginning to cause a ferment in the mind of the rate payer. The members of many of these boards can barely read or write, and are incapable of examining the junior classes of the schools […]. To wait for a reform until it is generally demanded by the people is a very lame excuse for not improving that which common sense shows to be rotten […]. I would simply ask why, on the principle of free and compulsory education, the acre of philanthropy, the poor or small section should not be assisted by the more wealthy part of the township?[524]

As discussed in section **5.3.4**, those who occupied important positions in districts often lacked formal education, and so they generally took little interest in education. Reverend Fraser, superintendent of four districts, reported that 'a mild compulsory bill would soon correct the evil and be freely accepted by the people.'[525]

Even the *British Colonist* included a statement on the matter: 'the fault of the act is, that it is not compulsory enough – that it does not all at once force on the people […] but simply allows municipal councils to be the judge of the necessity.'[526] They believed that it could only be effective when implemented by higher authorities. The *Weekly Message* included the resolution carried out at the annual meeting in Chatham: 'that this meeting would prefer to see the system of *free* schools at once established by Legislative enactment.'[527] Again, the

[523] No name, 'A general system of free schools, county of Norfolk,' *JEUC* 6 (1853) 11.
[524] C. Whitcombe, trustee in Ancaster E. Ryerson, 5 November 1873, AO RG 2-12-236-6.
[525] W. Fraser, superintendent of Bruce, Huron, Kincardine and Kinloss to E. Ryerson, 5 February 1863, AO RG 2-12-44-53.
[526] 'The new common school act,' *British Colonist* 26 December 1849, AO RG 2-27-197-0-2-5.
[527] Mackenzie's *Weekly Message*, 24 February 1853, AO RG 2-27-197-0-2-38.

emphasis was that the people were not progressive enough to vote for this initiative, and therefore the legislation ought to make it compulsory.[528] It is curious to observe that where some condemned the notion of a compulsory school law, others did not see it as mandatory enough. Moreover, the superintendent of Tilbury West emphasised a very realistic concern: 'I am not against compulsory attendance, if it could be known how the children of the indigent are to be provided with suitable clothing, to enable them to go to school.'[529] For those new settlements, isolated and poor, the toils of providing daily necessities were the priority.

6.3.3 Defending the free school movement

The common themes regarding free schools and property tax were that the rich should not be compelled to pay for the poor, parents should be responsible for the education of their own children, and free schools paid for by taxed property would only succeed if the payments became mandatory. Despite these criticisms, Ryerson defended this principle by referencing the history of this feature in the United States, and the advantages of the payment being a voluntary act. Anecdotes from Americans were frequently published in the JEUC as proof that free schools sustained by property tax were the best method. Moreover, free schools encouraged regular attendance, which inevitably led to less illiteracy and a reduction in juvenile delinquency. These themes will be elaborated upon below.

[528] 'School inspector's report, Lanark county council,' October 1873, AO RG 2-12-234-15; R. Grant, superintendent of Flamborough East, n.d. AO RG 2-12-111-11; D. Ritchie, county clerk for Huron, 7 January 1865, AO RG 2-12-69-52.
[529] A. Craig, superintendent of Tilbury West, 11 March 1867, AO RG 2-12-108-1.

6.3.3.1 Defence One: history of free schools in the United States

During Ryerson's first tour to all municipal councils following the 1846 school act, he lectured on the importance of free schools, and his speech was then republished in the JEUC. Ryerson said:

> My first reason for commending [free schools] as the best method of providing for the education of your children is, that the people who have been educated under it for two hundred years, are distinguished for personal independence, general intelligence, great industry, economy and prosperity, and a wide diffusion of the comforts and enjoyments of domestic life. The truth of this remark in reference to the character and condition of the people of the New England States, will, I presume, be disputed by none.[530]

The history of free schools in the United States and compulsory, universal education in Europe assisted Ryerson in promoting the importance of the same system in Ontario. Interestingly, the Report of 1846 focused on universal education in Europe, while circulars and reports following the school act concentrated on American examples (see section **5.3**). Perhaps this shift may be the result of the perceived worthiness of these institutes, as Ryerson claimed. Whatever the reason, American examples were discussed, particularly in the JEUC, and held up as proof that this was the best method of funding schools and diffusing education. An entire editorial was even devoted to the history of free schools in the United States.[531] Some articles concentrated on the obligation of the wealthy to assist the less privileged; others documented the positive changes that ensued when the principle was voted upon.

The first American schools were founded in the seventeenth century. In 1647 the Massachussets Bay Colony made provision by law that there should be a free school in every town where there were fifty families. This was the first time in North America that a

[530] E. Ryerson, 'Address to the inhabitants of Upper Canada on the system of free schools,' *JEUC* 2 (1849) 1.
[531] 'System of free schools in the New England State,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 97.

legislative body representing the state ordered that all children must be taught. An American resident described the basis of the arrangement:

> In Massachusetts all the schools have been *free*, and that has been supported by a tax upon property, from the very day when the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock. In all the New England states, the experiment has been tried and has proved successful. Free schools have been established in some of the Western States, and even in South Carolina every child of a free man may receive instruction at the expense of the *property* of the state.[532]

New York's *Albany Patriot* claimed that the rich and childless citizen, the opulent absentee and the lot owner all contributed to paying for the education of others: 'the poorest child in the village sits down to the mental repast, on the most perfect equality with the most purse-proud citizen's heir.'[533] The achievement of free schools in Massachusetts and New York influenced policy makers in other states to adopt a comparable scheme. In Connecticut, an article boasted that the poorest and richest residents unanimously voted to tax their property.[534] In 1850 schools in Wisconsin became free, and in Indiana the school motto was 'by common access, common obligation, and common interest.'[535]

The local Canadian press also commented on the value of this initiative. Whether papers were documenting how universal education united all classes of a community or how they removed ignorance, the argument was that free schools were a fundamental principle in American states and should therefore be emulated in Ontario. This was the message from the *Brantford Herald*, which compared education in the United States and Canada:

> To remove this plague-spot of ignorance, this disgrace from Canada, will be a noble work for all true and enlightened reformers […]. The Americans perceive the necessity for making education general: and Canadians must see that education is the foundation of progress, and the great bulwark of civil and religious liberty: and seeing this they must emulate, and, if possible, surpass their neighbours in the states, by distributing knowledge to *all*, 'without money and without price.' The poor man's child must not be excluded from

[532] 'Testimony of experience in favour of the principle of free schools,' *JEUC* 4 (1851) 121.
[533] 'Free schools in Albany,' *Albany Patriot*, *JEUC* 1 (1848) 124.
[534] 'Prize essay on the necessity and means of improving the common schools of Connecticut,' *JEUC* 3 (1850) 132.
[535] 'Free schools in the state of Wisconsin,' *JEUC* 3 (1850) 16; 'Galveston Free Schools in *Teachers' Advocate*,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 125.

> the foundations of learning on account of the poverty of his parents, but must have every facility afforded *him* for the cultivation of his immortal part, that would be granted to the child of the wealthiest in the land; and for the instruction of *all*, teachers of the highest order of intellect should be employed and fully compensated for their labours […]. There are some who say, that it is *impossible to accomplish so much in a poor country like Canada*; but so much we would say, that Canada is not a poor country, and that it is quite possible for Canadians to educate their children as well as the inhabitants of the neighbouring state can educate theirs.[536]

American states served as an example where communities acknowledged the importance of free schools supported by taxed property. The principle originated in Massachusetts and the example of its achievement quickly spread. General taxes supported gaols, courts, infrastructure, the building of roads and canals and higher degree institutions. Therefore, Ryerson argued, such universal taxation should also be the case in Ontario, regardless of whether a couple was childless, lived at the border of the district or had sent their children abroad. Ryerson used the examples of foreign nations to provide evidence that this initiative was not unique to Canada, but was in fact practiced worldwide.

6.3.3.2 Defence Two: links between crime and lack of education

By the nineteenth century, school promoters saw a visible and measurable pattern between criminal activity, poverty and lack of schooling. As discussed in sections **4.4** and **4.5**, variations in industry, commerce and social structure had caused a shift in the traditional pioneer lifestyle. Where some adapted by acquiring new skills, others did not. Those of school age were equally affected. Causes of non-attendance included poverty, a lack of suitable clothing or distance from the school. Most often, however, it was because parents required school-aged children to remain at home or to work to support the family. Ryerson, along with foreign nationals, emphasised the necessity of educating the young, not only for their own sake but also for the sake of society: ‘such a system of general education amongst

[536] *Brantford Herald*, 12 December 1849.

the people is the most effectual prevention of pauperism, and its natural companions, misery and crime.'[537] Ryerson, among others, shared the assumption that crime and pauperism could be eradicated by early training.

The relationship between poverty and a lack of education was considered in the Canadian press. In the *Globe*, the author compared gaols and schools between Natchez (Mississippi) and Toronto (Ontario). He noted how absurd it was for the common schools in Toronto to be closed and the gaols filled:

> [Natchez] provides free schools in which we are told 'an admirable education' is given to all; while [Toronto] shuts up the schools 'because they are free for all!' It is a strange sight in the metropolis of Upper Canada, to see the prisons and asylums filled, and the common schools emptied – groggeries everywhere licensed and crowded, and the common schools everywhere shut up and locked – the Sabbath bay-boats patronised, and the weekday schools proscribed! [538]

As previously discussed (in section **6.3.2.1**), Toronto's municipal council would not tax their residents' property so schools were shut for one year.

Likewise, an entry in the *Niagara Mail* highlighted the expense of schools as compared to prisons:

> The mode of assessment in this town in general worked well, and met with the approval of the great body of the people. If it bore hard on some who had no children to send to school, it is contended that it is much better to have to support the system, in this way, than to be obliged to contribute to the maintenance of prisons with all their concomitant expenses. Let all the children receive an education, and they will be more likely to grow up good members of the community than if they were neglected. This is self-evident, and requires no elaborate train of reasoning.[539]

The testaments of Canadian and foreign nationals show that there was a strong correlation between illiteracy and crime.[540] Those children who were unable to receive any form of schooling often became involved in criminal activity. Free schools could solve this problem.

[537] Report of 1846, p. 10.
[538] Third Annual Report of the Board of School Visitors in the City of Natchez (Mississippi), 4 July 1848.
[539] *Niagara Mail*, 23 January 1850.
[540] This was reported in 'Educated vs. Uneducated,' *The Globe*, May 1851 in *JEUC* 4 (1851) 78.

They were much cheaper to maintain in comparison with courts and jails, and therefore they represented the best insurance for the nation.

6.3.3.3 Defence Three: local decisions versus compulsory regulation

The final argument that served to encourage local residents about the free school initiative was an examination of the manner in which it was applied in Ontario in comparison with other nations. In Canada, the free school system was a voluntary effort, dictated by votes within each given district and not imposed by government. Although many residents desired it to be encoded in law, or believed that the only manner in which it could be successful was if it was sanctioned, this was not the case. The Report of 1846 described the manner in which compulsory education was enforced in Prussia (section **5.2.1**). Regarding the Prussian system, Ryerson stated:

> The law therefore protects the weak and the defenceless against the strong and the selfish; it is founded on the purest morality and the noblest patriotism; *and although I do not advocate the incorporating of it into a Statute of this country, I believe it to be the duty of every parent to act in accordance with its spirit*. With what a noble race would Canada be peopled forty years hence, if every child from this time henceforth should receive eight years instruction in the practical arts and duties of life on Christian principles![541]

In Ryerson's address, he made it clear that although the Prussian method was exemplary, it was not to be imitated in Ontario: 'our system of schools is not compulsory in the sense in which that term is applied to despotic governments, [it] is the voluntary act of the people.'[542] What Ontario would emulate, however, was the underlying principle of free schools. Education was a social obligation, a collateral effort between the state and the parent. Unlike in Prussia, though, parents were not fined, and nor was education initially mandatory. As

[541] E. Ryerson, 'Basis of the compulsory system of education in Prussia, Saxony, and Switzerland' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 241.
[542] E. Ryerson 'Special report on the operations of the common school act of 1846, 24 June 1847,' *DHE* vol.7, p. 104.

previously stated, it was only in the 1871 school act that free schools and compulsory attendance became compulsory.

Moreover, for those Canadian residents who were hostile to the initiative or who linked it exclusively to Prussia, Ryerson pointed out that the 'obnoxious principle was common both to Switzerland and to the New England and Northern States of the American Union.'[543] Ryerson also quoted American educationalist Horace Mann on the subject:

> A very erroneous idea prevails with us, that this enforcement of school attendance is the prerogative of despotism alone […], incompatible with, but impossible in, a free and elective government. This is a great error […]. The elective franchise in this and in several of the other states of Germany, is more generally enjoyed, that is, the restrictions upon it are less than in some of the states of our own union.[544]

Ryerson made it clear that Prussian ideas influenced the rules of compulsory attendance, but the idea was not directly copied. It was this feature, of allowing the people to govern their own affairs through the overarching management and organisation of the board of education that made the structure in Ontario so advanced.

6.3.4 Local support and the free school movement

In 1850, provincial legislation made it an option for school boards to levy taxes on property. However, several boards had already voted in favour of this method of funding several years earlier. Local newspapers played an important role in imparting to residents the success of this movement. The *Niagara Mail*, for instance, published the minutes of several council meetings to serve as a model. In one entry, the newspaper announced that a vote was taken in Stamford and the people proved their 'determination to keep pace with the progressive spirit of the age, by voting for free schools.'[545] The editor of the *St. Catherine's Journal* said: 'the

[543] E. Ryerson to the editor of the *Banner*, 7 December 1847.
[544] E. Ryerson, 'Basis of the compulsory system of education in Prussia, Saxony, and Switzerland' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 241.
[545] 'School meeting at Stanford – the liberal system adopted,' *Niagara Mail*, January 1849 in *JEUC* 2 (1849) 9.

advantages of the free school system are so numerous, and so palpable, that we think they only require to be known in order to be appreciated – demanded by the people, and properly sustained.'[546] A year later, an article stated:

> We are pleased to see that the principle of *free schools* gains ground […]. Whatever may be the objections made by a few narrow-minded, selfish individuals to the adoption of this principle, it is nevertheless the true basis of popular education, and lies at the very foundation of national prosperity. Property, the possession of which is now made antagonistic to this principle, would itself be enhanced more by the universal diffusion of education than by any other thing.[547]

In the *Peterboro' Weekly Despatch*, the challenge extended to the people in their voting choice was documented: 'we should like to see free schools established, if only for one year, by way of experiment, in this town, for we are persuaded that their beneficial effects would soon be felt and acknowledged.'[548] A similar remark was made in Bowmansville's *Messenger*, underlining the duty of the rich to help the penniless:

> We know that in some instances the system bears heavily on certain individuals, but that is no reason why it would be abandoned; besides, those individuals on whom the system bears heaviest are, in every respect, the best able to bear it […]. It is the duty of the rich to assist the poor to educate their children.[549]

The emphasis was that if people tried the free school initiative, they would see that it was in fact the best method of supporting and maintaining their schools.

Local superintendents and trustees equally documented their successes. In the township of Howard, the *Western Planet* reported:

> Last year the rolls presented an average of from 15 to 20. Now the benches are crowded; no child in the section but is there: and there you will find even those of maturer years mixing with the young and endeavouring to make up for early deficiencies; and thus, high and low, rich and poor, concentrate their energies and exertions in the maintenance of a common cause and in giving to their children the benefit of a good elementary education.[550]

[546] *St. Catherine's Journal*, February 1849 in *JEUC* 2 (1849) 32.
[547] *St. Catherine's Journal*, 14 March 1850.
[548] *Peterboro' Weekly Despatch*, 21 February 1850.
[549] Mr. Rogerson, *Messenger* 15 October 1851.
[550] Dr. Cross, superintendent of Howard on the free school system, *Western Planet*, 27 January 1852.

The same journal remarked a few months later that 'men who have educated their own children, either by private or public means, and would *leave* the numerous offspring of the poor to "perish for lack of knowledge" received no mercy.'[551] Furthermore, in the *Norfolk Messenger*, the verdict was that education was a public service, and residents should spend less time on luxury, spending it instead on the youth of their community.[552] A similar tone was taken in Bowmansville's *Canadian Statesman*: 'A ratepayer' wrote to the editor that it was more virtuous to spend money on schools than on town halls or churches:

> It is well known that our taxation is enormous for what we have to show for it. But are we to have no improvements, no outlays which will benefit the town, until that debt is wiped off […]? Our school buildings have been patchwork throughout. It is acknowledged that it is impossible to have suitable and commodious rooms from the old structure. If money is to be expended, let it be for something creditable to the town, and not in fitting up old town halls, churches, and unoccupied places unfit for everything else but a school house.[553]

In 1850, when the option was made available, the department of education acquired the minutes of annual school meetings describing the alacrity with which freeholders chose this initiative.[554] In the city of Kingston, for instance, the report emphasised the enlightened spirit of the people in providing free schools: 'the trustees were of opinion that they best executed their trust, by placing education within the reach of all. They have, therefore, given admission to 200 children free of charge, whose parents were unable to pay for their education.'[555] We learn that by 1851, similar resolutions were being adopted at public meetings in the towns of Simcoe, West Gwilliamsbury, Hope, Wolford, Hamilton and Dawn, among others.[556] In Wentworth, the people resolved to make parents more accountable:

> That in the opinion of this meeting, authority should be given to municipal councils to punish such parents or guardians as refuse to send their children

[551] 'Free Schools,' *St. Catherine's Journal*, 16 May 1850.
[552] *Norfolk Messenger*, March 1851 in *JEUC* 4 (1851) 44.
[553] *Canadian Statesman*, 17 December 1871.
[554] Examples of those resolutions adopted were at the convention in Picton (Prince Edward County) in February 1860, AO RG 2-12-29-88 and Perth in March 1852, AO RG 2-12-15-612.
[555] 'Annual report of the board of school trustees, city of Kingston, 1848' *JEUC* 2 (1849) 10.
[556] 'Free schools in Upper Canada,' *JEUC* 3 (1850) 8; 'Local superintendent reports,' *JEUC* 4 (1851) 41.

> between the ages of seven and twelve years to some school for at least four months in the year, and also to establish where necessary further reformatory schools to which the children of habitually vicious parents who refuse or neglect to send them.[557]

The fact that the voters authorised the municipal councils to impose penalities several years before it became provicial law confirmed this community involvement. As early as January 1851, a letter appeared in the *Globe* stating that residents had voted in favour of free schools: 'the best gift the people of Canada can confer on their children is education, sound, practical education available to all. Public money employed in educating the masses is a most profitable investment.'[558] Again, it had only been two years since schools in Toronto had been closed.

Rate bills had always been a method of payment that Ryerson found problematic, and local responses confirmed his views. The charges were usually too high, so that parents were unwilling to allow their children to attend, or in other cases parents refused to pay when it was time for collection. When money was obtained, it was often insufficient to cover the cost of school maintenance, apparatus and a supplement to the teachers' salaries. This was precisely what the superintendent of Goderich felt:

> The time is fresh in the memory of many of us, when our schools were supported by rate-bill, levied on the parents and guardians of those sending their children to school, and when as a necessary consequence, the schools were but indifferently sustained, and inefficiently managed. Now we have free schools, attended by nearly all the children of school age in the town, and attended also by children of the most respectable and intelligent of our towns-people.[559]

Not everyone liked the enshrining of a general property tax into law, but it had become apparent that it was a necessary step in the progress of public instruction.

[557] 'Wentworth School Convention,' Hamilton 29 January 1866, AO RG 2-12-86-17.
[558] *Globe*, 30 January 1851.
[559] J. Fraser, 'Report of the common school, town of Goderich for 1857,' AO RG 2-109-B1-48.

John Kirkland, local superintendent of Guelph and Puslinch, was a keen promoter of a universal, free system of education. He lectured in various districts, and his talks were then republished in the JEUC. On the question of free schools, Kirkland said:

> Such penny-wise persons, however, might rest assured that, though they might possibly succeed in retarding the adoption of the free school system in their own locality, and thus ensure to themselves the censure of posterity whose interests they had endeavoured to sacrifice, they could not altogether prevent it. The signs of the times were so unequivocal as to the universal adoption of the free school system.[560]

Similarly, in a memo sent to the board of education, the author acknowledged that the time had come to make property tax mandatory. He concluded his letter by reiterating: 'I do not profess to advocate compulsory attendance apart from the conviction that it is the logical sequence and necessary attendance on compulsory assessment.'[561] This superintendent's report, and the emphasis of many others, was that it was only natural for free schools, supported by taxed property, to become mandatory.

6.3.5 Concluding remarks

Funding schools by taxed property was a precarious affair. Although Ryerson considered this the best method of supporting schools, many Canadians viewed the idea unfavourably. As discussed in section **4.4**, immigration meant a strain on resources and led to new neighborhoods or expanded towns and cities. Where some communities had no problem with free schools, perhaps because they were accustomed to similar arrangements in their countries of birth, others resisted. The acceptance of the idea also had a lot to do with the residents' understanding of responsible government. For some, who interpreted the move as officials no longer being allowed to meddle in the businesses of the district, forcing a property tax was indeed unjust. A survey of the first regions that voted in favour of taxing

[560] John Kirkland, 'Free Public Education in Canada,' *JEUC* 3 (1850) 178.
[561] 'Memo on the schools act and proposed amendments in Toronto,' March 1863, AO RG 2-12-40-263.

property confirmed that it was the old, populous towns and new, smaller sections that respectively supported and resisted this plan.

Despite opposition, Ryerson favoured free, universal schools supported by taxed property. This was the preferred method in Europe and the United States. In those nations, such a system was a recognised feature of law and parents who failed to provide some form of schooling for their children were fined. In Ontario, the free school principle appeared in 1850 as one of three methods of supporting schools. In 1871, it finally became a permanent feature of the education legislation. However, many communities had already opted for this scheme a number of years before that date. Incoming correspondences to the board of education, as well as newspaper articles, demonstrates a general consensus that free schools supported by this means were better attended, covered the costs of apparatus and other materials, and paid for a first-or second-class teacher. With time, the positive outcomes drowned out the critics. At town meetings, more and more residents voted in favour of the initiative to the extent of fining fellow parents who did not send their children to school.[562]

What made Ontario's structure so advanced was that it was the communities themselves, and not government, that decided on the method of maintaining their schools. Perhaps this is best summarised in the annual report of the superintendent of Markham:

> I met with an intelligent American the other day, who while boasting of the superior freedom of American institutions pointed out the fact of free schools being compulsory in the United States. I told him that we had more liberal institutions in Canada, for our people had the liberty of choosing the system that suited them best; their freedom was a compulsory statute, ours was the spontaneous choice of the people.[563]

Even in those districts that did not initially approve the scheme, with time their opinions altered. The examples that Ryerson shared were no longer from New York or Massachusetts, but directly from Canadian communities. They illustrated how free schools and property tax

[562] This was a main resolution taken at the Upper Canada Teachers' Association in 1867 whereby a vote passed that every child should be required to attend school at least four months each year, *DHE* vol. 20, p. 74.
[563] G. Hill, superintendent of Markham to E. Ryerson, 22 February 1864, AO RG 2-12-59-65.

were just, progressive and worthy of replication. It was the efforts of the people that propagated this enterprise. The next feature that caused uproar was the question of textbooks. Residents opposed a central body imposing a framework for what was taught in schools just as much as they resented being told how to fund them. The next chapter will examine this issue.

Chapter Six Part IV

Irish textbooks in Ontario schools

I may remark that the original tongue of a large proportion of the children in the county […] is Gaelic, and the lessons in the National Books are found to be very "dry." Some of us have thought that the introduction of an interesting work would be of service […]. I am convinced of the benefit that would accrue from the use of an auxiliary book of a more interesting nature than the National Books.

W.G, local superintendent for Bruce county, 1856 [564]

For your information, United States school books, contrary to the provisions of the Common School Act, are extensively used in many of the common schools in this district, the truth is, that the enactments of the statutes are grossly violated in many respects.

Letter from the Niagara district, 1849 [565]

I have not only conversed with the principal members of the Irish National Board, but I have made arrangements with them to procure their books at a cheaper rate there than at which they have yet been sold in this province. I think their books are beyond comparison as a whole the best series which have yet appeared in the English language.

Egerton Ryerson, 1846 [566]

Egerton Ryerson recommended the Books used in the National Schools in Ireland and they were excellent books.

Retired teacher Michael Gallagher, 1896 [567]

[564] W.G. to E. Ryerson, 11 November 1856, AO RG 2-12-21-688.
[565] W. Macdougall, superintendent of Niagara district to E. Ryerson, 30 May 1849, AO RG 2-12-6-35.
[566] E. Ryerson to Mr. Hutton, local superintendent of Belleville, 3 July 1846, MS 925 – 15.
[567] M. Gallagher, superannuated teacher of Gananoque to G. Hodgins, 11 April 1896, MS 6026.

6.4.1 Introduction

The Common School Act of 1846 set guidelines for the type of books permitted for use in grades one through eight (or their equivalent). However, unlike the preceding legal entities, textbook provisions were included under five separate clauses. The chief superintendent was to discourage the use of unsuitable and improper books in schools or libraries and to give potential ones to the board of education to review. The board was then to sanction a recommended series. The second clause under the duties of the board also stated that:

> No portion of the government grant shall be given in aid of any school in which any book is used which has been disapproved of by the board.

Trustees were required to ensure that all pupils were supplied with these authorised textbooks, and local superintendents, in their inspection, had to make sure that they were the only ones used. Lastly, section thirty of the Common School Act stated:

> No foreign books, in the English branches of education, shall be used in any Model or Common School, except by the express permission of the Board of Education.[568]

Ryerson chose the Irish National Readers as the authorised textbooks, and they were subsequently approved by the department of education. The Irish commissioners gave the board permission to reprint the series or, if they preferred, agreed to supply them with the edition at a reduced rate, comparable to the price at which they were sold to the Poor Schools in Ireland. After importing and distributing the series to various districts, the board in Ontario called for tenders to reprint them from Ireland. However, after receiving and considering several bids, the department thought it best to leave the republishing of the entire series or any part of it open.[569] Copies of these books may be found in Appendix Six. The books, when printed in Ontario, would be in every respect uniform with the Irish edition. Therefore, the department was not responsible for printing, leaving it to private enterprise.

[568] *Statutes of Province of Canada, 9 Victoria, Chapter XX 1846,* Section II, clause six; Section III, clause two; Section XIII, clause 17; Section XXVII, clause ten; Clause XXX.
[569] G. Hodgins, 'To printers and publishers of school books in Canada,' 27 October 1846, *DHE* vol. 6, p. 245.

The hope was that by offering Canadian publishers and booksellers these editions at retail prices, they would be easily acquired and reproduced and would therefore become the textbook of choice for teachers and parents, displacing those of American origin. A private note written by Ryerson alluded to this effect:

> In respect to school books, it may be sufficient at the present time for us to state, that it is not our intention to employ any coercive means to carry into effect our recommendations. We shall endeavour to make such arrangements, that these school books which may be recommended by the board of education for use in schools shall have the additional recommendation of being the cheapest as well as best of their kind.[570]

Shortly thereafter, an appointed committee within the department oversaw the selection of suitable books.

This final section of Chapter Six will analyse the textbook question. In 1846 the Irish textbooks became the sanctioned books. As with all educational matters, up to that point communities had had the right to select which books they preferred. However, trustees now risked losing the government grant if their districts used unauthorised textbooks, such as American readers. Convincing the people to use the Irish copies was not without problems. Many preferred the American editions, specifically Kirkham's grammar, Morse's geography and Cobb's spelling book. Using Figure 7 as a guideline, this section will show the manner in which Ryerson defended the importation of the Irish readers in Canadian schools.

[570] E. Ryerson, 1846, AO RG 2-9-1-18.

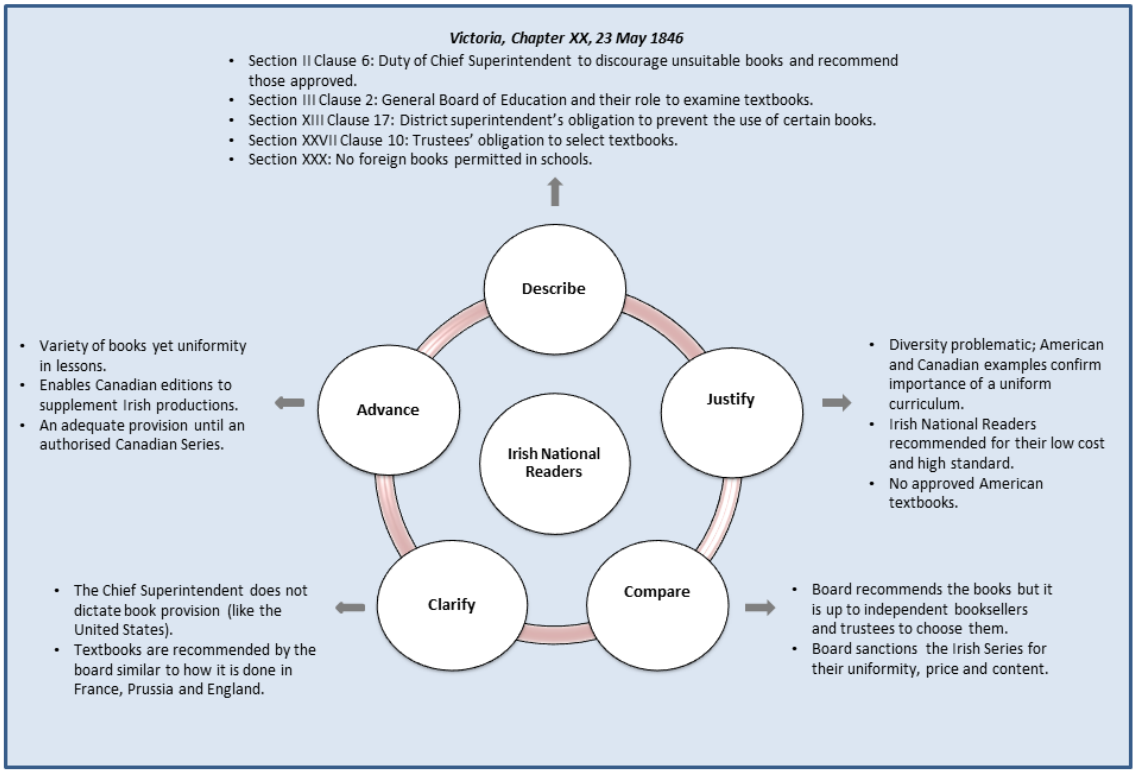


Figure 7: Irish National Readers internalised

Although many criticised the Irish Readers, resenting the purchase of new books and opposing the exclusion of American publications, Ryerson did not steer away from this decision. These European books had not only been carefully reviewed and approved by foreign educationalists, but they helped to resolve the problem of textbook diversity. Eventually, the opinions of local superintendents, trustees and teachers endorsed them. It was precisely these community efforts that assisted Ryerson in introducing the books into the schools. The Irish Readers remained the approved books for Ontario until 1867, when they were superseded by a Canadian series.

6.4.2 Complaints against the Irish books

Establishing a uniform curriculum and using books imported from Ireland was no simple task. Criticisms focused on (1) the price and inconvenience of purchasing entirely new books, (2) the exclusion of American publications, (3) copyright and printing issues and (4) the unsuitability of the lessons from the Irish curriculum. The following sub-sections will review these objections.

6.4.2.1 Criticism One: price and inconvenience of purchasing new books

The local superintendent of Port Hope claimed that 'my only troubles in school matters have been caused by introducing new books.'[571] In Cavan, a school promoter reported 'how averse the Canadians are to purchasing school books of any kind, and, when obliged to purchase, they generally choose those which cost the least without much, if any, regard to intrinsic value.' In other cases, the emphasis was on parents who were not inclined to introduce a new series. For example, in the Prince Edward district, the superintendent's report focused on the concerns of parents who 'are unwilling to rush the purchase of books, which may be thrown aside in a few weeks.'[572] Likewise, a school master in Caledonia wrote:

> When I came here, a year ago, I found a complete set of those unauthorised American textbooks in use in the school. I immediately commenced to introduce the authorised books but found considerable opposition from the parents, who stated that they were forced by the former Master to procure these books at considerable expense.[573]

The report of the Home district mentioned a similar obstacle:

> We could not, in my opinion, have a better series, one more suited for the circumstances and wants of the province […] than the excellent works of the Irish National Board of Education, now reprinted in Montreal, but there is

[571] F. Poudd, master of Point Elgin Public school to Committee on Textbook, MS 917-2.
[572] T. Donnelly, '*School book perplexity – the question as to foreign text books in the Prince Edward District*,' 16 December 1846, AO RG 2-12-5-11-26.
[573] M. Sinclair to G. Hodgins, 12 June 1861, AO RG 2-12-36-F6-125.

> some difficulty in getting them introduced. The people will not go to the expense of providing new books.[574]

Even a former common school teacher's letter expressed that he felt 'sorry that we have so many changes in the books, as it often causes difficulties to arise between parents and teachers.'[575] These extracts showed a general opposition to purchasing a new series of books when others were being presently used.

The *Perth Courier* republished an article from Toronto's *Examiner* in August 1846, detailing how the residents were offended that they were powerless to decide on their own school affairs:

> We know the arguments used to defend the taking of the power of choosing the books out of the people's hands and putting it into the hands of an irresponsible body, viz – '*They are not sufficiently intelligent*;' 'The people cannot do it.' A flattering comment this? And how are they ever to acquire intelligence enough for this important purpose? By telling them. 'Gentlemen, you know nothing about this matter; nor need you trouble yourselves to learn: we will do all this for you!' Surely not. This is the very argument used by the slave-drivers of the South. 'You niggers ain't fit for liberty; leave that for us, and go you and hoe corn and weed rice.' When we see the superintendent of education quoting, or rather mis-quoting, the liberal institutions of other countries to sustain his sentiments and measures, we are forcibly reminded of another gentleman, dressed in black, who used to quote Scripture to accomplish his designs.[576]

As with the criticisms against the chief superintendent, the board of education and the principle of property tax, many connected the lack of freedom to decide on their own school affairs as falling outside the principles of responsible government.

To help distribute and circulate the authorised books, by the 1850 Common School Act, a book depository was established. This was similar to the practice followed in England, Ireland and the United States in providing a depot for supplies. Books at the depository were sold at a much cheaper rate than through other channels. However, as with other features of

[574] H. Hunter, district superintendent of the Home district, ARUC 1846, p. 4.
[575] E. Warf, superannuated teacher to G. Hodgins, n.d. MS 917-2-12.
[576] The *Perth Courier*, 18 August 1846.

the act, people objected. This was the view taken in the *Canadian Literary News Letter*, which felt that it was unjust to interfere with the book trade:

> A public department has been reduced to the dimensions of a trading concern, outrivaling every other competitor by the means of monopoly which it possesses […]. There are not so many industrial avenues open to our population that the government can without serious injury place itself at the entrance of one to repulse honest and respectable persons who desire to enter.[577]

They suggested that school apparatus ought to be left to private enterprise rather than becoming subject to a government monopoly. As late as 1870, an editorial in the *Newmarket Era*, a liberal newspaper, criticised Ryerson and the selection of the new school books: 'it looks to us if the Dr. had used his influence over the Board of Public Instruction, to force a sale for his publications.'[578]

Further agitation against the education depository occurred in 1865, and again in 1874. While Ryerson was preparing the passage of the 1865 Grammar School Improvement Act, James Campbell, a bookseller in Toronto and a representative agent for the Scottish publisher Nelson, petitioned against the Council of Public Instruction. In a series of attacks published in the Toronto *Globe*, Campbell claimed that the only books which received approval were those whose authors were linked to the educational department. Mr. Brown, editor of the *Globe*, even referred to Thomas Robertson (former headmaster of the Toronto Normal School), Charles Sangster (the new headmaster) and George Hodgins (the deputy superintendent) as 'the three employees receiving large salaries from the public chest, while engaged in writing books for their own benefit.'[579] In 1874 the question of the depository appeared again. In a pamphlet entitled 'Reform in the Education Office,' the value of the department was discussed. It stated that the office was corrupt and the manner in which

[577] 'The government bookstore,' *The Canadian Literary News Letter and Booksellers' Advertiser*, 1 (June 1855) 3.
[578] *Newmarket Era*, 1 March 1872.
[579] 'Replies of Doctor Ryerson to attacks on the Council of Public Instruction in regard to the selection of textbooks,' 10 April 1866, *DHE* vol. 19, p. 191.

books were managed was for the exclusive benefit of the members of the Council of Public Instruction.[580]

The criticisms of textbook monopoly were fallacious. Although the depository was part of the board of education, it was a subordinate office – a means of supplying schools with maps, charts, apparatus, prizes and library books. It enabled residents to acquire supplies inexpensively while ensuring that products were of a high standard. The depository was not for all books, only those related to schools. In fact, Ryerson sent a circular to education superintendents in the United States on the subject. They replied favourably about the initiative.[581] Equally, there was always the option for residents to buy items from booksellers or publishers. It was their choice.

6.4.2.2 Criticism Two: the exclusion of American publications

The question of American textbooks was another significant issue. Although the 1846 school act did not overtly outlaw their use, districts were refused their government grant if it was found that unauthorised books were employed. As described, many residents objected to their exclusion. The minutes of the board of education meeting even documented the difficulty of eliminating American editions: 'an uneasiness has been manifested by some teachers of schools, who have been in the habit of using foreign [textbooks], particularly Morse's Geography and Kirkham's Grammar.'[582] As soon as the law passed, it became apparent that this new clause was a contested one.

[580] A complete catalogue of replies from inspectors, principals and teachers regarding the textbook revision may be located in RG 2-13.
[581] 'Supplement to the Journal of Education, Canada Directory for 1857 – 1858,' *JEUC* (12) 1859. Copies of this publication were forwarded to Nova Scotia, England, Scotland, Ireland and the states of New York and Oregon.
[582] Minutes of the Board of Education 29 September 1846, AO RG 2-2-22. That meeting was attended by M. Power, E. Ryerson, H. Grassett, J. Morrison, H. Scobie and J. Howard.

Incoming letters to the department focused on a variety of reasons for preferring books from the south. Several local superintendents felt that American books were the preferred option of residents because of their style, cheapness and the fact they were easily available.[583] Others chose them from habit, or because they favoured the content. This was the view taken by the superintendent of Niagara:

> It is doubtless known to the head of the educational department that the new school act has been, and is, quite unpopular with a large number of the inhabitants of this district, one of the principal objections being the anticipated prohibition to the use of foreign books. The preference given to school books published in the United States, does not here, I am inclined to think, arise from any political bias, but from the peculiar geographical position of the locality in relation to that country which naturally led to frequent intercourse with each other for the purposes of trade.[584]

These books used in Niagara were the natural result of interaction and proximity between the two countries. The superintendent also noted in his report that because parents had recently supplied their children with books at a considerable expense, they were unwilling to purchase more.[585]

From Mallorytown, Ryerson received a note making it clear that Irish books were considered unsuitable for Canadian pupils, whereas American ones were practical:

> I do not consider it an evil to allow foreign books to be used in the schools. That is American books for they are much more sensible and better adapted to the understanding of children of Canada than your great National Series. For instance in the 1st book of lessons we find such as this "Jack rode a mile on a fine ass" [etc]. Now such trash might suit to learn young Irish but we do not want such teaching in Canada but such is set as the standard by the Council of Public Instruction.[586]

American books were favoured because there was a history of textbook acquisition being the responsibility of school sections, rather than a central board.

[583] D. O'Keenan, teacher of Cache Bay to G. Hodgins, 14 April 1896.
[584] D. D'Everardo to E. Ryerson, 19 October 1846, AO RG 2-12-5-F99-24.
[585] Ibid.
[586] Anonymous to E. Ryerson, 10 May 1864, AO RG 2-12-62-38.

6.4.2.3 Criticism Three: copyright and reprinting issues

Even after the textbook provisions had been outlined in the 1846 School Act, the confusion did not end there. Correspondence reveals a lack of understanding of which books the department approved, or to whom individuals should address their concerns. For instance, the superintendent of the Prince Edward district enquired:

> The winter schools are now commencing; as usual a fresh supply of textbooks is wanted; and I am daily applied to for information, as to what books will be sanctioned by the board of education, of this I am, of course entirely ignorant […]. The consequence is that from motives of economy, parents [are] unwilling to risk the purchase of books which may be thrown aside in a few weeks.[587]

Not only were parents unwilling to purchase the new Irish series but this letter refers to the practice of purchasing new books yearly, not only a costly exercise, but one that would do nothing towards securing textbook uniformity.

Upon hearing that one series was to supersede all others, the department received a surge of requests from authors and publishers to have their books included on the approved list. One such was a letter from J. Merritt of St. Catherine's, who wished *Porter's Rhetorical Readers* to be published. Ryerson's reply to that appeal was as follows:

> You, and your friends, do not seem to be aware that there is one of the series of the Irish National School Books, which supplies the deficiency, to which you refer [….] 'Porter's Reader' is an excellent book of this kind; but the book, to which I have referred, possesses all the excellences of Porter's […]. The price of the Irish National Book will also be much less than that at which Porter's can be bought, or reprinted – not more than one shilling and three pence per copy. It can even be imported from Ireland and sold at that price.[588]

Another letter sent to Ryerson was from Alexander Davidson of Niagara, who had published his *Canada Spelling Book* in 1841 and sought to have it officially recognised. Ryerson's response to that request was:

[587] T. Donnelly to E. Ryerson, 16 December 1846, AO RG 2-12-5-F11-26.
[588] E. Ryerson to J. Merritt, 18 January 1846, *DHE* vol. 6, p. 284.

> I have carefully examined [Mr. Davidson's book] and quite concur in the high encomiums upon it by the New York *Albion*, and other respectable writers. I know of no better publication of the kind. But, in view of the fact that the government has encouraged the reprinting of the Irish National School Books, I cannot recommend the government to commit itself to any other publication, however excellent it may be.[589]

Most often, Ryerson's reply was that books could not be sanctioned because the lessons already appeared in the Irish Series. For independent authors or publishers like Davidson, the fact that their books were not part of the curriculum was problematic. It is clear why they would resent the decisions being made by a central body.

When the Irish National Readers were eventually republished in Ontario, altered Irish editions meant a lack of consistency in reproduced copies. However, and unbeknown to many, the board was not responsible for publishing books, but simply for approving which ones were best. Moreover, to make a profit, Canadian publishers frequently used the least expensive paper and ink, which often led to grievances about careless production. A letter from J. Macdonald of Chatham emphasised the numerous errors in his copies:

> The reprints of the Irish National Readers which are generally read in the schools of the province, are absolutely unfitted to be used as class books, owing to the numerous errors which have crept into them. With a view to obtain accuracy in the reprints of these publications, I would suggest that none be permitted to be used in the schools.[590]

The trustees in Zorra called Ryerson's attention to the number of typographical errors:

> What augments the evil, each publisher has a different set of errors. This is a fruitful source of much hindrance and confusion in school. Teachers complain much. A child diligently learns and reads correctly what is in its book when another interrupts it and 'vice versa'. Why? Because the text books disagree. We think it merits a speedy remedy.[591]

The elected trustees in the county of Waterloo also issued a notice on the various inaccuracies and dissimilarities between publishers Dagg, Dredge, McPhail, Lovell and Campbell. For instance, in Lovell's version, 'conspicuous' was divided into three syllables

[589] E. Ryerson to A. Davidson, 28 January 1846, *DHE* vol. 6, p. 286.
[590] J. Macdonald to E. Ryerson, 1 November 1861, AO RG 2-12-38-F2-4.
[591] A. Baine, J. Joyce and J. Inns, 17 February 1860, AO RG 2-12-29-3.

whereas in Campbell's issue it was divided into four. In Lovell it was ta-lent, whereas in Campbell it was tal-ent. A comparison between several booksellers also found 'Harry for Henry', 'rough for tough', 'them for her', 'song for sung', and 'those for whose.'[592] The report concluded by stating that the misprints caused so much confusion amongst teachers and pupils that the Irish Readers should be placed among those things that were obsolete.[593]

Mr. Dutton, a teacher from Nassagawaya, wrote of inconsistencies between textbooks:

> We have the Second, Third and Fourth Reading Books in our school all from various publishers and each as different as the Printer's names. We have also a Dublin copy of the Fourth Reading Book differing from them all; indeed it appears to be quite another and far superior book to any of the Canadian copies that has come into our hands, yet both as regards the contents, arrangement and length of the articles or lessons consequently uniformity is out of the question and classification rendered totally impossible.

Dutton concluded his letter by stating that he feels 'extreme regret that either from design or carelessness of the Canadian Press the pupils are not one whit better accommodated than when they used the old […] school books.'[594] As late as 1851, Ryerson received a letter from a superintendent in Brantford complaining that he had to glue the book back together because of the poor quality of the binding. He also mentioned the numerous errors:

> Extreme cheapness in school books is not desirable if it is purchased at the expense of having the books so frail that they literally drop to pieces with a few months use […]. The small arithmetic is so full of errors and misprints of every kind that with many it has got the book into such disrespect that teachers do all they can to keep it out of their schools.[595]

A couple of dramatic exchanges occurred as a result of reproducing the new series. Firstly, there was disagreement between Ryerson and the publishers Armour and Ramsay. These publishers were the first to obtain an agreement from the National Board of Education in

[592] 'Memorial to the Council of Public Instruction for Upper Canada from the Board of public instruction of the county of Waterloo,' 26 June 1865, AO RG 2-12-78-15.
[593] Ibid.
[594] W. Dutton of Nassagawaya (township of Halton) to G. Hodgins 29 October 1849, AO RG 2-12-F7-398.
[595] P. Hughes to E. Ryerson, 7 April 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-544.

Dublin to reprint the series in Canada.[596] However, by the time the commissioners in Toronto had given final approval, Armour and Ramsay's original, older version was outdated. They also complained that the cost of reproducing the Irish Readers on Canadian soil was much higher than predicted. In a letter to Ryerson, Armour and Ramsay said:

> One main object we had in view in introducing these books was to secure uniformity throughout the common schools. We soon found however that in each successive edition of the Dublin editions of the reading books the alterations were so numerous that if we kept pace with them we should only be assisting in perpetuating confusion.[597]

That same letter suggested that their older, original edition be used:

> The advertisement of your board indicates that the editions of the 1845 are those to be employed in Western Canada. We have since received from Dublin copies of the 3rd and 4th Readers with the imprint of 1846 and these books are both materially different from our reprints and from the editions of 1845. To get out of this difficulty perhaps the board would recommend that the same editions should be used without alteration for a term of years, say five.[598]

Regrettably for these publishers, the board was not liable to reimburse them or to compensate in ridding them of their old stock. In fact, a letter sent by Ryerson to Armour and Ramsay stated that 'many complaints were made in regard to your books, as to their inaccuracy; and some of the Readers were represented as being so defective, or inaccurate, as to render them unfit for schools.'[599] The problems with reproducing and shipping books thus remained the responsibility of independent booksellers.

The second set of heated exchanges occurred between Ryerson and Reverend Bruyère, the rector of St. Michael's Cathedral in Toronto. In 1856, when the clergy reserve funds were to be distributed to each municipality, Ryerson issued a circular recommending the disposition of the money towards school purposes, in particular township libraries. Bruyère objected to this on the account that it was unjust to the Roman Catholic body, since the books sanctioned

[596] M. Cross and J. Kelly, secretaries at the Education Office in Dublin to R. Armour and H. Ramsay, 28 February 1845, AO RG 2-12-5-11-38.
[597] R. Armour and H. Ramsay to E. Ryerson, 9 December 1846 AO RG 2-12-5-F11-34.
[598] Ibid.
[599] E. Ryerson to R. Armour and H. Ramsay, 11 November 1846, *DHE* vol. 6, p. 277-8.

by the board were Protestant in nature. In December 1856 Bruyère issued the following note to the editors of Canadian press:

> Let us, for a moment take a rapid survey of those public libraries, got up under the superintendence of Dr. Ryerson. In looking over their shelves, it is not unlikely but my eyes will fall upon some of the most rabid anti-Christian writers […]. The [works] and such others as are written by impartial and well-informed authors, are not, as a general rule, to be found in those public libraries, so much eulogized by Doctor Ryerson. Instead of them, you meet there with nothing but the flimsy productions of narrow-minded and prejudiced writers who give you a distorted and one sided view of the subject they treat, if it has any reference to Catholic, Catholic nations, and Catholic morals and customs.[600]

That letter concluded by saying:

> Are the fathers of our cities and towns, the heads of our municipalities, to make themselves ridiculous because Doctor Ryerson chooses to be so? Are they to waste and squander away public money intended for general purposes, because the dictator of the schools bids them so?[601]

Quebec's *Le Courier du Canada* also took note of Bruyère's point:

> M. Bruyère fait voir ensuite que parmi les 4000 et quelques volumes dont les titres se trouvent au catalogue des livres choisis par M. Ryerson pour les écoles, il ne s'en trouve guère plus d'une douzaine qui soient des ouvrages catholiques. Où est donc l'impartialité que l'on devrait chez M. Ryerson?[602]

Although the Ryerson-Bruyère controversy has been traditionally linked to the separate (Catholic) school question, it also illustrated the dislike of a central, Christian, board of education with sole responsibility for certifying textbooks.

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[600] 'J. Bruyère, "What is to be done with the clergy reserve funds?' 9 December 1856,"' E. Ryerson, *Controversy between Dr. Ryerson, chief superintendent of education in Upper Canada and Rev. J. M. Bruyère, rector of St. Michael's Cathedral on the appropriation of the Clergy Reserve Funds* (Toronto: Leader and Patriot Steam Press Print, 1857) pp. 18 - 19.
[601] Ibid, p. 22.
[602] *Le Courrier du Canada*, 28 March 1857.

6.4.2.4 Criticism Four: the unsuitability of lessons in the Irish series

In the *Toronto Patriot*, an article reviewed the Irish books: 'from the way in which business is generally conducted by the "board," it may be fairly questioned whether the members of the aforesaid board have ever examined the contents of the work thus elevated into a text-book.'[603] The Toronto *Examiner* noted that the Irish Series had been adopted in Ontario 'but we are not so certain that the texts are pure, and that no mutilations or interpolations have been made.'[604] The final criticism focused on the content of the Irish series.

In White's (1922) study of the history of textbooks in Ontario, he concluded that compared with modern standards, the Irish books were unattractive, used small print and lacked illustrations.[605] Based on this conclusion, it may not seem so odd that the board received numerous complaints when they were first introduced. This was certainly the feeling of superintendent David Mills in his lengthy summary of education in Clearville:

> It appears to me, the Irish National Series was intended to serve as the poor man's library. It was prepared for the use of a people to whom school libraries were inaccessible and when newspapers did not circulate […]. The fifth book is too long […] the lessons of geography in the 4th books are worthless.[606]

Mills goes on to write: 'with the exception of the first book, the series is an exceedingly defective one from which to teach the act of reading. In saying this I express not only my own conviction but the opinion of every competent teacher with whom I have spoken upon the subject.'[607] In addition, many found fault with the Irish Readers for lacking content on Canadian affairs. This was precisely the feeling of the head of a commission on textbooks in Belleville:

> I sometimes think that the history of our own country would be the proper one to first place into the hands of our classes for there is a great lack of knowledge of our own country in those who can tell you considerably about

[603] *Toronto Patriot*, 4 December 1850.
[604] Toronto *Examiner* 22 October 1851.
[605] E. White, *Public School textbooks in Ontario* (London: The Chas. Chapman Co, 1922) p. 19.
[606] D. Mills to E. Ryerson, 18 May 1865, AO RG 2-12-74-77.
[607] Ibid.

> the Saxons and Danes. It does seem to me that a knowledge of the acts of our country's founders is more important than [that] of the ancients.[608]

Considering the Irish books were originally intended for the pupils in that nation, it is not unusual that so little was written on Canadian activities.

In the county of Waterloo, an area with a predominantly German-speaking population, the residents were largely against the series. In the prelude to the report sent to the board, the chairman in Waterloo complained that the books had not only been prepared nearly thirty years before, but had been poorly reproduced. He noted that at a meeting, the majority of residents and teachers expressed their desire to see them eliminated.[609] The report concluded with the following:

> Your memorialists have from time to time received from many qualified and experienced teachers, complaints of the many defects which exist in the Series of National School Books or Readers, now in use in our common schools under the authority of the Council of Public Instruction for Upper Canada […]. Although the present authorised series of Readers possess many excellencies, there is yet room and there exists an urgent necessity for great and important improvements in the compilation of these books in order to render them suitable to the requirements of our school system in its present stage of advancement. These Readers may at the time of their first publication not unreasonably have been regarded as fully adequate to the purpose for which they were compiled, namely for the use of the Irish National Schools, and at the time our Canadian school system was in its infancy, it may have been wise to adopt them in the absence of a series better adapted to Canada […]. They have been in use in our common schools for some time and much of the information combined in them has ceased to be matter of fact, the historical dates, geographical and political definitions are incomplete […]. Indeed these authorised text books appear to have been compiled for no other country than Ireland, as Ireland is therein always designated "this country" and its inhabitants are defined pronominally as "we." Canada is invariably treated as a foreign, a wild and uncultivated country; as being barren, covered with dreadful forests/some books have "frosts" and hideous marshes.[610]

[608] S. Howell of Belleville to the committee of the council on the high and public school regulations, programmes and textbooks, 21 September 1874, MS 917-2.
[609] H. Jackson to S. Harrison, 7 August 1865, AO RG 2-12-78-14.
[610] Memorial to the Council of Public Instruction for Upper Canada form the Board of public instruction of the county of Waterloo, 26 June 1865, AO RG 2-12-78-15.

That report also stated that in the third book, Greenland, Holland and Canada were represented as countries in which the mode of conveying travellers was by sledges drawn by dog. In the fourth book, America was a barren country with no government, inhabited by 'wild Indians.'[611]

The criticisms levelled by the residents of Waterloo would have been justified, given the fact that the Irish Readers had by that time been in use for nearly twenty years. When Canada was mentioned, the colony was made to look primitive, lacking canals, railroads, horse-carriages or steamboats. The superintendent of Preston summarised his views of the use of the Irish books in Canada by stating that they were simply out of date:

> In respect to geography, science and other subjects; they may contain statements that are not offensive to the people of the country in which they were published but repulsive to the feelings of others; they may contain misrepresentations about which some nations feel indifferent but which are of great importance to another; and when that can be justly said of any textbook, it loses all its claim to universal application.[612]

School visitors and masters equally felt that the books needed amending.[613] For instance, Mr. Poudd, master of Point Elgin Public School, stated:

> I find it very difficult to teach Canadian history successfully from the authorized textbooks. The arrangement is defective, and the language frequently circuitous and indefinite. Noted men and important events do not receive sufficient notice, while unimportant persons and trifling events occupy too much space.[614]

Likewise, several common school teachers wrote about the books' unpopularity. Retired teacher George Graffley called the books 'the most uninteresting production of [any] kind.'[615] Mr. McCulley felt that 'the popularity of [American] Murray ended with the reign

[611] Ryerson did eventually include a French and German series of books as part of the curriculum for those children whose first language was not English.
[612] O. Klotz, superintendent of Preston to E. Ryerson, 12 April 1865, AO RG 2-12-74-11.
[613] W. Scott, superannuated teacher to G. Hodgins, 3 April 1896, MS 914.
[614] F. Poudd, Master of Point Elgin Public School to the Committee, 23 September 1874, MS 917-2.
[615] G. Graffley of Claremont to G. Hodgins, 6 September 1858, AO RG 2-12-25-507.

of terror; but those who succeeded were superior in little.'[616] A more lengthy description of the textbook was written in J. Carter's letter to Hodgins:

> I am best acquainted with the Fourth Reader; and I have no hesitation in saying that during the many years I have been a teacher, it is the most superficial milk and water school book I have ever used. Its extracts, stories, anecdotes are far too trivial to occupy the bulk of a schoolbook; one reading exhausts them, wears them thread bare, and consequently, it becomes really painful to dwell upon them, day after day, as we teachers are compelled to do. Not one of the series gives a connected view of any subject. The information they contain is worth little or nothing.[617]

Carter's account clearly pointed to the Irish series being an ineffective learning tool.

Other teachers continued to use American editions despite the risk of losing the government grant if their local superintendent found them in the schools. In an anonymous letter sent from St. Catherine's, it was reported:

> The Irish National Series had been introduced a little before into the country but as a general thing all the schools had not adopted them. This school had American teachers who were the choice of the people as well as American school books. I found Saunders's series in use in the school, Primers and Readers. Cobb and Webster's Spelling books and Olney's Geography, Kirkham's Grammar […], all American, a very kranky affair.[618]

Where some teachers described the content of the Irish books as offensive, others felt that they were unsuitable for Canadian schools.[619] As a result, many schools continued using American publications. Moreover, many opposed importing the Irish textbooks, either because they did not want to bear further costs, they saw no value in the Irish series, or they were altogether unconcerned with the topic. Despite these complaints, Ryerson defended his selection by concentrating on the approval and widespread use of the books overseas, and the fact that they ensured a standardised, uniform curriculum. Responses from teachers and trustees regarding textbooks gradually helped to justify Ryerson's suggestions.

[616] A. McCulley of Hay to G. Hodgins, 13 June 1861, AO RG 2-12-36-F6-138.
[617] J. Carter, no location, to G. Hodgins, 1874, MS 917 Reel 2-9.
[618] Anonymous letter of St. Catherine's, 11 April 1896, MS 6026.
[619] J. Carter, teacher of Almonte to E. Ryerson, 24 September 1874, MS 917; J. Young Forest County to G. Hodgins, 16 April 1896, MS 914; '[Illegible signature] to E. Ryerson, 9 May 1861, AO RG 2-12-36-F4-83; Anonymous to E. Ryerson, 5 July 1849, AO RG 2-12-7-F1-8-26.

6.4.3 Irish Readers for their uniformity and universality

In response to the criticisms against textbook regulation, Ryerson focused on two points. First, he made it absolutely clear in a Special Report why American textbooks were prohibited. It was not because they were from that nation, but because they contained anti-British sentiment. Second, importing the Irish Series not only solved the issue of textbook diversity, but the content taught everything from fundamental lessons to advanced skills. This would inevitably help with pupil classification and the gradation of schools. These points will be discussed below.

6.4.3.1 Defence One: anti-British sentiment in American books

As discussed above, many residents were accustomed to using American books. However, districts now risked losing their government grant if inspectors found that unauthorised books, such as American Readers, were used. In Ryerson's Special Report, presented to the legislature in June 1847, he summarised the rationale for excluding American textbooks:

> It is not because they are foreign books simply, that they are excluded, although it is patriotic to use our own in preference to foreign publications; but because they are, with very few exceptions, anti-British, in every sense of the word. They are unlike the school books of any other enlightened people, so far as I have the means of knowing. The school books of Germany, France, and Great Britain contain nothing hostile to the institutions, or derogatory to the character, of any other nation. I know not of a single English school book in which there is even an allusion to the United States not calculated to excite a feeling of respect for their inhabitants and government. It is not so with American school books. With very few exceptions they abound with statements and allusions prejudicial to the institutions and character of the British nation. It may be said that such statements and allusions are 'few and far between,' and exert no injurious influence upon the minds of children and their parents. But, surely, no school book would be tolerated which should contain statements and allusions 'few and far between' against the character and institutions of our common Christianity. And why should books be authorized, or used in our schools, inveighing against the character and institutions of our common country? And, as to the influence of such publications, I believe, though silent and imperceptible in its operations, it is

> more extensive and powerful than is generally supposed. I believe such school books are one element of powerful influence against the established government of the country.[620]

We learn that American books were prohibited not because they were foreign, but because they were anti-British and hostile to the institutions of other countries.[621] That aggressive feature had never been found in any book in France, Germany, England, Ireland or Scotland. Ryerson's report went on to claim that on personal enquiry, he found more aggression against the government in those regions that used American books.[622] Ryerson's responses to local superintendents revealed additional explanations for the books' exclusion: they had been prepared in a selfish and illiberal manner, were in general useless, and their content was unsuitable for Canadian pupils.[623]

This perception of anti-British sentiment is confirmed in a survey of local superintendent and trustee reports. In Kingston, for example, the superintendent agreed with Ryerson about how Morse's Geography gave undue prominence to the United States and 'inculcated on the minds of American youth the great lesson of fidelity to American institutions.'[624] Likewise, in Picham, A. Macdougall wrote to Ryerson that the American books were 'wretched and worthless' and suggested that 'the sooner the books are ostracised, the better.'[625] A few weeks later he wrote again that 'the books are of the most pernicious tendency, inculcating democratic, and revolutionary principles, disloyalty to the sovereign, and hatred to Britain and British connexions.'[626] Upon visiting a school in the municipality of Caledonia, a visitor wrote to Ryerson that he wished 'to have worthless Yankee books banished, and sound

[620] E. Ryerson, 'Special report on the operations of the Common School Act of 1846, 24 June 1847,' *DHE* vol. 7, p. 104.
[621] Regarding American teachers, concern of their presence declined after 1846 as the tensions between the two countries diminished and with the establishment of a Normal School which produced more Canadian teachers. From 1849 onwards, the hiring of teachers was also left to local authorities who gave Americans the legal right to teach.
[622] E. Ryerson, 'Special report on the operations of the Common School Act of 1846, 24 June 1847,' *DHE* vol. 7, p. 104.
[623] E. Ryerson to G. Hendry, 1 February 1846, *DHE* vol. 6, p. 283-4; E. Ryerson to D. D'Everardo, 30 October 1846, *DHE* vol. 6, p. 283; A. Macdugall of Picton to E. Ryerson, 5 May 1849, AO RG 2-12-6-F9-96.
[624] S. Woods, superintendent of Kingston to E. Ryerson, 16 March 1868 AO RG 2-12-129-33.
[625] A. Macdougall of Picham, Niagara District to E. Ryerson, 3 May 1849, AO RG 2-12-6-96.
[626] A. Macdougall to E. Ryerson, 30 May 1849, AO RG 2-12-6-35.

Canadian ones brought in.'[627] For the townships of North Cayuga, Rainbow and Oneida, the superintendent revealed:

> In a certain school, it was my place to reprove a teacher for permitting his pupils to recite from a worthless American book, a particular dialogue, containing expressions, most obnoxious, to the feelings of all British subjects. Here then arose a case calling for the necessity of putting the law into force against the use of foreign books, and the still further necessity of having a complete uniform set of class books in every common school throughout the lands so as to prevent occurrences such as this.[628]

This superintendent had no problem with importing an entirely new series to supersede those currently being used. Interestingly, a letter from 'a loyal British subject' also alluded to the problem with American teachers and textbooks in his school section:

> In sections where Yankee teachers and books have been adopted, the inhabitants are not only growing anti-British but would in some instances subvert British rule […]. The Yankee has left the impression upon the mind of some of his Canadian pupils that there is nothing great or good but that which emanates from the United States.[629]

Another British view of the subject was provided in an article by Reverend Vaughan who visited the United States and Canada. In his review of the American school readers, histories and geographies, Vaughan remarked:

> Lesson books have a great deal of the Fourth of July tone in them, and impassioned speeches against England are thus made to be familiar to American youth from their childhood […]. It consisted of specimens of oratory concerning the War of Independence, and was singularly well adapted to associate the name of England in the young mind with everything odious in insolence and oppression.[630]

The editor of Toronto's *Patriot and Farmer's Monitor* supported this claim:

> No one acquainted with human nature, and with the influence which the instructor exercises over the mind of the pupil, can deny the position that, if an American educates a child, the child will grow up with a strong American bias, an American that is filthy in his habits, an American that is with a nasal twang in his pronunciation, an American that is a free thinker, or fanatic, in

[627] A.W. of visitor of the municipality of Caledonia to E. Ryerson, 1 May 1861, AO RG 2-12-36-F4/5-2.
[628] Report for the townships of North Cayuga, Rainbow and Oneida, February 1860, AO RG 2-12-29-174.
[629] J. Reavely of Port Robinson to E. Ryerson, 14 July 1862, AO RG 2-12-41-244.
[630] 'Reverend Vaughan report in *British Quarterly Review*, 1865,' *DHE* vol. 19, p. 69.

> religion and an American that is an inveterate hater of the British government in his political opinions.[631]

Teachers agreed with Ryerson that American textbooks contained unfavourable content. For example, Pringle Shaw, who began teaching in 1846, wrote:

> My first Ontario school was a more pretentious affair but not as agreeable […]. All their previous teachers had been Yankees and they had no use for a Bluenose. Their school books were all Yankee and so was their pronunciation. The Geography was Morse's in which Canada was barely alluded to – the arithmetic contained all the currencies in the various states in £, S, D before the […] $ but nothing of Canada or even of England. Their history was of the United States, in which the battle of Lundy's Lane was a grand 'American' victory.[632]

The battle of Lundy's Lane is also known as the battle of Niagara Falls, which took place during the War of 1812 and is still considered one of the deadliest battles fought on Canadian soil.

Meade Wright remembered that the American editions used in his school were 'repugnant to the feelings of any loyal British subject.'[633] Thomas Armstrong of Newbury, reminiscing about his experience, said that the books were deplorable since 'a history that represents England as the aggressor in the War of 1812 is not fit for our public schools.'[634] Similarly, recalling his time as a pupil in Scarborough, David Martin said:

> Almost the only available books on the subject were by American authors – strongly anti-British, conveying the impression (as American publications usually do), that the United States was the greatest and, in fact, almost the only country, or nation, worth mentioning on the face of the earth.[635]

An analysis of the content of the most popular American books used in Canadian schools validates Ryerson's criticisms. For instance, in Olney's *A practical system of modern geography* (1838), the following passage appeared:

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[631] J. Love, 'Anti-American ideology and education reform in 19th century Upper Canada,' in *An imperfect past: education and society in Canadian history*, ed. by D. Wilson (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1984) pp. 170 – 180 (p. 170).
[632] Pringle Shaw, superannuated teacher to G. Hodgins, 5 April 1896, MS 6026.
[633] M. Wright of Throndale, 3 April 1896, MS 914.
[634] T. Armstrong of Newbury, 9 April 1896, MS 6026.
[635] D. Martin, *History of the township of Scarboro, 1796 – 1896*, ed. by D. Boyle (Toronto: William. Briggs, 1896) p. 183.

> The United States are the most interesting and important division of the western continent. They are distinguished for the excellence of their government – the rapid increase of the population – and for the intelligence, industry and enterprise of the inhabitants.[636]

Also by Olney, the elementary geography text classified society into four categories: the savage, half-civilised, civilised and enlightened. Regarding the latter, the lesson concluded with:

> In the enlightened state, men are noted for intelligence, enterprise and industry. The arts and sciences are carried to a high degree of perfection, and all the arrangements of society are in a highly improved form, as in the United States.[637]

Dr. Noah Webster's spelling book, among the first to be used, followed American spelling and pronunciation. The letter Z in the English (British) alphabet is pronounced *zed,* but Webster's taught it as *ze*.[638] In reference to that pronunciation, a letter appeared in the *Kingston Herald* in 1846 that stated 'the instructor of youth, who, when engaged in teaching the elements of the English language, direct them to call the letter *ze*, instead of *zed*, are teaching them wrong.'[639]

According to Bannister (1926), in a book published in Boston and used in the London district, the following questions were included:

> Q. 'What is the best government on earth?'
> A. 'A republican government like that of the United States.'
> Q. 'What is the worst government on earth?'
> A. 'A Monarchical Government like that of England and Canada.'
> Q. 'Will you, if occasion arises, rise up and rebel against such a government as yours and join the States?'
> A. 'Yes, with all my power and influence.'[640]

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[636] J. Olney, *A practical system of modern geography; or, a view of the present state of the world* (New York: Robinson, Pratt & Co., 1838) p. 56.
[637] J. Olney, *An elementary geography: adapted to Olney's outline maps, for common schools and general use* (New York: Pratt and Woodford, 1847) p. 3. Ryerson stated in the ARUC (1847): 'No American geography is more objectionable, in these respects, than Olney's, which has found considerable circulation in Canada, though it contains very little respecting Canada, and that little is, to a great extent, false and slanderous,' *DHE* vol. 7, p. 164.
[638] W. Canniff, *History of the province of Ontario* (Toronto: A.H. Hovey, 1872) p. 333.
[639] Ibid. p. 334.
[640] A. Bannister, *Early educational history of Norfolk County* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1926) p. 46.

Another geography text which was widely used was Morse's Geography. In Wilson's (1970) study of this work he claimed that little space was devoted to Canadian affairs, so that the state of Rhode Island was assigned more space than the study of Ontario and Quebec combined.[641] Based on these examples, it becomes evident why Ryerson and other school promoters wanted to see them prohibited from Canadian schools.

Despite American textbooks being easily acquired through direct railroad routes between New York, Boston and Montreal, they were not authorised. However, this was not because they were American, but because they contained anti-British sentiments. Ryerson wanted a series that embodied common subjects but also gave an objective account of history and geography, a condition that American editions failed to achieve. In fact, with the passage of the 1850 School Act, provision was made for the establishment of public libraries and Ryerson sought help from American publishers to supply book series. He even travelled to the United States to purchase and import books directly to Ontario (see section **7.3.5**.).[642] However, so long as American books contained hostile lessons against Britain, they would remain excluded from the authorised series.

One must also recognise the context in which American books were written. Poor relations between England and the United States were echoed in the curriculum, so that it was only natural for American books to contain themes related to their independence or providing evidence against the British. On the other hand, Ontario's residents were not innocent either. As described in section **4.3**, there had been a longstanding 'anti-American sentiment' in the province, particularly following the War of 1812. Teachers from the United States were targeted for not only spreading anti-British views but for inculcating pupils with incorrect

[641] J. Wilson, 'Common school texts in use in Upper Canada prior to 1845,' in *Papers of the Bibliographical society of Canada* (Toronto, 1970) pp. 36 – 53.
[642] E. Ryerson, 'Circular on the subject of establishing public school libraries in Upper Canada to book sellers in the United States, 27 September 1850,' *DHE* vol. 9, p. 193.

facts or pronunciation. Therefore, the exclusion of American textbooks is intertwined with a much wider historical and political context.

6.4.3.2 Defence Two: Irish Readers for their uniformity, content and widespread use

In defending the Irish Readers, Ryerson focused on two points. First, having a central body to oversee regulations solved the problem of textbook diversity. It ensured a streamlined, universal curriculum. The second advantage of the Irish books was their content. Lessons went from basic texts on truth and morals to more advanced instruction in bookkeeping or linear drawing. Moreover, the Irish series were already widely in use overseas. These explanations were all testaments to their value and acceptability for Ontario.

6.4.3.2.1 Textbook uniformity

In McNab's education report (1845), written by the superintendent appointed during Ryerson's absence in Europe, he described the deficient state of schools because the diversity of textbooks made 'classification in the schools impossible, fritters away the time and paralyses the energies of teachers, represses the ambition and retards the progress of scholars.'[643] At the forefront of introducing only one series of books was the idea that it would address the issue of textbook diversity. The lack of a uniform series was also described by the superintendent in Brock:

> The diversity of books that at present may be found in a school is positively ruinous, an utter waste of time of the teacher. I have generally found four different spelling books in use in the same school and they were used not only as spelling books but also as lesson reading books for the junior classes.[644]

Equally, the superintendent of the Bathurst district maintained that the diversity of books resulted in a loss of time and money for parents:

[643] ARUC 1844-1845, 1 August 1845.
[644] G. Hendry, superintendent of the Brock district, 1 January 1847, MS 915-1.

> I have also been requested, to urge upon the board, the absolute necessity of adopting a uniform system of school books for our common schools; from the multiplicity of school books now in use (English, Scotch, Irish, Canadian & American) the time of the pupil and the labour of the teacher are comparatively thrown away.[645]

Retired teachers recounted similar problems. Joseph Kyle of Little Rideau complained that 'the books were very nearly as varied as the pupils' names.'[646] Kyle also recalled:

> My greatest trouble here was with the books, some old books that had been handed down from their ancestors. [In] my first school I insisted on having the Irish Series of books and also some maps for the school room. I applied to the parents but to no surprise the majority did not see the use of teaching things their fathers never had occasions for […].[647]

There was no question that textbook diversity hindered a streamlined educational system. To augment this argument, Ryerson quoted American experiences at length. The JEUC quoted numerous American educational sources, such as the *Fourth Annual Report in Connecticut*, where the state was experiencing a similar problem of being unable to classify students as a result of textbook diversity.[648] It was common for families to move annually for employment, and a lack of a uniform curriculum meant that when their children relocated, what they had learned in their past school was invalid in their new one.

Ryerson also quoted the report of the Massachusetts Board of Education, which found a central board with responsibility for standardising textbooks to be the best way of improving public instruction:

> The multiplicity of school books, and the imperfection of many of them, is one of the greatest evils at present felt in our common schools. The board know of no way, in which this evil could be more effectually remedied, than by the selection of the best of each class now in use, and a formal recommendation of them by the board of education.[649]

Moreover, the example of Michigan showed the unfavourable results of not having a centralised board to decide on textbooks. In that state, the law permitted school directors to

[645] W. Stewart to E. Ryerson, 1 August 1846, AO RG 2-12-5-28.
[646] J. Kyle, superannuated teacher of Little Rideau to G. Hodgins, 27 April 1896, MS 914.
[647] Ibid.
[648] E. Ryerson, 'Two objections to the School Act Answered,' *JEUC* 3 (1850) 155.
[649] Ibid. p. 153.

meet annually to decide on which books could be used for the year. This meant that not only were new books imposed yearly, at a great expense to parents, but these directors failed to consult with teachers and often favoured particular booksellers.[650] Similarly, in New York, a law passed in 1843 allowed both state and county superintendents to authorise or reject books from school libraries. This resulted in each city endorsing particular books for their jurisdiction, and making no attempt to work with other districts.[651] A lack of control over books meant that publishers could produce and sell a diversity of texts.

The evidence from America showed the importance of appointing a central board to prepare a list of approved books. In Ryerson's ARUC (1849), he wrote:

> All educational writers in the neighbouring states, without exception, as far as I have observed, as well as European educationalists, agree with the New York state superintendent as to the great advantage of uniform textbooks for the schools. The difficulty with our American neighbours has been and still is, the pre-occupation of the grounds by rival publishers and sellers of school books, and the flooding of the whole union, especially the older states, with an endless diversity of books.[652]

In Ontario, the board of education would follow the footsteps of foreign examples. The Council of the University in France, Prussia's Minister of Public Instruction, and the Privy Council Committee of England were all bodies that endorsed textbooks. Unlike in the United States, these central bodies recommended series of books to ensure that only those of superior value were used, which inevitably solved the problem of diversity. In Ontario, although the final choice always remained in the hands of school trustees, they had to select from those books that were endorsed by the board of education.[653]

A survey of incoming letters to the board supports the idea of the curriculum being managed by a central body. This was the case for A. Prestion, who remarked:

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[650] E. Ryerson, 'Two objections to the School Act Answered,' *JEUC* 3 (1850) 155.
[651] E. Ryerson, 'Letter expounding and recommending the original draft of the present school act,' 3 March 1846, *JEUC* (1848) 39.
[652] ARUC 1849, p. 8.
[653] E. Ryerson, 'Fundamental general principles of school legislation,' 3 March 1846, *DHE* vol. 6, p. 73.

> Every person I have spoken to on the subject is decidedly in favour of the control of the school books being lodged in the Central Board at Toronto, not only for the sake of uniformity in the system, but from the character of the individual members of the board whose qualifications must be known to some of the administration.[654]

This was a similar opinion to that of the superintendent in Oxford, who stressed that residents acknowledged the usefulness of the board to secure uniformity and standardise the education system.[655] Moreover, in the report for Preston, the superintendent noted that the inhabitants declared the arrangement advantageous:

> It will be readily admitted that the greatest care should be exercised in the selection of the means, and that especially in matters of such vital importance, as the education of a whole generation, no measure that cannot withstand the test of a close and careful investigation, but which bears evidence of defect on its face, should be protected by the mantle of government.[656]

This was also the view taken by J. Knight, a school inspector in East Victoria who wrote that 'the books are so well selected that it is safer to leave it to the department than to attempt to make a selection at a book store.'[657] Even Canadian politician Francis Hincks, premier of the Province of Canada, agreed that a central board was advantageous:

> In my opinion, a <u>discussion</u>, whether the control over school books etc. should be vested in County Boards of Education or, in the central one in Toronto, would be as it seems to me, an <u>extraordinary</u> discussion firmly believing that <u>ninety nine</u> out of every hundred persons would decide for a uniformity of books as the best system of all for the speedy development of the 'young idea.'[658]

These extracts confirm that many saw the value of a central board to manage textbooks, rather than leaving the selection to local county councils. In doing so, the board ensured uniformity across the country.

[654] A. Prestion to E. Ryerson, 21 January 1850, AO RG 2-12-5-44.
[655] W. McCullough, county superintendent at Picton, *DHE* vol. 9, p. 70.
[656] O. Klotz, superintendent of Preston to E. Ryerson, 12 April 1865, AO RG 2-12-74-9.
[657] J. Knight, 10 July 1873, AO RG 2-12-227-17.
[658] F. Hincks to B. Hayter of Cobourg, 18 March 1850, AO RG 2-12-8-289.

6.4.3.2.2 Content and widespread use

Ryerson defended the importation of the Irish Readers because of their practicality and content. The first lessons dealt with simple forms and sounds of letters, and in time the subject matter proceeded to advanced lessons in astronomy, political history or animal physiology. They also covered reading exercises, poetry, grammar, arithmetic, bookkeeping, geography - all subjects which Ryerson believed to be valuable, as expressed in his Report of 1846 (section **5.3.3**). Lessons built on each other, a feature which would clearly assist in gradation and classification. This chronological curriculum was a huge change. Before that time schools had used whatever books were on hand so that there was no consistency and no order. Even Armour and Ramsay, the first publishers to reproduce the series (see section **6.4.2.3**), wrote in their *Prospectus*:

> In the lessons, which these books contain, there is nothing sectarian; and, hence, they have received the most unequivocal expressions of approbation, from men in every rank of society and who maintain the most opposite and widely differing forms of belief […]. The lessons contained in the Irish National Reading Books rise in interest and importance, from the first to the last; and they possess this very distinguishing and characteristic merit, that, during the whole time the pupil is engaged in learning to read, he is, at the same time, acquiring a knowledge of sound moral principles, and of a vast number of important facts in history, literature and science.[659]

Eventually, teacher candidates at the Provincial Normal Schools used the Irish National Readers exclusively while they were learning how to teach.

Recent studies support the claim that these books were suitable for Canadian schools. In that by Baldus and Kassam (1996), these authors examined the content of the Irish Readers and found values relating to work, kindness to animals and family members, religion and personal character.[660] Regarding moral instruction, a subject that Ryerson emphasised in his

[659] R. Armour and H. Ramsay, 'Pressing necessity for an improved class of school books in Canada, in *Prospectus*, 3 November 1846,' *DHE* vol. 6, p. 276.
[660] B. Baldus and M. Kassam, 'Make me truthful, good, and mild': values in nineteenth-century Ontario schoolbooks,' *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 21 (1996) 3, pp. 327 – 358.

Report of 1846, Martell (1974) found that due to their emphasis on general tenets, they could easily be used in Ontario's schools:

> There was no Canadian content in the *Irish Readers*. They were designed to emphasize a hierarchical view of the universe and of society, as seen through Christianity. There was no reason, within this world view, to create a particular national consciousness. After all, life was an ephemeral affair, and man should concentrate on his relationship with God.[661]

In Graham's (1989) study, he noted that the Irish books avoided controversial matters, and remained denominationally neutral so that their pedagogy was commendable.[662] Similarly, for Repo (1974) these books were pious, conservative, and attempted to defuse conflicts between Catholics and British rulers. They also stressed Bible knowledge and Christian virtues. More poignantly, Repo claimed that they were so successful in ignoring the specifics of the Irish situation that they could be used in any school in British-ruled territory.[663]

In addition, the authorised series were used in various European nations and had been translated into several languages.[664] The Irish National Education report (1847) informed the public that the books had been sent to Australia, British Guinea, Gibraltar, Malta and recently to the Governor of Corfu 'and it is not improbable that they will be translated into the Greek language for the use of children attending schools in the Ionian Islands.'[665] They had also been recommended by Her Majesty's Privy Council Committee on Education, which, according to Ryerson, was 'another good endorsement of the judgment and proceedings of the board of education for Upper Canada in regard to these excellent books.'[666] They were already in use, they could be acquired at a reasonable rate and they

[661] S. Repo, 'From Pilgrim's progress to Sesame Street: 125 years of colonial readers,' in *The politics of the Canadian public school*, ed. by G. Martell (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1974) pp. 118 – 133 (p. 124).
[662] R. Graham, 'The Irish Readers revisited: the power of the text(book),' *Canadian Journal of Education*, 14, (1989) 4, pp. 414 – 426.
[663] S. Repo, 'From Pilgrim's progress to Sesame Street: 125 years of colonial readers,' in *The politics of the Canadian public school*, ed. by G. Martell (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1974) pp. 118 – 133.
[664] The *New York Observer* remarked: 'the National school books of the Dublin Board of Education have been recommended by Her Majesty's Privy Council Committee on Education,' *JEUC* 2 (1849) 48.
[665] *Fourteenth Report of Commissioners of National Education in Ireland*, 1847 (Dublin: Alexander Thom, 1848) p. 7.
[666] Editorial Remark, *JEUC* 2 (1849) 48.

assisted with gradation and classification in schools; for these three reasons, Ryerson recommended them for Ontario. Moreover, they also addressed the problem of textbook diversity. It was not only Ryerson who saw this issue as problematic; the view was shared by superintendents, trustees and teachers.

As discussed above, in 1846 the Irish Readers became the authorised curriculum. They had been prepared by the most experienced teachers in England, Ireland and Scotland, and they were unanimously supported by public authority and accepted by both Protestant and Catholic authorities (see section **5.3.3**).[667] Moreover, Ryerson's decision to import them into Canada was supported by numerous officials, including his deputy superintendent George Hodgins and the president of the Baptist College in Montreal. Even Reverend Adamson of Christ Church (Montreal) was happy with their introduction, having used them to instruct his own children.[668]

6.4.4 The Irish National Readers in Ontario's common schools

As with any significant change, the Irish Readers received mixed reviews. Despite issues relating to copyright, republishing and purchasing or the exclusion of American editions, a survey of incoming correspondence to the department of education shows that in general they were favourably received.[669] The series helped the teachers in their instruction and were

[667] 'Selection of the national books for Canadian schools,' *JEUC* 13 (1860) 35.
[668] Hodgins was first to admit that the books' ability to promote inter-denominational unity 'imbued with the purest principles, and embrac[ing] the whole range of topics' resulted in their being the textbook of choice, G. Hodgins, 'Machinery of the System,' *DHE*, vol. 6 p. 204. Others who supported the books were W. Agar Adamson of Christ Church (Montreal) who had even used them to instruct his own children and J. Camp of Baptise College: 'it is the peculiar excellence of this series of lessons, that it is a storehouse of facts and truths with which all ought to be acquainted. Formerly, children were taught words rather than things: these lessons teach things rather than words. The information they contain is highly interesting and instructive, and the style is distinguished for perspicuity,' 4 and 13 December 1844, AO RG 2-12-5-F11-39.
[669] H. Clifford, superintendent of Simcoe, 1 February 1848, *JEUC* 1 (1848) 115.

well adapted to impart important lessons.[670] The school superintendent of Prince Edward confirmed the advantageous results in his county:

> The admirable series of reading books published by the Irish National Board are coming into extensive use in this district. Wherever they have been introduced they have, I believe, given satisfaction; they are calculated to improve the head as well as the mind – to render knowledge attractive to the scholar, and to facilitate the labour of the teacher; many of the books, indeed, might be read with advantage by children of a larger growth.[671]

The report from George Duck, the Western district superintendent, also affirmed that the books assisted with the traditional problem of textbook diversity:

> The Irish National Series of School Books are becoming very popular in this district; I think they will increase in favour, and gradually supply the place of the older books as soon as new copies are required. The most intelligent teachers in this district generally concur in a favourable opinion of them; and they all are alive to the advantage of having a uniform system in this respect, instead of the old method of providing the children with books as multiplied difficulties in the way of the teacher, and defied all attempts at classification.[672]

Similarly, remarking on the series, George Hodgins wrote in the JEUC: 'how different is such a series of books, systematically and properly arranged, from the common hodge-podge miscellanies which pass under the name of school readers; and how much will be saved both in money and improvement, by the use of such a series!'[673]

Newspapers also supported Ryerson's efforts to create textbook uniformity. Stratford's *Perth County News* and Windsor's *The Canada Oak* both praised Ryerson's labours in introducing a uniform series of books. In the *Christian Guardian*, allusion was made to the new and effective books, so that 'if any system could be successful in Ireland, and we cannot doubt the figures given, then there is little cause for despair should such a system be introduced

[670] No name of Gwillinsbury to E. Ryerson, 9 June 1857, AO RG 2-12-23-208; I. Finlayson, 'Report of the townships of Waterloo, Nelson, Wellesley and Peel,' 5 March, AO RG 2-12-12-710; B. Hayter, superintendent of Newcastle district, ARUC 1847, p. 22.
[671] T. Donnelly, superintendent of Prince Edward County, ARUC 1847, p. 21.
[672] ARUC 1848, *DHE* vol. 8, p. 102.
[673] G. Hodgins, 'The Series of National Readers,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 337.

into Canada.'[674] In the *London Advertiser* an article headed 'Early school days' recounted that great improvements were made by the introduction of the Irish Series.[675]

Perhaps the best judges of the Irish books were those who used them. Teachers' accounts offer valuable evidence as to how the books improved uniformity while also imparting useful information.[676] For instance, J. Palmer of Witby recalled that the Irish Readers were generally used in all the schools in his section.[677] This was also confirmed by R. Campbell who taught in the township of Augusta.[678] Benjamin Shirreff, who emigrated from Scotland in 1834 and attended the Toronto Normal School, remembered how the Irish Series were enjoyed in both common and grammar schools.[679] Progress was also documented by Patrick O'Meard: 'there was a big improvement in the short time because the Irish national school books were used so then I could classify the children committed to my care.'[680] Charles Clark, who commenced teaching in 1846, introduced the Irish books two years later:

> I was teaching in the township of Binbrook then; the scholars had two or three different Readers, one of them was by Mr. Thornton, superintendent of the District. I got the Irish National Readers and gave a book to each scholar. The most of them paid me for them. I believe the First National Readers were used in almost every school after that time.[681]

Patrick O'Sullivan, who taught for over twenty-five years after leaving Ireland in 1845, recalled using them to the extent that 'the Ontario school system is now as perfect as that of

[674] *Christian Guardian*, 23 February 1853, AO RG 2-27-197-0-2-59.
[675] The *London Advertiser*, 19 April, MS 914.
[676] The following correspondences refer to the Irish books in their schools: R. Richmond of Peterborough, 13 April 1896, MS 6026; J. DeCatillon of Dublin (Perth county), 19 May 1896, MS 6026; A. Forbes or Marshall (Minnesota), 13 April 1896, MS 6026; R. Hamilton, of Loughboro (Frontenac county) n.d MS 6026; E. Hopkins of London, 9 April 1896; N. Jarvis of Halls Mills (Westminster county), 1852, MS 6026; D. O'Keenan of Cache Bay, 14 April 1896; MS 6026; H. Lucas of Port Percy, 2 May 1896, MS 6026; J. Mackay of Kitty (county of Leeds), 6 April 1896, MS 6026; R. Campbell of Kemptville, 14 April 1896, MS 6026; E. Richard of Cavan, 13 April 1896; MS 6026; E. Hopkins of London, 9 April 1896; MS 6026; W. Bradley of Restonle, 3 April 1896, MS 914; F. Costello of Osceola, 18 April 1896, MS 914; M. Murray of Wardsville, 1896, MS 914; S. Perry , n.d. MS 914; J. DeCantillon of Dublin Perth County, 19 May 1896, MS 6026; H. Dugdale of Kingston, 22 April 1896, MS 6026.
[677] J. Palmer of Whitby, 9 April 1896, MS 6026.
[678] R. Campbell, 14 April 1896, MS 6026.
[679] B. Shirreff, April 1896, MS 6026.
[680] P. O'Mead, superannuated teacher of Fallowfield to G. Hodgins, 7 April 1896, MS 6026.
[681] C. Clark, 8 April 1896, MS 6026.

any other country in the world and is, I think, much better than the Irish school system.'[682] The comparison that O'Sullivan made between Ontario and Ireland argued favourably for the Canadian example. George McBride, who began teaching in 1864 in Davis Corner, regarded the Irish series 'as the best we have ever had in the schools.'[683] Mr. Pegg, recounting his experience in Norfolk, said these books:

> Gave a great impetus to education. The fifth book of the series was, I think, one of the best text books ever used in our schools: its Jewish and Ancient History were explained in a brief, concise and comprehensive manner, while there were enough animal and vegetable physiology to give a pupil a good idea of the subject and inspire him with a desire to know more.[684]

Retired teacher John McNamara wrote that the Irish Readers continued to be used until 1870 and were 'the best of their day.'[685]

Another teacher, who taught in the township of London in 1849, wrote extensively about religious instruction in schools. His view of the textbooks in use before the Irish Readers confirms precisely the features that Ryerson attempted to address:

> One of our great troubles was in almost every section. The first settlers brought along books from home which had been used by them and their fathers before them there […] and each parent stood up for his own, declaring it to be the best. Mavor's spelling book was very common but we had also Webster's, Carpenter's and others and had to use them all. It was a great relief when the Irish National school books were introduced and all others forbidden.[686]

Mary Bates, who took up her up first position at the Prince Albert Public School in 1863, recalled that 'the reading books were of the Irish National Series, the 1st book being in sheets pasted on tablets that hung around the room except those in immediate use, these had their places on 'a stand.''[687]

[682] P. O'Sullivan, teacher from Kinkora to G. Hodgins, 13 June 1896, MS 6026.
[683] G. McBride of Davis Corner, 17 April 1896, MS 914.
[684] M. Pegg of Norfolk to G. Hodgins, *DHE* vol. 4, p. 321.
[685] J. McNamara of Seaforth to G. Hodgins, 2 April 1896, MS 914.
[686] Anonymous (county of Middlesex) to G. Hodgins, 16 April 1896, MS 6026.
[687] M. Bates to G. Hodgins, n.d. MS 914.

In 1867, a Canadian series of books eventually replaced the Irish one. However, this should not be viewed as a response to discontent about foreign books, but the reaction to a natural change in times. By mid-century Ontario, and indeed Canada as a whole, had transformed. The nation now had its own histories, struggles and successes, and even the birth of a distinctive currency. Students should not be learning to count in pounds, shillings and pence when dollars and cents were used in everyday life. Likewise, pupils ought to be instructed on the Canadian Confederation (1867), which had altered the geography and political structures of the country.

When the Canadian series superseded the Irish edition, teachers' accounts mostly preferred the old version. Yeo Peters, who commenced teaching in 1860 in the county of Durham, described the Irish books favourably:

> The books in use at that time were the old Irish National Readers, and though not as suitable as modern ones for teaching reading, they contained a vast amount of information (much behind the times in some departments) in general history, geology, geography, natural history, political economy, and Bible lessons, etc.; and as books were scarce in those days, they were studied well for what might be learned from them.[688]

The process of replacing the Irish books with a Canadian edition was described by William Scott: 'in early times we used the Irish National Readers – and were sorry to part with some lessons in them – change was needed and with them some of the good was swept away.'[689] A similar sentiment also appeared in a letter from James Young, who taught in the county of Wellington for forty years:

> The reading books then used were the Irish National Series. These certainly needed some adaptation to make them suitable for Canadian schools, but they contained a large amount of Scripture, History, and useful information which must have been beneficial to those who studied them.[690]

Importing the Irish National Readers was a precarious affair and it could hardly be expected that all residents would be happy with this initiative. Disposing of their current textbooks and

[688] Y. Peters of the country of Durham, n.d. MS 914.
[689] W. Scott, n.d. MS 914.
[690] J. Young of Wellington, 16 April 1896, MS 914.

acquiring new ones would have been costly, and many would have resented only being able to purchase those books on an official list. Despite these issues, the Irish textbooks remained those approved in Ontario schools for nearly twenty years. They had been sanctioned by the board of education in Ireland, were already in use in several nations, and assisted with classification and gradation. Their content was also commendable, encompassing the basics to more advanced studies. The annual report of W. Rath, from around the time when the Irish books would soon be discontinued, strikes a nostalgic note:

> Many teachers part with the Irish National Readers with regret. I have become familiar with those chiefly used in the state of New York and in the Western states, but, in the mass of valuable information contained, have seen none to compare with the Irish National Series […]. These books were extensively read by parents as well as children, and have been the means of causing a great deal of history to be taught that would not have been taught without them. In this way they have done good service.[691]

Once the Irish books were used in schools, people realised that their content was valuable and that they helped properly classify students. In that respect, Ryerson successfully imported foreign books to a new context.

6.4.5 Internalised foreign examples: concluding remarks

The Common School Act of 1846 resulted in a wave of discussion regarding educational matters. Like any new law, opinions were diverse, and many aspects required lengthy clarifications to render them acceptable. However, what was consistent was that those who criticised the features of the bill, such as the duties prescribed for the superintendent and the board of education, the injustice of free schools or the injunction to throw away old books, were often misinformed about the reasons why these elements had become law, or how they had become valuable features of foreign educational systems. Taken as a whole, Ryerson's

[691] W. Rath, superintendent of Ellice, Logan, Hibbert, Fullarton and Blanchard to E. Ryerson, 3 April 1869, AO RG 2-12-145-21.

measures enabled a centralised system of school management but simultaneously accepted the autonomous efforts of the people.

Moreover, educational reforms are always inextricably connected with political, economic and social realities at a number of levels. The rapid expansion of cities, population movements and changes in demographics impinged on and became part of the perception of educational restructuring. The criticisms voiced, particularly in the press, illustrated this huge alteration and the fear that was generated: control went from the local level to the state, from religious exclusivity to moral tolerance. Ryerson's new school law dramatically altered education by tightening the guidelines governing everything from the board down to the trustees and the teacher. However, the law did not set out to impose; the aim was merely to regulate. Ryerson addressed the public by communicating through the JEUC, ARUC, circulars and letters. He defended the school law and justified the fact that these elements were not novel, but instead were the amalgamation of best practices borrowed from foreign policies, finely tuned for the local context. Ryerson's initiatives improved the failures of former school bills and, most importantly, they were highly regarded by others.

Chapter Seven Part I

Lessons learned

The poor man's childher' don't dasarve to get an eddycation for fear they should know too much, and have a chance of getting into the Crown Lands, or be made a Cornel or a member of Parlyment, may be.

P. Kelly, *Guide*, 26 September 1859 [692]

One great obstacle was, that, as Canadians, we have not thought enough of ourselves, we have undervalued our institutions, and undervalued the character of the people of the country. It wants self-reliance and enterprise to develop the resources of the country, and if such were excited, Canada would be placed on a level, if not on an eminence above every state on the continent.

The North American, 1853 [693]

I have sought to act in accordance with the wishes of the representatives of the people, and to promote most economically and efficiently, to the best of my humble ability, the educational interests of my native country.

Egerton Ryerson, 1868 [694]

[692] Paddy Kelly, parent to the editor of the *Guide*, 26 September 1859.
[693] *The North American*, 18 February 1853, AO RG 2-27-197-0-2-57.
[694] E. Ryerson, *Acts of the chief superintendent explained and vindicated* (Toronto: Hunter and Rose, 1868) p. i.

7.1.1 Lessons learned

The nineteenth century is a period of lively interest for an investigation of the mechanisms of education systems around the world. Ryerson certainly fits that category of individuals who travelled to learn about foreign features. In analysing incoming correspondence to the department of education, minutes of meetings and the local popular press, in conjunction with material on the history of education and educational policy borrowing, this thesis has investigated people's perceptions of the use of foreign examples and their internalisation in the 1846 Common School Act. The features Ryerson recommended for that school bill were influenced by foreign examples, but these were adapted to fit the Canadian context.

However, extensive archival research has also brought to light two other noteworthy phenomena. These were not initially part of the research questions; they were only discovered while reviewing the documents. Firstly, it became apparent that Ryerson played a significant role in transforming systems of education in foreign nations and other Canadian provinces. Within the thousands of sources at Archives Ontario, letters from foreign nationals, policy makers and teachers not only requested provincial documents, but also sought guidance. This reverse cross-national attraction is fascinating to review, since it had originally been Ryerson who sought advice from foreigners in devising his scheme of public instruction. This phenomenon therefore extends the question: to what degree did Ontario influence education in the United States, Europe, Australia and other Canadian provinces?

Secondly, in conceptualising education in nineteenth century Ontario, it became apparent that current frameworks and theories have failed to address the complete dynamics of the process. In the context of policy transfer, what role do secondary policy officials, teachers and unions have during the decision making process or at the implementation stage? Is it still 'policy borrowing' when the ideas or initiatives transpired in many countries, or when similar features were already present within the local context? Moreover, it became clear that

many issues that were faced by Ontario residents were not exclusive to the Canadian context, but were also being discussed worldwide. Changes in society, particularly crime and juvenile delinquency forced school promoters to look again at the relationship between the nation and public education. In the following two sub-sections, these 'lessons learned' will be discussed.

Chapter Seven Part II

Cross-national attraction and Ontario's influence abroad

I congratulate you on the state of your schools generally in Canada. In this Western Country, education is a sham – like the rivers, swift, shallow and muddy. Parental control is something these Western Yankees seem never to have heard of; and consequently the schools are wretched […]. Children here do just what they please […]. I hope Canadians will have wisdom enough not to cross the lines. This country is built on "gas."

John May of Nebraska, 1870 [695]

Canada's progress in educational matters had greatly astonished every one, and the United States, instead of looking across the ocean for help, should get it from her immediate neighbor.

A.Morris, Australian commissioner 1876 [696]

I was familiar with the system of National Education in Ireland but I think our Canadian system is preferable and superior in all its convenients.

Retired teacher D. Jordan, 1896 [697]

[695] J. May of Freemont (Nebraska) to E. Ryerson, June 1870, AO RG 2-12-162-5.
[696] G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 25.
[697] D. Jordan, retired teacher of Iroquois, 1896, MS 6026.

7.2.1 Introduction

Up to this point, this thesis has focused on which foreign educational examples Ryerson praised and what people thought of those initiatives. However, reversing the analysis and looking at foreign perceptions of Ontario's policies and procedures is equally fascinating. Did foreigners travel to investigate the province's initiatives? What kind of material did they acquire? Did Ontario's system of education influence other nations' policies? In this section, a review of how Ontario's system of education became an important resource for foreign educationalists will be provided.

Firstly, Ryerson's Report of 1846, ARUC, *A special report on the systems and state of popular education on the continent of Europe, in the British Isles, and the United States of America: with practical suggestions for the improvement of public instruction in the Province of Ontario* (1868) and the JEUC were requested worldwide.[698] Receipts revealed that some officials were not just interested in learning about public instruction through these documents, but they sought to emulate their practices, such as Toronto's Normal School. Next, I will describe Ontario's inclusion in the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, the same year that Ryerson retired as superintendent. Not only did the province's exhibit receive several awards, but it resulted in foreign officials purchasing materials to be shipped to their own nations. To conclude, I will demonstrate that historical sources point to Ontario influencing the educational infrastructure of other nations. It is precisely this reverse cross-

[698] The Archives of Ontario contains receipts from the following state superintendents: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kansas, California, District of Columbia, Colorado, Nevada and Arkansas. The following city superintendents requested the *ANUC*: Worcester, Cambridge, Springfield and Boston (Massachusetts), New Haven and Hartford (Connecticut), New York, Buffalo, Albany, Rochester, Ogdensburg, Brooklyn (New York), Detroit (Michigan), Providence (Rhode Island), Philadelphia, Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania), Baltimore (Maryland), Washington (DC), Columbus and Cleveland (Ohio), Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Chicago (Illinois), Portland (Maryland), San Francisco and Sacramento (California). There is also evidence that the following institutions sought copies of Ryerson's reports: R. Emery, principle of Iowa State University, 14 April 1864 AO RG 2-12-62-19; M. Cavan of Knox College to G. Hodgins, 30 November 1876, AO RG 2-12-321-12; M. Scribner, publisher of *Scribner's Monthly* (New York) to G. Hodgins, 21 November 1872, AO RG 2-12-205-24; A. Barnes, publisher of the *National Teacher's Monthly* (New York) to G. Hodgins, 11 January 1875, AO RG 2-12-267-1.

national attraction that makes Ontario's policies, programmes and procedures such an interesting case to study.

7.2.2 Praise of Ryerson's reports and circulars

Letters from foreign educationalists provide a favourable account of Ryerson's general reports. Regarding the Report of 1846, New York's *Monthly Journal* remarked: 'we have read this report with much gratification. It is methodically arranged and well written, presenting a system of instruction matured by close observation and sound thought.'[699] The *Liverpool Mercury* commented on Ryerson's annual report, noting that it 'furnishes gratifying evidence of the progress of the common school system established in that section of the province under the direction of Dr. Ryerson.'[700] That same newspaper went on to say:

> The report of the superintendent of education for Upper Canada has just been published, and affords most satisfactory evidence of progress. Perhaps there is no more perfect system in existence in the world than that in operation there – certainly, none on this continent. This gratifying state of things has been the product of some five or six years of unwearied and well-directed labour by Mr. Ryerson.[701]

In Chicago, a note of thanks was sent in receipt of Ryerson's annual report of 1857 which contained information that the writer had failed to find elsewhere.[702] This individual also mentioned that he had visited the Toronto institute in 1854 and met with Dr. Ormiston, then the master at the Toronto Normal School (1853 to 1857). There are also notes from D. Carry, a local superintendent in Connecticut, and the superintendent of public instruction in Michigan who was going to have all of Ryerson's reports bound 'as valuable permanent documents for this office.'[703]

[699] '*District School Journal* (New York),' June 1848 in *JEUC* 1 (1848) 176.
[700] *Liverpool Mercury* (Liverpool, England), 7 July 1854.
[701] *Liverpool Mercury*, 23 January 1855.
[702] A. Wells, Tribute Building, Chicago, 4 October 1876, AO RG 2-12-317-9.
[703] D. Carry, superintendent of schools (Connecticut) to G. Hodgins, 18 January 1861, AO RG 2-12-34-372; C. Stebbins, superintendent of public instruction (Michigan), 9 November 1861, AO RG 2-12-38-77.

In addition, an anonymous letter was sent to Ryerson which stated how 'your own publications are actually better than ours in Pennsylvania at least, most cheerfully use yours until ours can be so much improved that they will compare favourably with any works of the kind published on this continent.'[704] Also in Pennsylvania, state superintendent Charles R. Coburn was 'thankful and pleased' to have received the annual school reports. He requested additional copies for his own records before his retirement.[705] In Illinois, William Powell, the first elected superintendent of education in that state, considered Ryerson's text the 'most valuable document of the year.'[706] In Australia, Rob Kay, secretary of the South Australian Institute in Adelaide, equally believed that they were 'valuable editions[s] to the library.'[707] He, too, requested copies of previous reports for the institution's archives.

A complimentary letter was written by C. Goodrich, a professor at Yale College and son-in-law of Dr. Webster, the author of Webster's American Dictionary. Goodrich wrote to Ryerson to ask whether he and the teachers at the Normal School would edit a book he was about to publish. He also congratulated the chief superintendent on Ontario's educational advancement:

> I have spent considerable time in studying your system of school education through these documents, and am much struck with its comprehensiveness and wisdom. It appears to me one of the most perfect which has ever been devised in any country. In reading these documents, I find everywhere the most striking evidence of the energy, judgement, and perseverance with which the system is carried out by your Department of Public Instruction […]. Upper Canada is fortunate indeed in having such a man at the head of her educational department; and in enjoying the labours of others associated with him in carrying out the details of so large and complicated a system. I have rarely seen any documents which carry with them more unquestionable proofs of talent, fidelity and diligence.[708]

[704] No name of Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) to E. Ryerson, 5 October 1865, AO RG 2-12-80-13.
[705] C. Coburn (1863 – 1866), Department of common schools (Harrisburg) to E. Ryerson, 11 November 1863, AO RG 2-12-52-102.
[706] N. Powell, superintendent of public instruction (Illinois) to E. Ryerson, 12 January 1859, AO RG 2-12-26-86.
[707] R. Kay, secretary of the South Australian Institute to E. Ryerson, 16 May 1864, AO RG 2-12-116-5.
[708] C. Goodrich, professor at Yale College to T. Hodgins, 2 March 1854, AO RG 2-12-17-406.

Goodrich also commmended Ryerson in his responses to Michael Power, the bishop of Toronto. Power was a passionate advocate of the Catholic school system. He and Ryerson were embroiled in many lengthy discussions, and Goodrich felt that the superintendent had responded to the bishop in an appropriate, dutiful manner.

Specific reference was also made to Ryerson's *Special Report* (1868). This comprehensive document, written following Ryerson's fourth tour in Europe and the United States, recorded educational laws, facilities, statistics and historical sketches. Receipts within the Archives confirm that individuals within Canada and England, France, Japan, Australia, Russia and Tasmania either requested the document or commented favourably about its content.[709] Furthermore, the newly-appointed superintendent of the Military College of Egypt asked Ryerson to send this book as a reference as he began his career.[710] O. Robinson, of Dartmouth College (New Haven), proclaimed that the report should be read by anyone concerned with education.[711] In North Carolina, H. Shaw alluded to the way in which this document would aid him in framing legislation:

> Feeling that our common schools afford the best opportunity to raise the moral, political and social standard of communities of our Commonwealth, I am giving my attention especially to the study of their methods and systems which are proving most successful, and infer that your report will greatly aid me in doing this.[712]

Likewise, Ryerson received a note from A. Rickoff, the superintendent in Ohio:

> I read a copy of a document issued by yourself, containing some account of the school systems and methods of instruction prevailing in these states and I believe also on the continent of Europe. Unfortunately this document has been taken from my office […]. The purpose of this letter is to request that

[709] J. Graham (New Brunswick) to E. Ryerson, 30 September 1869, AO RG 2-12-152-18S. Quarterly (New Brunswick) to E. Ryerson, 28 November 1870, AO RG 2-12-167-11; J. Gross, superintendent of public schools (New Jersey) to E. Ryerson, 23 September 1871, AO RG 2-12-176-8; W. Class, superintendent of public instruction (Indianapolis) to E. Ryerson, 25 September 1865, AO RG 2-12-80-19; E. White, office of the state school commission (Ohio) to G. Hodgins, 17 February 1863, AO RG 2-12-72-25; J. Eaton, commissioner of Bureau of Education (Washington) to E. Ryerson, 25 March 1872, AO RG 2-12-51-9; R. Idewra, Japanese commissioner, to E. Ryerson, 30 November 1876, AO RG 2-12-321-2; [Illegible], National Education Office (Australia) to E. Ryerson, 29 September 1857, AO RG 2-12-23-792; J. Pigg, teacher from Liverpool (England) to W. Ormiston, 4 April 1861, AO RG 2-12-36-84.
[710] D. Boyd, superintendent of the Military College of Egypt to E. Ryerson, June 1873, AO RG 2-12-281-7.
[711] O. Robinson of Dartmouth College (New Haven) to E. Ryerson, 22 March 1869, AO RG 2-12-145-1.
[712] H. Shaw of Concord (North Carolina) to E. Ryerson, 28 July 1869, AO RG 2-12-150-4.

> another copy be sent to me at whatever expense may be necessary. Many years ago while superintendent of common schools in Cincinnati I had your first work of this kind, and made copious use it in my report […] on retiring as I supposed, from public school work, I gave it to the public library. Can I obtain another copy? I should value it highly.[713]

In October 1870, J. Eaton, commissioner of education in Washington, wrote to Ryerson requesting an additional copy of his *Special Report*:

> You will remember my desire to put into this bureau a copy of all your publications. If you can furnish me such a set, I am sure that it will be specially useful and that many educators will be obliged. I have long contemplated with great interest the effect of your life and efforts upon the institutions and civilization of your province and have desired that our people should have the benefit of a statement of the leading facts in it. Has any such statement been made? If there has not been, could I obtain a brief one which I could use in an article (which I desire for my Report) on education in Upper Canda, its origin, progress and results?[714]

Years later, Eaton sent two more letters to Ryerson explaining that he was in the company of F. Tanaka, the commissioner of education in Japan. Tanaka was so impressed with Ryerson's report that he wished to obtain a copy for his own records.[715] In May 1872, Eaton wrote again to Ryerson, requesting an additional copy to give to a master in Ireland:

> Rev. Dr. Porter of Belfast College, Ireland, has just been in with Prof Henry of the Smithsonian, asking some questions which are so well answered in your 'Special report on the systems and state of popular education on the continent of Europe, British Isles and the US,' a copy of which I showed him that he desired one for himself and I write to say that [if] you can send a copy here to my address […] I shall be happy to place it in his possession.[716]

One may infer from Eaton's letter, in addition to those above, that Ontario's system of education was not only discussed abroad, but that also many found the reports from the department useful in their diffusion of public instruction. Moreover, receipts in the archives indicate that further correspondences took place between Henry of the Smithsonian and

[713] A. Rickoff of Cleveland (Ohio) to E. Ryerson, 22 February 1871, AO RG 2-12-170-1.
[714] J. Eaton, Bureau of Education (Washington) E. Ryerson, 8 October 1870, AO RG 2-12-165-20.
[715] J. Eaton to E. Ryerson, 25 March 1872, AO RG 2-12-51-9-192-10; J. Eaton to E. Ryerson, 25 March 1872 AO RG 2-12-192-25;
[716] J. Eaton to E. Ryerson, 4 May 1872, AO RG 2-12-194-5.

Eaton of Washington, describing a proposed pedagogical museum in Washington. These discussions will be presented in section **7.2.7.2**.

7.2.3 Admiration of Ontario's *Journal of Education for Upper Canada*

Incoming letters to the department equally praised the JEUC. The purpose of the journal was to provide an array of articles on topics such as education in Ontario and abroad, suggestions for teachers, monthly meteorological reports and departmental notices. Regarding its content, the *New York Commercial Advertiser* stated:

> The enlightened, liberal views which distinguish this monthly, and the editor's ardent devotion to the cause of education, have given to the 'Journal of Education' a wide and beneficial influence. Dr. Ryerson is the chief superintendent of schools for Upper Canada, and has already achieved much in that sphere. We often find evidence in his pages that he has closely studied the American system of education, and that his active mind is alive to every improvement that can be introduced into the schools under his charge.[717]

Also from New York, the *Methodist Quarterly Review* stated:

> We have been greatly gratified with monthly visits, for the last quarter, from the 'Journal of Education for Upper Canada,' published at Toronto and edited by Rev. Dr. Ryerson. It is conducted with great spirit and ability, and its pages abound in indications that the common school system is taking deep root in Upper Canada.[718]

The editor of the *Ohio Journal of Education* said: 'We most heartily wish that every citizen of Ohio could read this report; there might then be some hope that we should be stimulated to secure, for our own sake, a school system of similar efficiency.'[719] These remarks reveal gratitude for Ryerson's efforts and the usefulness of the publication.

[717] New York *Commercial Advertiser*, 19 January 1850.
[718] New York *Methodist Quarterly Review*, January 1850, p. 163.
[719] 'Opinions on the system of education in Upper Canada – Ohio Journal of Education,' *JEUC* 6 (1853) 24.

Incoming correspondence to the department show that many individuals as well as institutions also requested the journal.[720] These include C. Fowley, the principal of Santa Clara Public School (California), and O. Fitzgerald, the superintendent of public schools in that state. Fitzgerald served in his position for four years and was instrumental in the establishment of the University of California.[721] Likewise, the secretary of the South Australian Institute 'gave thanks for this valuable addition to the public collections of the colony', and Reverend Kirkly of Minnesota wrote: 'I wish we were nearer to you that we might share with Canada in her educational advantages.' He also requested all previous editions of the journal, specifically for teachers, to help 'strengthen their hands in their tiring but important employment.'[722] Kirkly's note equally congratulated Ryerson on his successes.

Joseph Henry, as previously discussed in reference to John Eaton, was the secretary and later the director of the Smithsonian Institute of Washington. He wrote to Ryerson: 'I think your journal [is] a valuable addition to the literature of education and hope it meets with a liberal patronage in the United States as well as in Canada.'[723] There are a number of receipts located in the archives that verify that Henry continued to receive the journal and the ARUC for several years.

The attraction of the Canadian journal even extended as far as India. The principal of the Thomason College of Civil Engineering (India), R. Maclagan, asked for back copies for his own collection. Of even more interest is the fact that Maclagan explains that he had actually visited Toronto in 1850, and had been introduced to Ryerson courtesy of W. Steward Reid, Director of Public Instruction in the North West Provinces.[724] The fact that this individual

[720] The JEUC was also requested by the Office of Mills and Company who specialised in map publishing in Des Moines, Iowa, J. Elby of Des Moines to G. Hodgins, 4 August 1872, AO RG 2-12-164-17; S. Fellows of Iowa State University to G. Hodgins, 5 November 1870, AO RG 2-12-166-15;
[721] C. Fowley of Santa Clara (California) to G. Hodgins, 14 December 1870, AO RG 2-12-168-5; O. Fitzgerald, superintendent of public instruction (California) to E. Ryerson, 23 March 1871, AO RG 2-12-170-88.
[722] R. Kay, Secretary of the South Australian Institute to E. Ryerson, 18 January 1873, AO RG 2-12-232-11; W. Kirkly of Red River Scott (Minnesota) to E. Ryerson, 10 February 1858, RG 2-12-24-474.
[723] J. Henry of the Smithsonian Institute to G. Hodgins, 18 June 1855, AO RG 2-12-19-360.
[724] R. Maclagan, Principal of Thomason College (Bengal) to E. Ryerson, 25 June 1859, AO RG-2-12-26-1251.

visited Toronto and praised its features, and the wider reality that dialogue occurred amongst many educationalists, further indicates the instance of cross-national attraction in education during the nineteenth century.

Lastly, the famous American educationalist Henry Barnard not only praised the periodical but gave suggestions about its format:

> Why do you not have a minute topical index prepared for your Journal of Education, from Vol. I. to XXI? It is so full of the history, the principles, the methodology, the biography, and literature generally of schools and education. Such an index will make your sets valuable, not only to your own scholars, teachers, and statesmen, but to educationalists everywhere. It is a monument of intelligent and practical editorship.[725]

In Barnard's own *American Journal of Education*, he also wrote about Ryerson's annual report:

> We know not where to point to the evidence of more substantial improvement in the organization and admistration of a system of public instruction during the last ten years, and to the assurance of still greater progress in education and knowledge during the next ten years.[726]

Several years later, Barnard requested that material in the JEUC be reproduced in his American publication.[727] These requests for previous issues and remarks from foreigners could not have been a more complimentary message for Ryerson and his efforts to educate the people.

[725] E. Ryerson, *Acts of the Chief Superintendent explained and vindicated* (Toronto: Hunter & Rose, 1868) p. 30.
[726] H. Barnard, *American Journal of Education*, vol. 2 (1856) 733.
[727] H. Barnard to E. Ryerson, 26 October 1859: 'I notice in the September number of the Journal of Education plans of a new brick school house for Simcoe County of Norfolk. I should be glad to circuit the same in the December No of the *American Journal of Education*,' AO RG 2-12-27-636.

7.2.4 Interest in the Normal School at Toronto

Foreign letters to the department of education and in the local press also praised the Toronto Normal School. According to one American, the establishment in that city had 'the honour of being the Pioneer Normal School in the Western hemisphere.'[728] *The Morning Post* of London (England) noted: 'at Toronto, the Athens of North America, the great features of interest were the very complete and admirable establishment of the Normal schools, and the splendid buildings of the university, and the courts of law.'[729] The JEUC included a note by a Massachusetts teacher who, upon visiting Toronto, left with a favourable impression:

> So much has been written and said of the Prussian system of schools, that well informed teachers have become familiar with most of its prominent features; but a system of education, in some respects more complete and imposing than that of Prussia […], appears to have attracted less general attention among us […]. The Normal School at Toronto is an institution that would be an honour to any country in the world.[730]

The fact that the Canadian schools were compared favourably with those of Prussia is noteworthy. Equally, Ireland's *Belfast News-Letter* emphasised the value of the training institute, especially its efficiency and the fact that teachers received certificates based on their level of qualification.[731] In Ontario, the type of diploma each candidate received (either First, Second or Third) was dependent on their courses of study and their results at a final examination. Also in the Toronto institute, an area within the building held the first publicly-funded museum, whose initial collection was based largely on Ryerson's own artwork and the apparatus he had acquired during his trips to Europe. The property around the building was equally used for a botanical garden, agricultural work and experiments.

[728] H. Murray, 'Extracts from travels,' *JEUC* 8 (1855) 177. Similarly, L. Lefory's letter from Cambridge (England) said that 'the Provincial Normal School occupies a position which can hardly be paralleled in advantage for initiating a better offer of things,' L. Lefory of Hype Park (England) to E. Ryerson, 28 August 1855, AO RG 2-12-19-889.
[729] *The Morning Post*, 31 October 1865.
[730] Massachusetts teacher, *JEUC* 8 (1855) 179.
[731] 'Emigration or no emigration' *Belfast News-Letter* (Belfast, Ireland), 28 May, 1874.

In another example, a former teacher wrote to Ryerson: 'I attended a teacher's institute in the state of Chicago for a short time but Sir I think it was in no way equal to the Normal School of Toronto. I deem it one of the best institutions of Canada for qualifying a person for the responsible duties of teaching.'[732] Ryerson received a letter from Philadelphia in 1876 which remarked: 'a gentleman stated last night that he had visited the Normal School at Toronto, that Dr. Ryerson had explained the school system to him and he did not hesitate to say that he thought it to be the best in the world.'[733] The comparison between the facilities in Chicago and Toronto pointed favourably to the Canadian institution.

Letters within the archives also confirm that people requested resources related to admittance and curriculum. This was the case for an individual from Pennsylvania who sought a complete catalogue of the programme of study, the architecture of the building and the admission procedures.[734] In South Carolina, a correspondent wanted material on the overall organisation:

> I have read the reports of your schools with <u>great</u> interest, and congratulate you upon the services which have come from your efforts […]. I was particularly struck with the remarks […] upon your Normal School. We have an institution of a similar kind in its infancy, and should feel greatly obliged to you, if you could send us a more detailed report of this organisation.[735]

B. Beresford, a representative of the Imperial University of Kazan (Russia), requested information on the Normal School management:

> Being desirous of obtaining information respecting the educational establishment of Canada […] and particularly concerning the Normal Schools […], it is a very great favour if you would furnish me with your last annual reports and any data relative to your excellent and well known institution.[736]

Beresford explains in his letter that he had tried to visit the institute in the summer of 1860 but found that it was not in session. Similarly, the local superintendent in Maine not only

[732] E. Gage to E. Ryerson, 18 March 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-451.
[733] Illegible, Philadelphia to E. Ryerson, 24 June 1876, AO RG 2-12-310-5.
[734] V. Goodwin of Farmer's Valley (Pennsylvania) to E. Ryerson, 28 September 1869, AO RG 2-12-152-12.
[735] M. Gumbe of Charleston (South Carolina) to G. Hodgins, 11 February 1861, AO RG 2-12-34-250.
[736] P. Beresford of Imperial University of Kazan (Russia) to W. Ormiston, 3 October 1860, RG 2-12-32-37.

applauded Ryerson for his efforts but alluded to the fact that he had stopped at the institution beforehand:

> I ask your congratulations, that we have just now for the first time secured the passage of our Act establishing Normal Schools in Maine […]. We had a meagre substitute for them for a year or two, but abandoned them […] for a few terms. Will you have the goodness to send me a set of your documents touching the Normal School of your province which I had the pleasure to visit briefly?[737]

There is also evidence that the secretary of the board of education in Massachussets visited the establishment in Toronto, and subsequently purchased charts and books for the school in his state as they were 'books being preferred to any of the kind published in the United States.'[738] Andrew Rickoff, who was the superintendent of public schools in Cleveland before becoming superintendent of schools in Cincinnati (1864), wrote the following complimentary note:

> Eighteen years ago, I visited your Normal School at Toronto […]. I have to say that the impression then made upon my mind […] has been entirely formable to the plan. I should very much like to see it adapted in this state.[739]

Rickoff also congratulated Ryerson on the province's book depository and wished to have a similar facility set up in Cleveland. Sir Francis Hincks, who was governor in Ontario for twenty years, wrote to Ryerson from his new post in Barbados:

> As to education, in which you will take the greatest interest, all I can say is that my own hopes are centered in getting a good Normal School in humble imitation of yours. I think that all will be well. If we could train good teachers we would have an admirable system […]. I want your advice as to the establishment of this school. Tell me how to go to work to get good men etc. I must have your plan of boarding the Normal School pupils at the public expense, which I think essential. I want to introduce the national books (as you did). Any advice or information will be conductive to good results.[740]

Of interest too is a letter sent to Ryerson in August 1870 by H. Phillips in Mississippi. Originally from Toronto and the son of the principal of the Niagara Grammar School,

[737] E. Preston, superintendent of public schools (Maine) to E. Ryerson, 30 March 1863, AO RG 2-12-47-10.
[738] 'School books going from Canada to the United States,' *JEUC* 8 (1855) 5.
[739] A. Rickoff, superintendent of public instruction (Cleveland) to E. Ryerson, 27 September 1873, AO RG 2-12-233-36.
[740] 'F. Hincks, 31 May 1856,' G. Hodgins, *Ryerson Memorial Volume* (Toronto: Warwick and Sons, 1889) p.27.

Phillips suggests that the Normal School had influenced the facility in his new state: 'I believe that Mississippi is just now adopting a school system framed by a Torontonian and based as far as my recollection goes upon that of Canada.'[741] Within the archives there is also evidence that people from Ireland, England, New York, Illinois and Detroit sought admission to the institute.[742] From New South Wales (Australia), an individual requested information on the curriculum for primary and grammar schools, the teachers' salaries, details of retirement funds and the chances of gaining employment should he arrive in the colony.[743]

Although it was not affiliated with the Normal School, many foreigners were equally impressed with Belleville's Institute for the Deaf and Dumb. This school, established in 1869, was the first provincial facility sanctioned by the government to provide elementary instruction and vocational training for children who were hearing impaired or developmentally delayed. The Archives contain letters from school principals of similar institutes in Baltimore and North Carolina seeking information on its curriculum and admissions process.[744] A memo from Ohio revealed that the author had learned of the Belleville facility during a visit to New York and 'saw some good illustrated lessons which I desire to procure for our school.'[745] A professor in New York also requested information on the school to be forwarded to his friend in Liverpool (England).[746] The attention that these

[741] H. Phillips of Crystal Springs (Mississippi) to E. Ryerson, August 1870, AO RG 2-12-164-23.
[742] R. Colborn, Irish teacher in Kingston (ON) to E. Ryerson, 6 March 1872 AO RG 2-12-190-73; J. Wright, teacher at Starky Seminary (New York) to E. Ryerson, 9 February 1872, AO RG 2-12-188-4; W. Dexter, Englishman teaching in Peotone (Illinois) to E. Ryerson, 14 February 1874, AO RG 2-12-245-9; T. Snowden, teacher from London (England) to E. Ryerson, 17 November 1873, AO RG 2-12-237-7; C. Rowley, English teacher residing in Detroit (Michigan) to E. Ryerson, 22 November 1871, AO RG 2-12-179-1; H. Chute, recipient of bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan, 20 November 1872, AO RG 2-12-205-25.
[743] J. West of New South Wales to E. Ryerson, 23 March 1874, AO RG 2-12-251-21.
[744] E. Stone, American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb (Connecticut) to G. Hodgins, 7 November 1872 AO RG 2-12-204-32; W. Palmer, Ontario Institution for the Deaf and Dumb to G. Hodgins, 3 April 1872, AO RG 2-12-51-22.
[745] R. Patterson of the Ohio State Asylum for Idiotic and Imbecile Youths to E. Ryerson, 24 August 1857, AO RG 2-12-23-607.
[746] H. Syle, professor at the New York Institute for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb to E. Ryerson, 12 September 1871, AO RG 2-12-175-41.

institutions received was a compliment to Ryerson and those affiliated with the dissemination of public instruction in Ontario.

7.2.5 Foreign press and general praise of education in Ontario

The contents of foreign and other provincial Canadian newspapers also allow insight into the wider perception of Ontario's educational system.[747] Where some articles documented general amazement, others compared their own plans with those of the province. The editor of the *Oshawa Freeman* commented on the foreign attraction of the educational policies:

> It is somewhat gratifying to know, and not a little flattering to our pride, that our system is favourably noticed by educationalists in other states […] and that we are probably in advance of some older states in which a system of common school education has been much longer established […]. Taking the educational institutions of this country as a whole we do not think there is much for us to envy in the kindred institutions of other countries whether in Europe or America – a fact which casts a beam of light upon the glorious future of Canada.[748]

Montreal's *Witness* focused on the comparative state of instruction in Ontario and New York:

> Comparing the common schools of Upper Canada with those of the state of New York, it is shown that […] the length of time during which the schools are kept open during the year, and the amount of money raised for the salaries of teachers, which are the two strongest tests of the doings of people in regard to education, throw the balance very much in favour of the province.[749]

Foreign newspapers described similar favourable results.[750] In the United States, an article appeared in Cincinnati's *Western School Journal* which stated: 'the efforts of Dr. Ryerson

[747] Mention of Ryerson's efforts and the success of Ontario's education system are alluded to in The *British Columbian*, 7 March 1861; 'County school convention,' *Western Progress*, 17 February 1853, AO RG 2-27-197-0-2-63.
[748] 'School Convention,' *Oshawa Freeman*, 3 March 1853, AO RG 2-27-197-0-2.
[749] Montreal *Witness*, 8 January 1853.
[750] The editor of Maine's *Journal of Education* acknowledged receipt of Ryerson's ARUC and was particularly impressed with the length of time schools were open: 'In comparing these last two statistical facts with the corresponding ones in our own state it will be perceived that our Canadian neighbors are far in advance of us in making provision for educational purposes […]. We evidently suffer very much by the comparison,' *Journal of Education*, Maine 1 January 1853, in *JEUC* 6 (1853) 24. Likewise, Ontario's education museum caught the

have not been fruitless. [The Common School Act] has been passed; a board of education has been appointed; and provision has been made for the establishment and support of a Normal School.'[751] The editor of the *New York Enquirer* summarised a lecture Hodgins had recently given:

> The paper read by Hodgins was explanatory and statistical and exhibited a satisfactory progress, under the liberal legislation in the cause of education. A gentlemen remarked […] the system in operation in Canada West, so far as it differs from ours, is a decided improvement, particularly as regards the provision made for libraries and the maintenance of teachers.[752]

The fact that George Hodgins attended a conference in New York which was then reported upon emphasises this cross-national attraction towards Ontario's system of education.

Similarly, several letters appeared in the *New York Spectator* from an individual calling himself 'Maple Leaf.' In one letter, the author said that 'Dr. R deserved great credit for his untiring exertions in the cause of popular education.'[753] In a separate article 'Maple Leaf' reported:

> The common school bill for Upper Canada, which has passed through the second reading and the committee of the whole house, will prove to be a very popular measure, and will reflect great credit on its authors. It is a vast improvement on former school laws, being exceedingly comprehensive, liberal and […] simple in its construction.[754]

Based on the date of the article, one may infer that the author was alluding to the school act of 1850 which brought rural, village and city schools under one bill.

Across the Atlantic, English newspapers also reported favourably on Ontario's progress. The *Bradford Obsever* remarked that 'in Canada I found the system of common schools on this

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attention of French minister M. Buisson. He said how he would like to see a similar institution in Paris, see G. Hodgins, *Special Report of the International Exhibition at Philadelphia* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 26.
[751] '*Western School Journal* (Cincinnati), October 1847,' *JEUC* 1 (1848) 207.
[752] Reference to the *Enquirer* (New York), *JEUC* 8 (1855) 142.
[753] 'Maple Leaf' Letter III, *The New York Spectator*, 22 July 1850, MS 6024
[754] 'Maple Leaf' Letter XIV, *The New York Spectator*, 11 July 1850, MS 6024.

plan working with good effect and all seemed to be satisfied with it.'[755] *The Morning Post* credited Ryerson's labours and the voluntary efforts of the people:

> The educational system of Canada is one which may bear favourable comparison with that of any country in the world. The common school plan has been found to work admirably, the principle on which it is conducted being similar to that of the mother country, it is so far as state aid is concerned, the voluntary contributions of a locality being supplemented by grants from the public funds […]. These increases are due, in a great measure, to the very able and persevering efforts of Mr. Ryerson, the estimable chief superintendent of education in the province.[756]

An article in the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* pointed to Ontario as an example for Britain:

> To those friends of popular education in Great Britain who may at times feel discouraged by the difficulties which they have to encounter, I could suggest nothing which would be more likely to invigorate and refresh them than a visit […] to Canada, so that they may judge for themselves what can be done for popular eduation by the people, when left untrammelled by vested interests and denominational jealousies.[757]

An allusion to education for all is also found in the *York Herald*:

> I may briefly say that the entire population of Canada, from the highest to the lowest class, are educated in schools adapted to their wants and circumstances; and that a more intelligent people are scarcely to be found in any country.[758]

In England, schools had traditionally been run by the church. The National Society was founded with the aim to provide a school in every parish, and the British and Foreign School Society was instituted and taught according to a monitorial model. In 1833 a grant was made for assistance in erecting schools for the poorer classes. However, the government's unwillingness to intervene during the first part of the century meant that annual grants were given to develop private, religious, and local schools, each serving particular constituencies. It was only with the Forster Act of 1870 that the state began to fund primary schools.

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[755] 'The Education Question,' *Bradford Observer* (Bradford, England), 2 February 1854.
[756] *The Morning Post* (London, England) 31 October, 1865
[757] *The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* (Sheffield, England), 2 December 1876.
[758] 'Yorkshire union of Mechanics' Institute annual conference at York,' *The York Herald*, 13 June 1885.

What these extracts reveal is that, as in Ontario, residents questioned the right of the state to intervene when schools had traditionally been under the control of the Church. In regard to the manner in which education was accomplished in Ontario, an article appeared in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet, and General Advertiser* which said: 'such evidence of the workings of the 'common schools' under government control is valuable, now that the desire is openly expressed to introduce a similar system in England.'[759] This idea was also expressed by Thomas White, a Canadian emigration commissioner, in his article to the *Newcastle Courant*:

> Free schools were not charity schools in any sense of the word, nor was there any stigma of degradation attached to them […]. Their chief superintendent of schools, Dr. Ryerson, about two years ago made a tour through all the European cities and towns, and afterwards presented a most interesting report of the results of his observations as to the existing school systems in the countries visited, and from the experience thus gained their present school system they felt left the nothing to envy in those countries.[760]

Unlike in England, the common schools were not exclusively for the poor but were meant for all classes and religions. An article also appeared in the *Glasgow Herald* which commented favourably on Ontario's system of public instruction:

> I now come to speak of the educational system of Canada – a system which is considered to be the most perfect national system in the world by men whose opinions have been formed after years of examination and study […]. Dr. Ryerson, to whom the school system of Canada owes a great deal, was appointed chief superintendent. The Doctor visited the Continent of Europe and the United States for the purpose of inquiring into the best systems of education. He returned and introduced many improvements; in fact, to that gentlemen the present excellent school system of Canada owes its success.[761]

The positive reports included in foreign newspapers add to the argument that Ontario's system of education, relatively unknown at the time it was instituted, was gaining interest abroad.

[759] *The Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet, and General Advertiser* (Truro, England), 7 February 1851.
[760] 'Emigration to Canada,' *The Newcastle Courant* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England), 15 April 1870.
[761] D. Wiler, 'Canada a field for emigration,' *Glasgow Herald* (Glasgow, Scotland) 29 March 1870.

7.2.6 Foreign nationals requesting documents or seeking advice

The board of education also received a collection of letters from foreigners seeking advice or materials to help with the development of instruction in their localities. In 1868 Warren Johnson, newly elected superintendent in Maine, asked Ryerson for constructive criticism on several points including the potential clause for compulsory attendance.[762] In a second letter sent four years later, Johnson requested 'a package of your common school text-books, retail prices market, also elementary works on natural history, agriculture, chemistry, mechanics [and] such text-books as we might use in our schools.'[763] Ontario's reports also became known to a local superintendent in Arkansas who 'desire[d] to acquaint myself with the school law and regulations of your section.'[764] In North Carolina, superintendent C. Wiley acknowledged the 'promising system' in Ontario and requested copies of all educational reports, Acts of Parliament, documents on the division of school funds and laws for and against Protestant and Catholic education.[765] In addition to his role as superintendent, Wiley was a director of the Educational Association of North Carolina and the editor of the *North Carolina Journal of Education*.

In Mississippi, superintendent M. Coloom asked Ryerson for any significant reports that might assist him in amending the local school bills:

> The school laws of this state (of Mississippi) are about to undergo some change in the legislature and as I feel somewhat interested in education, I would like to have the advantage of knowing something about the Canadian school system, which I have been told gives general satisfaction.[766]

Following the establishment of the state of Florida, C. Chase, the superintendent of education, wished for information on the workings of the 'distinguishing features' of the

[762] W. Johnson, superintendent of common schools (Maine) to E. Ryerson, 7 September 1868, AO RG 2-12-136-4.
[763] W. Johnson to E. Ryerson, 19 April 1871, AO RG 2-12-171-24.
[764] N. Stuart of the sixth judicial district (Arkansas) to E. Ryerson, 23 October 1871, AO RG 2-12-177-49.
[765] C. Wiley, superintendent of education (North Carolina) to E. Ryerson, 18 July 1855, AO RG 2-12-19-572.
[766] M. Coloom of Vicksburg (Mississippi) to E. Ryerson, 11 April 1870, AO RG 2-12-161-23.

Ontario system, such as the general organisation for establishing and raising school funds, and the method of supplying books through government channels.[767] The Florida superintendent would not propose any new educational policies until 'it has proved successful and satisfactory with you.'[768] As previously discussed, Ontario's book depository delivered all school-related supplies at wholesale rates. Ryerson had even travelled to England and the United States to establish arrangements with publishers and agencies. In 1875, the assistant superintendent of public instruction in Kansas sought Ryerson's advice on the manner in which Ontario organised and supervised schools, selected superintendents, and whether discipline was a common practice.[769] Once more, these letters demonstrate that American state superintendents valued Ryerson's reports and expertise.

Moreover, individuals outside of official roles were equally impressed with Ryerson's initiatives. For example, the principal of the State Normal and Training School of Potsdam (New York) asked Ryerson for copies of all previous school reports, as did C. Scotson of Maine.[770] Scotson described himself as a man 'deeply interested in the education of the people among who he lives.'[771] Ryerson also received a letter from a former Torontonian currently residing in Wisconsin, who was 'desirous to investigate the system of education, now in force through the Dominion of Canada, in comparison with the system in force in many of the states.'[772] In Utah, the secretary of the Territorial Teacher's Association was interested in Ontario's educational infrastructure:

> We are very anxious to secure the adoption of a school system in our Territory fashioned after the very best systems of our country. Mr J.B. Cook of your city, was passing through here last summer and visited my school. He […] spoke of the excellent schools system of Canada, and told me if I should

[767] C. Chase, superintendent of public instruction (Florida) to E. Ryerson, 23 October 1868, AO RG 2-12-136-46.
[768] Ibid.
[769] S. Felten, assistant superintendent (Kansas) to E. Ryerson, 18 May 1875, AO RG 2-12-279-10.
[770] M. McVicar, principal of State Normal and Training School (Potsdam, New York) to E. Ryerson, 16 September 1873, AO RG 2-12-232-3.
[771] C. Scotson of Lewiston, Maine to E. Ryerson, 2 March 1869, AO RG 2-12-143-31.
[772] G. Emery of De Pere (Wisconsin) to E. Ryerson, 18 August 1876 AO RG 2-12-314-2.

> write to you that you would doubtless furnish me some very valuable information on the subject of schools.[773]

Also, Ryerson received a letter from the principal of Flynn High School (Massachusetts) explaining that the Honourable Josiah Sherman, a senator of the Georgia Legislature and part of a committee that was about to amend the school system in that state, had contacted him for advice. To assist Sherman with this task, the educationalist from Massachusetts wrote: 'I know of nothing that would be of so much value to him as a copy of the public school system of Canada West.'[774] He requested that reports be forwarded to his colleague in Georgia. The archives hold hundreds of receipts that show that people requested Ryerson's documents not only for the development of education in their locales but also for its content. As section **2.2** described, the ARUC contained copies of examination papers, blank forms to collect fees, teachers' contracts and general legal requirements.

Across the Atlantic, the French consultant general wrote to Ryerson on behalf of the minister of public instruction who wished for information on Ontario's school attendance laws:

> The French Minister for Foreign Affairs has requested me to furnish him with precise details on the legislative, and administrative measures which govern primary education in Canada, and especially to make known to him if it is, or not, obligatory. The Minister of Public Education in France wishes particularly to be informed what the established penalty is against children not frequenting the schools, and what the results are with regard to their attendance. What is moreover the number of children who succeed in avoiding the legal obligation prescribed[?][775]

This letter would surely have been a compliment since Ryerson's Report of 1846 referenced France's school laws regarding this very feature. From England, a letter from Mr. Lucas referred to the difficulty in establishing a national system of free schools, and said that the writer had heard Ontario's method produced favourable results:

> Some of the opponents of the movement now making in England in favour of the establishment by law of a national system of instruction in free schools report very positively that giving free instruction to the people has no

[773] O. Riggs of Salt Lake City (Utah) to E. Ryerson, 7 May 1873, AO RG 2-12-223-6.
[774] N. Hills of Flynn (Massachusetts) to E. Ryerson, 14 August 1865, AO RG 2-12-135-1.
[775] F. Gautier, consulat général de France au Canada to E. Ryerson, 18 August 1864, AO RG 2-12-65-35.

> tendency to increase the number of children under instruction. I observe with great pleasure the rapid extension of your system in Canada and I am much mistaken if you are not in possession of information which will enable you to give the most direct contradiction to such an operation.[776]

The fact that Lucas had heard rumours that Ontario's residents had successfully voted in favour of free schools, and that there was statistical evidence to prove the success of the system, emphasises the idea of the advancement of the province's educational infrastructure.

Also from England, a note from E. Chambers, appointed by the Canadian government as an emigrant agent in England, not only requested the Journal of Education for personal use but reflected on the current local situation in comparaison with Ontario:

> The subject of education is especially interesting [and] agitates the public mind. *Our [illegible] appears incapable of devising a system to give general satisfaction. But I think they might learn from Canada where you appear to have little trouble with it*. The Non-conformists are especially dissatisfied with Mr Foster's Bill and I have no doubt but they will try to break up Gladstone's Government.[777]

The highlighted parts, added by this author, paid tribute to the manner in which Ryerson was able to achieve a unified system of public instruction supported by the majority of the inhabitants. These two extracts point to a period of transition in England's educational system.

In Ireland, an anonymous letter sent to Ryerson asked how the 'religious question' was handled. Again, it had only been twenty years since Ryerson referred to the Irish National Board of Education regarding this very issue:

> I am anxious to get any official document in your possession which would aid me in working up a history of Canadian education especially with reference to its mode of treating or solving the 'religious difficulty.' These would include copies of the several modifications of the Common, Separate and Grammar School act, copies of Annual reports since 1863 – especially those containing

[776] S. Lucas of London (England) to E. Ryerson, 5 April 1851, AO RG 2-12-10-561.
[777] M. Connolly of England to G. Hodgins, 12 February 1872, AO RG 2-12-188-17.

> any references to changes or modifications affecting the position of 'religious instruction' in the schools.[778]

Lastly, Ryerson communicated with F. Kane, the secretary of the Board of Education in Australia, who was so impressed with the agreement made between Ontario and English publishers that he wished for Ryerson's aid to make a similar arrangement:

> As this board are unable to adopt a similar plan of sending an agent to Europe because of the great distance, it would be conferring a great obligation upon them if you gave them the benefit of your agent's [Dr. Hodgins] assistance, by furnishing a list of the prices paid to publishers by your department and any other information on the subject, which would prove valuable to the cause of education in the colony.[779]

Ryerson did as requested and wrote a letter to the English publishers on behalf of the Australian secretary.[780] This extract confirms that numerous foreigners were impressed with Ontario's system. It equally verifies that the reports from the province's department were passed to and read by individuals in Europe, America and Australia.

7.2.7 Canadian praise

The archive also contains receipts of correspondence between Ryerson and Canadian superintendents. While some letters asked for Ryerson's numerous educational reports, others sought advice on their own school laws.[781] In Halifax, B. Wier wrote to Ryerson for feedback on his province's educational system as 'I do not know of any one in the provinces so well calculated as yourself to advance a course so calculated to meet the difficulty as you

[778] Anonymous letter from Ireland to E. Ryerson, 27 December 1871, AO RG 2-12-185-9.
[779] B. Kane, Secretary of the Board of Education (Australia), 15 June 1869, *DHE* vol. 22, p. 180
[780] E. Ryerson to English Publisher, 4 September 1869, *DHE* vol. 22, p. 180.
[781] H. St. John of Winnipeg (Manitoba) to E. Ryerson, 18 July 1871, AO RG 2-12-173-26. In Nova Scotia, the president of Acadia College sought copies of the educational law and views of the separate school system because 'we wish to become acquainted with the evidence of experience and facts, I. Cramp, president of Acadia College (Nova Scotia) to E. Ryerson, 26 October 1868, AO RG 2-12-137-5. The principal of Harbor Grace Grammar School (Newfoundland) was commissioned by the government to report on the educational conduct of the country. In framing this report, he requested all of Ontario's reports and educational acts, J. Roddick of Newfoundland to G. Hodgins, 1 December 1871, AO RG 2-12-180-20. Ryerson received a letter from D. Lelacvicar behalf Rev. M. Harvey of St. John's Newfoundland seeking information regarding the educational system of Ontario as there is soon to be a revision of the school law of his Island, D. Lelacvicar to E. Ryerson, 1 September 1871, AO RG 2-12-175-5.

have had many years.'[782] Likewise, Ryerson received a note from a trustee in New Brunswick requesting school acts and bookseller regulations:

> Being frequently impressed with the idea that your province had the best system of education in North America our board of trustees […] appointed under the new School Act of New Brunswick are desirous of receiving a copy of your school act and any publisher regulations.[783]

More letters emerged between Ryerson and Theodore Rand. Rand was professor of Classics at the Provincial Normal School in Nova Scotia before becoming that province's superintendent of education. In that position he requested numerous items from the department, including the ARUC, JEUC, book catalogues for school libraries and apparatus.[784] In 1871, Rand became New Brunswick's first superintendent of education and wrote again to Ryerson seeking suggestions on educating French Acadians:

> We have considerable districts of county inhabitants of Acadian French. The reading books that are used by them in the schools have been objectionable in respect of quality and subject matter. Could you recommend a French primer and one or two reading books suitable for use in Public schools attended by French children? We desire to teach them to read in their own tongue first and then to teach them English.[785]

Further correspondence from Rand requested copies of the teachers' syllabus, examination questions and blank certificates for successful candidates, and a complete outline of the course of study for public schools.[786] He even asked Ryerson to send information on the time that recess took place in Ontario.[787] The numerous requests for material verify that Ryerson was considered a knowledgeable educationalist and had the experience and skill to help frame the systems of education in other nations as well as different Canadian provinces. However, there was no better evidence of this than the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, which took place in 1876, the same year Ryerson retired as chief superintendent.

[782] B. Wier of Halifax (Nova Scotia) to E. Ryerson, 8 May 1856, MS 6024.
[783] A. Chaussied of Saint Stepture (New Brunswick) to E. Ryerson, 19 December 1871, AO RG 2-12-182-19.
[784] T. Rand, Education office (Halifax, Nova Scotia) to E. Ryerson, 19 December 1865, AO RG 2-12-83-6.
[785] T. Rand to E. Ryerson, 16 September 1871, AO RG 2-12-175-59.
[786] T. Rand to E. Ryerson, 20 September 1871, AO RG 2-12-176-5.
[787] T. Rand to E. Ryerson, 3 May 1872, AO RG 2-12-194-8.

7.2.8 Ontario and the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition

In 1876, Philadelphia hosted the Centennial Exposition. It ran for over six months, was attended by over nine million people, and had representatives from Sweden, France, Belgium, Russia, Norway, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and numerous American states including Hawaii and the Sandwich Islands, in addition to agents from Japan, Egypt, Australia, Brazil, Argentina, Chili, Honduras, Bolivia, Mexico and Jamaica.[788] The Philadelphia exhibition was particularly important for the province of Ontario for three reasons. Firstly, all the Ontario teachers and inspectors were given the opportunity to take a week to travel to the United States and to visit the exhibition. Under the heading 'A noble example' the state superintendent of Pennsylvania commented on this occasion:

> We have, on more than one occasion, commended the educational exhibit made by the province of Ontario at the International Exhibition. It is highly creditable, and in some respects superior to any other on the ground. We have also been aware for some years that Ontario was making rapid progress in her educational affairs. This information was obtained by a personal visit to some of the schools, and comes to us through reports and periodicals relating to education. But for all this we were hardly prepared for the grand step taken by her school authorities in allowing all the teachers in the province, over six thousand in number, to close their schools *for a week without loss of pay*, for the purpose of visiting our Centennial Exposition. True such a visit by the teachers will do more for the schools than the best week's work that could have been otherwise done in them […]. No state, no city, no county of the United States, we believe, has as yet shown an equal breadth of view, or an equal degree of liberality. Ontario has set us a noble example. To what extent shall we follow it?[789]

The second significant feature was the size of Ontario's display. Ryerson asked Samuel May, then the head of the department's book depository, to assume full-time responsibility for this task. May subsquently acquired pupils' work, photographs of school buildings, library books, printed catalogues and drawing models. Nearly four hundred volumes of books were sent to Philadelphia. An illustration of the exhibition may be found in Appendix Seven. Lastly, and

[788] G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 217.
[789] Ibid. p. 44.

perhaps most significantly, was the praise that the display received. The Ontario department was the recipient of several awards, including a bronze medal from the United States Centennial Commission for a 'complete and admirably arranged exhibition' and a gold medal from a committee of British judges:

> For an extensive and attractive collection, illustrative of the growth and extent of the educational system of Ontario, including a great variety of apparatus, maps, charts, models of school-houses, photographs of school buildings, and reports.[790]

The amount of time that was put into amassing the material and showcasing the province's educational provision not only resulted in distinguished awards, but gained the attention of foreign educationalists both in the popular press and in annual school reports. As the introductory chapter (section **1.1**) first revealed, Ontario's display was exemplary.

7.2.8.1 The opinion of the American press and state superintendents' reports

The province's display received considerable positive feedback in the foreign press and in reports. For instance, the Honourable J. Wickersham, state superintendent of public instruction and editor of the Pennsylvania *School Journal*, acknowledged Ryerson's efforts and the fact that he had obtained the support of the people:

> This province has for some thirty or forty years been making efforts to build up an efficient system of public education. At the head of the department of education for nearly the whole of that time, has stood the Rev. Dr. Ryerson, well known in the United States, and distinguished alike as a scholar, a gentlemen, and an enthusiastic worker in the cause of education. As a result of his wise administration, with the co-operation of the most intelligent citizens, Ontario has made such progress in her school affairs as to warrant her appearance at our Centennial Exposition to compete in respect to them with us and with the world.[791]

This was a similar statement taken from Buffalo's *Christian Advocate*:

[790] Copies of the awards are located in AO RG 2-12-321-9.
[791] 'The Centennial,' *Pennsylvania School Journal*, vol. 25, No. 2, August 1876, p. 92.

> The education department of Ontario, Canada, makes by far the most extensive display of school apparatus at the Centennial of any nation […]. Great praise is due to our neighbors over the northern border for this extensive and costly exhibition, and for the zeal in a great cause which it indicates.[792]

The *American Publishers' Weekly* described the presentation as 'most likely to be attracted at first sight, to the large case containing in the government display for the educational department of Ontario. Here at B17 we find the *bête noire* of the Canadian trade, the government depository.'[793] Similarly, Delaware's *Wilmington Republican* referred to Ontario's exhibit in a complimentary manner:

> No one visiting the Exhibition can fail to notice the magnificent display made by the Dominion of Canada. Its educational department especially is very attractive, showing conclusively that its schools are of the highest order. Where so much attention is given to education, the Dominion must eventually take high rank in the scale of nations. True, it is a dependency of Britain, but instead of benefiting by this connection, the probability is that Britain will be the gainer.[794]

The suggestion that Britain should learn from Ontario was exceptionally complimentary. This comparison was also made in the *New York School Journal and Educational News*, which noted that Ontario should be content with its achievements judged against England:

> Our northern neighbours make up for the negligence of the mother country by sending a magnificent exhibit of their school system. It includes models of school buildings from country and city, the former of which may be studied with profit.[795]

Moreover, M. Buisson, a representative of the Minister of Public Instruction of France, printed a series of letters in France's *Journal des Institutes* which were then translated in Pennsylvania's *School Journal*, commenting on the showcase:

> Of all foreign countries those which attract the most attention, because they make exhibit of new material, are Russia, Japan, and the British Colonies – Canada at the head […]. To make a brilliant educational exhibition by the side of that of the United States was not an easy thing to do, and for Canada to have succeeded in doing it goes to prove that her schools are in a very

[792] G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 44
[793] *American Publishers' Weekly*, 1 July 1876.
[794] G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 34.
[795] Ibid. p. 30.

> prosperous condition. That such is their condition, in fact, seems clear from all kinds of documents and photographic specimens, and specimens of maps.[796]

A comparison between Ontario and foreign education was also made in the *Philadelphia Herald*:

> There is an exhibit which is well deserving of the closest scrutiny, and the careful thought of every public-spirited citizen and visitor. It embodies the workings of the education department of Ontario, and shows in a thorough manner the admirable system of training the young idea in vogue 'across the border' […]. Philadelphia has splendid schoolhouses, but the methods of instruction practices in them are not, it may be confessed, comparable to those adopted by the Canadian authorities.[797]

The *New York Tribune*'s commentary paid particular attention to the high cost to educate pupils in the United States compared with students in Ontario. It noted that books cost nearly fifty percent less in Toronto.[798] An article in *Le Courier des États-Unis* encouraged Canadians to be proud of their achievements:

> The Canadian exhibition or department has over the American one (to which it can only be compared in the proportions of the two countries), the advantage of a perfect order, of an intelligent and methodical classification […]. The Canadians have, above all, the right to be proud, the section of public instruction deserves to be studied with particular care, even by nations who pique themselves on possessing the best methods of teaching. In short, Canada merits the greatest credit for this exhibition of resources, which is besides, a demonstration of the honest, orderly, patient, and laborious character of its inhabitants.[799]

In Canada, Quebec's *Journal d'instruction publique* commented on Ontario's progress, and these comments were reprinted in the *Pennsylvania School Journal*:

> The educational exposition of the province of Ontario, which is not excelled by any other of the same kind, sums up and represents to the eye of the stranger the best part of our system from Vancouver to the Island of Prince Edward […]. We say frankly that the educational exposition of our province [Quebec], as of several of the states of the American Union, is a failure.[800]

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[796] *Pennsylvania School Journal*, Vol. 25 (February 1877) No. 8. p. 259.
[797] G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 31.
[798] Ibid. p. 29.
[799] Ibid. p. 34.
[800] *The Pennsylvania School Journal*, Vol. 25 (December 1876) 6, p. 236.

The fact that newspapers spoke so highly of Ontario's display was remarkable. It not only confirmed the progress made, but also the fact that this information was dispersed amongst populations who may have never heard of, or even considered, Ontario as a case to emulate.

In addition, several American state superintendents commented on Ontario's display in their annual reports. Ellis Apgar, superintendent for nineteen years in New Jersey, wrote:

> We are astonished that our northern neighbor, one of her provinces, did so much. Ontario presented the finest collection of expensive school and college apparatus exhibited. Without enumerating the articles, which would be tedious, I may simply state that it is doubtful if one could find anywhere on sale a piece of school apparatus for any grade of school from the kindergarten to the college, that was not in the Ontario exhibit.[801]

Similarly, B. Northrop, secretary to the board of education in Connecticut, commented:

> The exhibition of school apparatus made by Ontario was a grateful surprise to most Americans. It was the fullest and finest collection of school and college equipments shown at Fairmont Park, embracing every appliance from the 'gifts and occupations' of the kindergarten to the apparatus of the college. In a visit to Toronto a few years since, I was greatly interested in the grand educational depository, which the government of Ontario had established in that city.[802]

A year later, the Honourable Mr. Northrop left for his educational tour in Europe. Lastly, General Eaton, the United States Commissioner of education, commented on the exhibit:

> Many of our educators are familiar with the successful efforts of the Rev. Dr. Ryerson and his able deputy, Dr. Hodgins, of Ontario, to secure these great aids to education in that province. Their example would seem of itself sufficient to secure adequate action in the United States.[803]

In the next section, we shall see further correspondence between Eaton and Ryerson regarding the acquisition of resources for Washington's proposed museum.

[801] E. Apgar, *Report on the state of public instruction in New Jersey*, 1876 (Trenton, 1876) p. 32.
[802] G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 219
[803] Ibid. p. 274

7.2.8.2 Ontario's material sought abroad

By the end of the exhibition, Ontario's display had attracted the attention of several foreigners who subsequently sought specimens for their own nations. For instance, John Charles Heard, the commissioner of the Russian Ministry of War, requested the province's models, maps and desks.[804] J. Eaton, the United States commissioner of education, was interested in material, particularly for the proposed pedagogical national museum at Washington: 'it would give me great gratification to include a full representation of these articles from your country.'[805] Receipts in the archives show that shipments were sent to Washington, in addition to subsequent requests for maps, globes, photographs, minutes from school meetings, and regulations regarding the duties of pupils and school law arbitration.[806]

An exchange of material was also requested by the Japanese Commissioner Fugimaro Tanaka. In fact, during the Centennial, Tanaka took his entourage on a twenty-day trip to Canada and was especially interested in visiting Toronto's Normal School. After their visit, the Japanese Vice-Minister of Education sent the following letter to Hodgins:

> I am exceedingly obliged to you, not only for the kindness which you had envinced towards us during our stay in Philadelphia, but also for your great kindness in showing us your own department, and many other educational institutions in Toronto during our short trip to Canada, where I enjoyed the visit so much and got so much information about education in your country.[807]

As a result of this visit, a large number of items were requested and sent to the department in Japan, including photographs of Ontario's Normal School and books such as Ryerson's

[804] Ibid. p. 288.
[805] J. Eaton, 20 July 1876, AO RG 2-12-312-11.
[806] List of material from Ontario educational exhibit to museum at Washington 24 November 1876, in G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) pp. 282 - 283.
[807] G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 287.

Christian Morals and Hodgins's *School Architecture*.[808] The Ontario department received the following note from the Japanese vice-minister following delivery of the order:

> I wish to express you my warm thanks for the two packages of the reports, journals, and other educational documents, which I received just now, and which are most valuable things to me, so that I can get important information from them. I am very much obliged to you not only for your kindness in showing us your schools and other places, but also for the trouble which you have taken in collecting for me so many reports and notes.[809]

An additional set of supplies were later sent to the National Museum of Japan in Tokyo.[810]

The last exchange of material following the exhibition was at the request of Augustus Morris, the Executive Commissioner from New South Wales (Australia). On the subject, Morris wrote:

> I am sure there is nothing which so fully shows the extraordinary progress of Canada as the educational display of Ontario. When I was seeking information on educational matters, one of the professors of the University of Pennsylvania recommended me to visit Ontario, as I would there learn more on those subjects than in any other country. He pointed to your exhibit as proof, and said he felt ashamed that the United States was so far behind Ontario. Nothing would teach the Australians more, or give them so high an opinion of Canada, as the study of your educational system.[811]

Later, the secretary for the Executive Commissioner wrote: 'your school apparatus would advance the interests of education in Australia' and requested that extra material be shipped.[812] This was even noted in *The Sydney Morning Herald*:

> By the Ocean Gem, from Montreal, the Educational Department of Ontario has shipped, on account of the government of New South Wales, samples of maps and other appliances used in that province in the schools. There is also a full-sized gymnastics bar which has also been ordered by the Russians, the Japanese, and other governments. All these things will be found highly useful to the Council of Education, and will enable them to purchase through the

[808] R. Ideura, Japanese commissioner to Dr. May, 30 November 1876 in G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 285.
[809] 'Letter from Japanese vice minister of education,' September 1876 in G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 284.
[810] List of articles supplied to the National Museum of Japan, 13 November 1876 in G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 287.
[811] G. Hodgins, *Special Report* (Toronto: Hunter, 1877) p. 25.
[812] C. Robinson to A. Cooks, 7 October 1876, AO RG-2-12-317-6.

> Ontario Educational Department many things much cheaper than they can in Europe.[813]

Reports of Ontario's educational achievements appeared not only in an Australian newspaper but also in France and the United States, which no doubt helped spread the word of the progressiveness of the province's framework. Where some reports, such as those of state superintendents, described the favourable results of Ryerson's innovations, other foreigners sought materials. The Centennial proved to outsiders that the province's education system was complete, thorough, and, even compared with more established countries, far more advanced than previously believed.

7.2.9 Ontario's influence abroad

In November 1871, Ryerson received a complimentary note from a former Glaswegian and current resident of Springfield who compared the systems in Ontario and Illinois:

> I was highly pleased to observe the rapid progress you are making in education in Upper Canada. It is highly creditable to you as a people, and is the best eulogy of the excellence and stability of that happy government under which it is your privilege to live. Everything is gloomy here. Democracy is a complete failure and, I fear, a lesson to man of his incapacity for self-government. Never has any government been more selfish or scandalously corrupt than […] in this country; and there is no hope of improvement. I am truly sorry for this state of things […]. I can find no employment and no sympathy amongst this corrupt, selfish and bigoted people.[814]

Mr. Milne Home, Royal Commissioner of Schools in Scotland, visited the United States and Canada in order improve the schools in his home nation. He noted:

> If anything farther were needed to show how much Doctor Ryerson's system has commanded general admiration, it would be the reference which I see frequently made to parts of it in the recent annual reports of school superintendents in the American states, and the desire evidently felt there to import many features of it into their own educational arrangements.[815]

[813] A. Morris, 'New South Wales at the American Centennial Exhibition,' *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 January 1877.
[814] T. Clarke to E. Ryerson, 18 November 1871, AO RG 2-12-38-169.
[815] 'The royal commissioner of schools in Scotland,' *DHE* vol. 10 pp. 89 – 90.

We also learn from this commissioner's report that the German traveler and geographer Johann Georg Kohl visited Canada in 1860 and reported favourably about Ryerson's initiatives, as did Hugh Seymour Tremenheere, an English inspector of schools and mines.[816]

In Tennessee, a librarian at the Nashville Tennessee State Library noted the difficulties faced and praised the provincial system:

> It happens to be deeply felt by a great number of the people in our state that the deplorable neglect of the educational interests of the state, and resulting inferior intellectual development, when compared with other parts of the civilised world has been in a measure, the predominant cause of the stubborn resistance to reforms, imperiously commanded by the decree of humanity […]. I am informed by my highly esteemed friend, Dr. Lindsley, Dean of the University of Nashville, that the province of Canada West, very similar in the character of her settlement by a scattered population to our Western states - excels under your most learned and comprehensive guidance, in a highly prosperous school system.[817]

This section has illustrated that people considered education in Ontario a valuable example. However, a final question remains: can there be any direct links between Ontario's education system and foreign schemes? To answer this question, we can refer again to letters Ryerson received.

In 1871 Montana's superintendent of education, who had previously spent two-and-a-half years teaching in Ontario, sought Ryerson's advice prior to amending Montana's school law:

> I have a very high appreciation of the many excellencies of the system under which I believe your country has made greater progress in education than any of the states of this union during the past quarter of a century […]. I am desirous of consulting it on various points in which we wish to effect some amendment in the present school law of this territory.[818]

That letter also requested reports or any additional information that might prove useful for his state's educational system. Also from America, the librarian of the Nashville Tennessee State Library remarked that 'in the Senate [there is] a bill for the thorough reform of the

[816] 'The royal commissioner of schools in Scotland,' *DHE* vol. 10, p. 90.
[817] A. Pattinger, Head librarian at the Tennessee State Library to E. Ryerson, 1 July 1865, AO RG 2-12-77-15.
[818] W. Marshall of Virginia City (Montana) to E. Ryerson, 18 October 1871, AO RG 2-12-177-46.

educational system of our state [which] has drawn a great deal of much valuable information from your documents.'[819]

The provincial department received a note from the secretary of education's office in Melbourne (Australia) which referred to Ontario as the basis for their new law:

> The commissioners would be very glad to be furnished with a complete set of reports with copies of the acts relating to education in Canada […]. The education question is, at present, exciting much attention in this colony, and it is proposed to assimilate the system to that of Canada. Every information on the subject of your arrangements is therefore of great value.[820]

Ontario's influence on other Canadian provinces is equally fascinating. According to Child (1978), the school laws in British Columbia (1871), Manitoba (1890) and the Northwest Territories (1892) were all influenced by Ryerson's legislation.[821] Child also claimed that the Normal School in Manitoba was the result of William Pinkham's visit to Toronto.[822] Pinkham served as the superintendent of protestant schools in Manitoba from 1871 to 1881. Likewise, Phillips's (1957) study claimed that New Brunswick followed Ontario in purchasing the Irish National Readers from Dublin. This may be confirmed in a letter Hodgins received from New Brunswick's superintendent of schools:

> I took your official catalogue of books for school libraries and selected seven, or eight, hundred, which are best adapted to our schools in New Brunswick, and had such a catalogue of them published. I begin to find that many of these books cannot be procured by any of our booksellers. It has, therefore, been suggested to me that I had better write to your department, for the purpose of ascertaining whether you can supply us.[823]

Ryerson responded two weeks later that it was 'a duty and a pleasure to do all in my power to promote the interests of education and knowledge in New Brunswick, as well as in Upper Canada, the former the birthplace of my sainted mother, the latter the land of my nativity.'[824] Phillips's (1957) study also claimed that by the late nineteenth century, Manitoba, the

[819] A. Pattinger to E. Ryerson, 4 December 1865, AO RG 2-12-82-10.
[820] B. Kane, Secretary of National Education Office to E. Ryerson, 26 November 1858, AO RG 2-12-25-993.
[821] A. Child, 'The Ryerson influence in Western Canada, 1871 – 1906,' in *Egerton Ryerson and his times*, ed. by N. McDonald and A. Chaiton (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978) pp. 279 – 301.
[822] Ibid. This Normal School was established in 1882.
[823] H. Fisher to G. Hodgins, 31 March 1859, *DHE* vol. 14, p. 308-9.
[824] E. Ryerson to H. Fisher, 13 April 1859, *DHE* vol. 14, p. 308.

Northwest Territories, British Columbia, Quebec and Nova Scotia all used books printed in Ontario.[825] Perhaps this may not so seem odd if one considers that Ontario was Canada's English-speaking province, and so it could be looked to as an example.

However, Ontario's influence is best illustrated in British Columbia. The first superintendent of education in the Western province, John Jessop, arrived in Ontario in 1846, entered the Toronto Normal School and then taught for five years. Upon hearing of the discovery of gold, Jessop moved to British Columbia and then to Vancouver Island, where he opened a school. The year was 1861, and Jessop sent the following letter to Ryerson:

> Having, at the solicitation of many of the citizens of Victoria, commenced a school and believing that a good opening presents itself for introducing the system of which you are the Honoured Head, and under which I received my training during two sessions at the Provincial Normal School and more than five years as a common school teacher in different parts of Canada West, I am desirous of making it as efficient as possible and for that reason I have taken the opportunity of applying to you, through an old friend, D. Ormiston, B.A., for a supply of maps, charts, apparatus, etc., for use of the school and for the benefit of the city of Victoria.[826]

Jessop goes on to explain that the common schools were currently deficient, and, as in Ontario, the question of separate or religious schools was gaining ground. Jessop thought that Ryerson's scheme would be suitable for the western province:

> A school, therefore, started and conducted exclusively on non-sectarian principles, as the one under my charge is and will be, and moreover carried on according to the admirable system of Canada West, cannot fail of soon becoming popular and flourishing. My object is to establish its reputation, and when the city is incorporated, to fall in with the common school system that will then be adopted, and place myself at the head of the common schools of Victoria and Vancouver Island.[827]

[825] C. Phillips, *The development of education in Canada* (Toronto: W. Gage, 1957).
[826] J. Jessop to E. Ryerson, 16 August 1861, AO RG 2-12-37-172.
[827] Ibid.

According to Hodgins, the school system that Jessop framed was based on Ryerson's structure. The law and the official regulations were almost verbatim copies of those in Ontario.[828]

In addition, Ryerson received a letter from E. Robson, a Wesleyan Minister from New Westminster (British Columbia), who wished to procure educational reports from Ryerson because he and his colleagues were in the process of writing their own school law:

> In this, England's youngest colony, we are just commencing in earnest the agitation of the school question. From the character of the principal men amongst us I anticipate considerable difficulty in arriving at a satisfactory solution of the matter. In all our discussions the school system of Upper Canada is often referred to by Canadians in a way which shows that they are proud of it and by many gentlemen from England in a way which evidently shows them to be ignorant of its true character and grand success […]. I would like to have copies of any works, statutes, reports etc which would be valuable in throwing light upon the subjects from your office […]. In view of the great Confederation now being consummated I think it of considerable importance that our school system should be as nearly assimilated to yours.[829]

This reverse attraction not only shows the historical importance of Ontario in nineteenth-century policy borrowing, but also demands further examination in terms of its contribution to foreign education. To what degree was Toronto's Normal School the example for the state school in Mississippi? How influential were Ontario's educational laws in advancing those in Australia? Did the citizens of Massachusetts resent having Canadian books in their schools as Ontario citizens had resented the Irish texts? Correspondence between Ryerson and foreign educationalists open a whole new set of questions in the history of education.

More importantly, this involvement reaffirms the progressive system of education and the skill with which Ryerson formed his policies. Perhaps this is best illustrated in a letter sent from Ryerson to Robson, the aforementioned minister in British Columbia, who had written to the superintendent regarding the replication of elements of Ontario's education in the West. Ryerson responded:

[828] 'Province of British Columbia,' *DHE* vol. 24, p. 312.
[829] E. Robson, Wesleyan Minister (British Columbia) to E. Ryerson, 28 January 1865, AO RG 2-12-74-30.

> The details and many of the provisions of a public national system must depend upon the institutions and circumstances of the country for which it is intended. On these points, I cannot pretend to judge or suggest as to what may be best for British Columbia. But I hope you may be able to devise and agree upon a system which will afford every youth of your rising and eventful country the education which will fit him for the duties of a Christian citizen.[830]

Ryerson emphasised the importance of a national system that would encourage progress, profit and innovation. He also recognised the precariousness of borrowing elements of foreign systems. The manner in which foreign policies finally became features of Ontario's law, rather than simply influencing ideas, will be discussed in the following sub-chapter.

[830] E. Ryerson, draft letter to E. Robson, 12 April 1865, AO RG 2-9-18-F4-84.

Chapter Seven Part III

Educational policy borrowing reviewed

The Legislature of New Brunswick will next year be called upon to deal with the subject of education. As a newly elected member of that body, I am anxious to obtain all possible information with a view to an intelligent treatment of the subject […] I enclose a copy of the school bill which the Hon. Geo King introduced into the House of Assembly last session. I am anxious to obtain the views of gentlemen of experience on its provisions.

Daily News, 15 July 1850 [831]

The greater number of the poor in the old country think that there are no schools […] *in Upper Canada. Before I commence to teach I wish to inform my relatives and friends* […] *in Scotland that Canada is* <u>*not*</u> *a wilderness* <u>*nor*</u> *the people therein* <u>*uncultivated*</u>*, as the mass of the people in the old country think.*

E. Young, former Scottish teacher, 1858 [832]

Starting upon the principle of selecting and adapting to Canada whatever we might find useful in the school systems or school writings of any country, whether monarchical or republican, European or American, we borrow most from those countries in which most attention is bestowed upon the subject of popular education, and most progress has been made in it by the free and voluntary efforts of the people themselves.

Egerton Ryerson, 1849 [833]

[831] 'Proprieter,' *Daily News* (New Brunswick) to E. Ryerson, 15 July 1850, AO RG 2-12-164-2.
[832] E. Young, teacher in Galt in township of Beverly to E. Ryerson, 4 March 1858, AO RG 2-12-24-625.
[833] E. Ryerson, 'Editorial,' January 1849, *JEUC* 2 (1849) 8.

7.3.1 Introduction

The study of policy borrowing is not new. There has been a longstanding tendency to look abroad to see how other nations have responded to similar pressures, to share ideas, to draw lessons and to bring foreign evidence back during the domestic policy-making process. Siegel and Weinberg (1977) state the obvious when they suggest that 'from the beginning of their existence, nations have sought to borrow and adapt structures and policies from other societies.'[834] Leichter (1979) too has observed that 'public policy and problem solving is an extraordinary imitative art.'[835] Different academic backgrounds apply diverse theoretical approaches, perspectives, concepts and explanatory variables to frame the process. The result is that a number of theories and frameworks have been developed to illuminate the manner in which foreign policies and programmes influence, inspire and in certain cases come to constitute the policy or programme of a different environment.

Out of the abundance of literature that outlines policy transfer, a number of issues have emerged. In this sub-chapter, I shall expand on this topic and introduce a 'conceptual framework of educational policy borrowing.' The framework recognises the intricacy of policy borrowing and will demonstrate the comprehensive nature of the process, from the initial resolution of policy amendment to the discourse that happens once the foreign example is internalised. This framework was influenced by the literature on educational policy borrowing and the manner in which foreign elements became features of Ontario's school law. It does not focus merely on the borrowed policy or procedure, but engages in a deeper level of analysis and acknowledges the context, actors and factors within which transfer occurs. As Cates (1979) has stated, 'policy analysis is not rational nor linear but

[834] R. Siegel and L. Weinberg, *Comparing public policies: United States, Soviet Union and Europe* (Homewood: Dorsey Press, 1977) p. 7.
[835] H. Leichter, *A comparative approach to policy analyses: health care policy in Four Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1979) p. 67.

draws strongly on intuition and is a messy and elusive creative process.'[836] This framework will contribute to the existing literature on policy borrowing in two ways. First, by presenting a supplementary taxonomy for the degrees of transfer, it will introduce a new spectrum of analysis. Second, it will include a micro enquiry about the factors that shape foreign policies and practices once they are internalised in the new locale. In explaining this framework, I will use the example of nineteenth century Ontario.

7.3.2 Review of policy transfer literature: causal factors, agents, levels and elements

Section **3.3** reviewed the literature on policy borrowing. It included the broad definition of the term whereby 'transfer, emulation and lesson drawing all refer to a process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions etc. in one time and/or place are used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements and institutions in another time and/or place.'[837] Policy convergence, on the other hand, is seen as 'the tendency of societies to grow more alike, to develop similarities in structures, processes, and performances.'[838] This body of research attempts to make sense of the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge by analysing the causal factors, the agents (primary actors, institutions and organisations) involved, the elements (policies, procedures, programmes) sought, and the motives behind the utilisation of foreign examples.

Many authors suggest that the catalyst for voluntary transfer is the result of the opinion, on the part of either the government or the public, that there exists some form of dissatisfaction or problem. Supporters of this model presume that when policies are functioning appropriately there is no need to engage in policy transfer; everything can operate through established routines. The search for lessons is only necessary when current policies or

[836] C. Cates, 'Beyond Muddling Creativity,' *Public Administrative Review*, 39 (1979) 6, pp. 527 – 532.
[837] D. Dolowitz and D. Marsh, 'Who learns what from whom: a review of the policy transfer literature,' *Political Studies,* XLIV (1996) pp. 5 - 24.
[838] C. Kerr, *The future of industrial societies: convergence or continuing diversity*? (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983) p. 3.

practices stop providing solutions. When a policy maker is appointed to amend these shortcomings and examine provision in specific foreign nations, it is the result of rational decision making. Similarly, when governments look at foreign countries there is the assumption that they do not learn about foreign practices randomly, but rather through common affiliations and characteristics including geographical proximity, colonial history, religion, language, similar socio-economic structures or ideological preferences.[839] This is supported by Nash's (2003) claim that 'the suitability of lessons and their level of transferability can be gauged according to the comparability of programmes, resources, institutions or outcomes.'[840] Policy makers are willing to emulate some countries more than others, especially ones that display more institutional comparability.

However, in my attempt to conceptualise education in nineteenth-century Ontario, a number of problems emerged that the literature did not address. The first issue deals with the relationship between policy makers (agents) and the decision-making process. For example, how does a researcher account for a policy maker's personal motives, beliefs and opinions? Is the policy maker's choice to look to specific countries always a rational decision? To what extent does a researcher need to explore the association between secondary agents in the decision making and formulation stage? As Hulme (2005) explains, the origins of policy ideas are significant in revealing the motivations of policy makers and evaluating their chances of successful policy development.[841] If one were to apply the explanations given in the literature, it is difficult to see why Ryerson would investigate the systems of education in Holland, Prussia, Bavaria, 'Germany,' Italy and Switzerland. These nations have dissimilar languages, cultures and educational infrastructures in comparison with Ontario. Similarly, Ryerson was assisted by a number of individuals during the decision-making process,

[839] Z. Elkins and B. Simmons, 'On waves, clusters, and diffusion: a conceptual framework,' *Annals* (2005) 598, pp. 33 – 51.
[840] R. Nash, 'The use and application of Rose's theory of lesson drawing in peripheral areas of Scotland,' *International Journal of Tourism Research,* 5 (2003) pp. 133 - 145 (p. 134).
[841] R. Hulme, 'Policy transfer and the internalisation of social policy,' *Social Policy and Sociology,* 4 (2005) pp. 417 - 425.

particularly his deputy superintendent George Hodgins. What influence, if any, did Hodgins have, in advocating certain foreign policies as opposed to others? The strategic decisions of actors must therefore be examined in a context of personal, subjective choices as well as national, political and institutional structures and processes.

Secondly, the current policy transfer taxonomy inadequately describes what transpired in Ontario. Under the current definition, the terms policy borrowing, transfer, diffusion, emulation and lesson drawing all fit under one umbrella defining the process by which policy X in country A influences policy Y in country B. However, this basic definition fails to capture the dynamic and complex nature of policy transfer. For instance, when he framed the 1846 Common School Act, Ryerson 'borrowed' examples he found in New York, Massachusetts, England, France, Prussia and Ireland, among other locations. He learned from more than one jurisdiction and took away many lessons from his travels. However, does his *praise* of inspectors in Holland carry the same degree of policy borrowing as his *importation* of the Irish National Readers? The former is an idea whereas there is concrete evidence of the latter. Can Ryerson's credit for the notion of free schools be given exclusively to New York and Massachusetts when it was in fact a widespread movement of the time? Similarly, the literature claims that the rules and regulations of the general board of education as well as the appointment of a chief superintendent derived from American examples. However, how does one account for the fact that both entities had existed in Ontario prior to Ryerson's period in office? For all these reasons, it seems justifiable to ask whether there are degrees of policy transfer, and if so, what differences there are between them.

At the internalisation stage of policy analysis, the literature pointed to certain generalisations that assist in successful implementation. Bass (1985) and Burns (1978) have suggested that strong, strategic *leadership* helps to maintain the balance of the system while simultaneously

influencing people's attitudes, thereby affecting performance and effectiveness.[842] Gill and Saunders (1992) discussed the local *capacity* and *will* for successful implementation. *Capacity* refers to the training offered or financial resources provided. *Will* encompasses individual attitudes, beliefs or motivations, as well as the internal institutional conditions that will affect the proposed changes.[843] Similarly, McLaughlin (1987) alluded to *commitment*, *motivation* and *competence* on the part of the public, supplemented by a combination of *pressure* and *support* from policy makers.[844] Pressure is required to focus attention on a reform objective, and support is needed to enable implementation. However, what role do professional organisations, epistemic communities, entrepreneurs, teachers and the media play in shaping the way these new policies or programmes are perceived? How might they assist or, in some cases, undermine the process? There is a clear need to develop a new model to reflect the relationship between non-state actors and the environmental factors that shape policy transfer.

Lastly, although Phillips and Ochs's (2004) 'Policy borrowing in education: composite processes' framework was useful in shaping the current study, it failed to capture the numerous factors and forces that constrain or encourage the policy borrowing process. Moving beyond the decision for policy change, the framework did not take into account the ways in which the local histories, cultures, languages or demographic characteristics of the residents may have affected their perception of the new initiatives. Moreover, the term 'policy borrowing' is used generically by Phillips and Ochs; in fact, as we shall see, there are differences in the process according to both degree and type. The proposed conceptual policy borrowing framework attempts to resolve these issues, placing the study of educational transfer in a broader context.

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[842] B. Bass, *Leadership and performance beyond expectations (*New York: The Free Press, 1985); J. Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978).
[843] J. Gill and L. Saunders, *Developing effective policy analysis in higher education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992).
[844] M. McLaughlin, 'Learning from experience: lessons from policy implementation,' *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 9 (1987) 2, pp. 171 – 178.

7.3.3 Educational policy borrowing conceptual framework

As a prerequisite for considering the framework, it is important to first recognise certain limitations in mapping the policy borrowing process. As Phillips and Ochs (2004) noted:

> Models seek to provide a concrete representation of processes described in the abstract. They serve as structures to facilitate analysis and discussion and to elucidate temporal and other relationships. They can, however, appear immutable, they can mislead (through the injudicious use of arrows, for example), and they can impede the investigation of complex issues by trapping an analysis within what appears to be a limited framework of possibilities.[845]

This relationship between concrete procedures and generalisable issues is one that needs to be acknowledged. The new conceptual framework makes every attempt to avoid 'trapping the analysis within what appears to be a limited framework of possibilities,' instead placing educational policy transfer in a larger but still manageable context of investigation. It recognises that external and internal factors shape decisions (those made by policy makers as well as what the people within the system do with that information) and the numerous actors involved. This is a vital feature of the framework, which will be discussed in more detail in what follows. Moreover, I have opted to look exclusively at voluntary efforts of policy transfer (as opposed to coercive or direct imposition); therefore the framework assumes that there is cooperation and not coercion (although people can be opposed to the new policies).

Figure 8 depicts the conceptual framework developed. Given the initial visual intricacy, I will review the model from the top down, explaining the component parts individually. The explanations will draw on the literature as well as examples from education in nineteenth-century Ontario.

[845] D. Phillips and K. Ochs, 'Researching policy borrowing: some methodological problems in comparative education,' *British Educational Research Journal*, 30 (2004) 6, pp. 773 – 784 (p. 781).

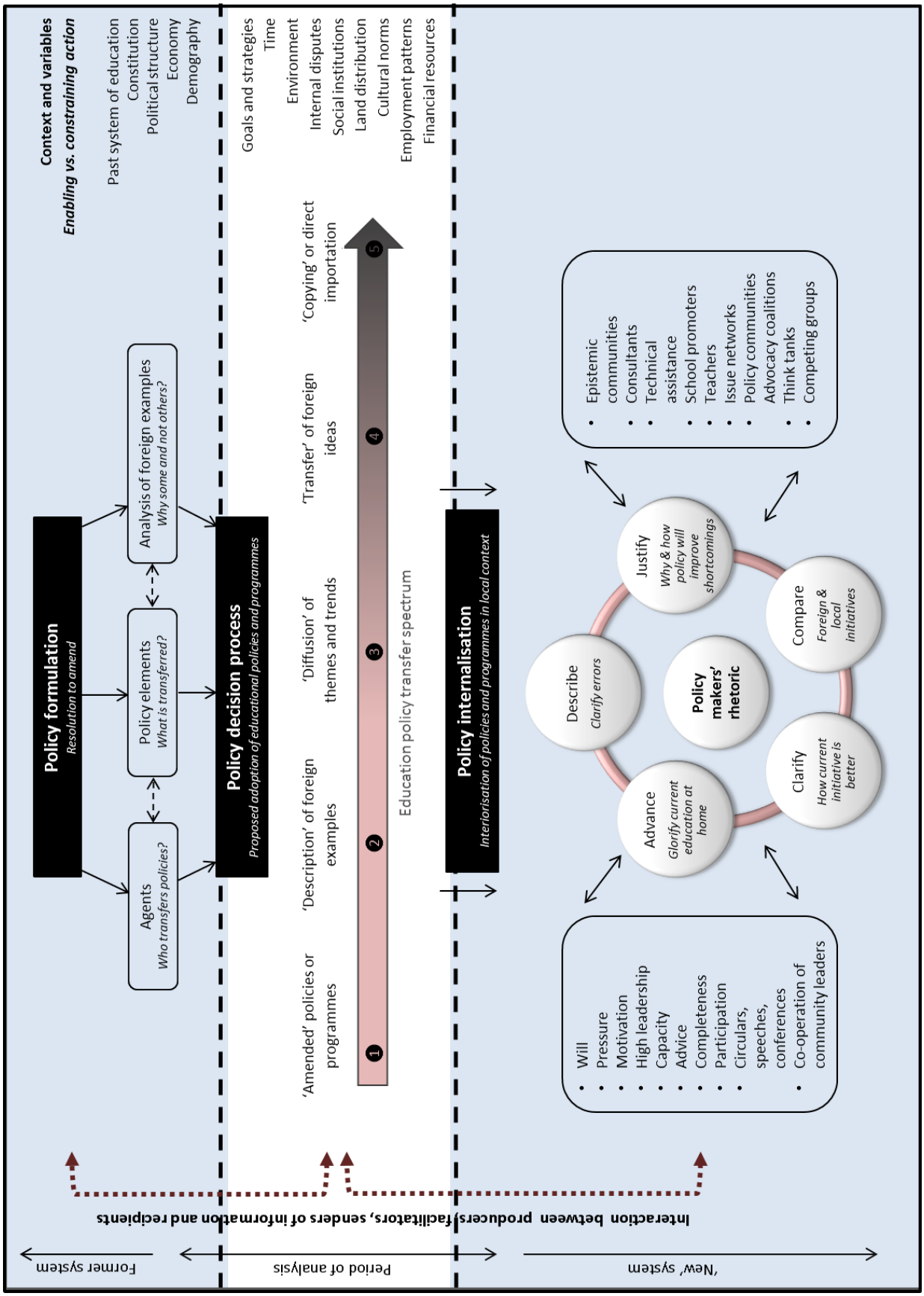


Figure 8: Educational policy borrowing conceptual framework

7.3.4 Stage 1: Policy formulation: resolution to amend

Kingdon (1984) considered public policy making to be 'a set of processes, including at least (1) the setting of an agenda, (2) the specification of alternatives from which a choice is to be made, (3) an authoritative choice among those specified alternatives and (4) the implementation of a decision.'[846] The separate units enable the researcher to systematically examine the various components which make up the policy process. It is for this reason that the first stage of the conceptual framework is 'policy formulation' a process which includes the causal factors, the agents (primary actors, institutions, organisations) involved, the elements (policies, procedures, programmes) sought, and the motives behind the utilisation of foreign examples. It entails a policy arena (a place or scene) within which resolution transpires.

This stage of the process directs our attention to the *agents* (actors) involved in policy transfer. Many authors have named agents as elected officials, political parties, bureaucrats/civil servants, pressure groups, supra-national organisations, non-governmental institutions, consultants, think tanks, league tables, the media and sources of funding.[847] The variety of agents involved in policy transfer shows the different geopolitical levels or areas in which this process can occur: international/global levels; within and between nations/states/countries or in local/community regions. Transfer can take place across time, within countries and across countries.

The *elements* are the policies, procedures and programmes that the agent seeks to amend, develop or transfer. The literature has highlighted policy goals, structure and content, policy instruments or administrative techniques, institutions, ideology, concepts and negative

[846] J. Kingdon, *Agendas, alternatives and public policies (*Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1984) p. 3.
[847] D. Dolowitz and D. Marsh, 'Learning from abroad: the role of policy transfer in contemporary policy-making,' *Governance* 13 (2000) 1, pp. 5-23; K. Ochs, 'Educational policy borrowing and its implications for reform and innovation: a study with specific reference to the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham' (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2005); D. Stone, 'Learning lessons and transferring policy across time, space and disciplines,' *Political Studies Association*, 19 (1999) 1, pp. 51 – 59.

lessons.[848] Stone (1999) has added ideas, ideals, expertise, programmes and personnel from NGOs, and social movements as elements of transfer.[849] Of course, policy makers can be interested in one or several elements.

The reasons underlying the adoption of certain *foreign examples* and not others has already been discussed. Haas (1992) proposed that policy makers consult specific countries because 'they know that their knowledge on policy is incomplete.'[850] Others have suggested that reasons such as similar cultural, institutional or economic structures, access, prior knowledge of the area and contact with key informants make it more likely that a policy maker will investigate specific nations.[851] Alternatively, as Phillips (1997) remarks:

> The reasons […] range from earnest academic ('scientific') examination of discrete features of successful educational practice 'elsewhere', through more or less scientific general consideration of, or casual curiosity about, how other countries organise their education systems, to the cheap political expediency of governments and opposition parties anxious for a range of dubious reasons to demonstrate that education in their country is either under – or overperforming in comparison to other nations.[852]

Policy makers may investigate peer countries simply because they are peers, or else governments may imitate what apparently successful countries do, simply because the foreign nations are high-status countries that are considered to know best.

However, there is an important relationship between the agents, their decisions and their choice of foreign examples, which remains insufficiently examined in the current policy transfer literature. Agents, whether they are individuals or groups, have their own interests, motivations, goals and values. Some actors may be more concerned than others with certain

[848] D. Dolowitz and D. Marsh, 'Learning from abroad: the role of policy transfer in contemporary policy-making,' *Governance* 13 (2000) 1, pp. 5-23; C. Bennett, 'What is convergence and what causes it?' *British Journal of Political Science*, 21 (1991) 2, pp. 215 – 233.
[849] D. Stone, 'Learning lessons and transferring policy across time, space and disciplines,' *Political Studies Association*, 19 (1999) 1, pp. 51 – 59.
[850] P. Haas, 'Introduction: epistemic communities and international policy coordination,' *International organisation*, 46 (1992) 1, pp. 1 – 35.
[851] A. Lenschow, D. Liefferink and S. Veenman, 'When the birds sing. A framework for analysing domestic factors behind policy convergence,' *Journal of European Public Policy*, 12 (2005) 5, pp. 797 – 816; R. Rose, *Lesson-drawing in public policy* (Chatham: Chatham House, 1993).
[852] Copied in D. Phillips, 'Learning from elsewhere in education: some perennial problems revisited with reference to British interest in Germany, *Comparative Education*, 36 (2000) 3, pp. 297 – 307 (p. 299).

problems, while strategic financial, ideological or pragmatic motivations may push the agents in a particular direction.[853] If they are appointed officials, they may seek remedies to problems that their governments want to deal with. These policy actors create particular dynamics in the policy process that are often linked to knowledge production. Some agents are more attuned to policy transfer than others, and are more adept at facilitating certain types of transfer.

Similarly, policy failure is a subjective opinion adopted by political actors to advance their interests or to enhance their own status, credibility or 'modernity.'[854] This reminds us of a remark made by Weimer and Wining (1999) who referred to 'heresthetics and rhetoric' as strategies that actors use to manipulate choice.[855] How confident these agents are in knowing what is supposed to be done or what the legal requirements are must be taken into account. It is therefore vital to identify who is assigned to particular tasks, under what circumstances, and whether they have any personal interests that may or may not influence their decisions. The different approaches and strategies of the agent must be taken into account, including whether tasks or tactics were set up (such as pilot tests), or whether goals and strategies were altered to fit the context.[856] This framework identifies that policy change involves different actors with diverse interests, goals and strategies, all of which play a role in policy formulation and decision making.

In the same way, during trips abroad, the primary agents may be more exposed to the views of advocates, those who administer programmes or receive benefits from them, than the views of critics or neutral observers. As Phillips (2006) notes, they are 'educational tourists'

[853] F. Rizvi, 'Towards a view of policy analysis as practical reason,' *Journal of Education Policy*, 1 (1986) 2, pp. 149 – 162; A. Meltsner, 'Political feasibility and policy analysis,' *Public Administration Review* 32 (1972) 6, pp. 859 – 867.
[854] C. Meseguer, 'Policy learning, policy diffusion, and the making of a new order,' *Annals* (2005) pp. 67 – 82.
[855] D. Weimer and A. Wining, *Policy analysis: concepts and practices* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1999).
[856] K. Boal and J. Bryson, 'Representation, testing, and policy implications of planning processes,' *Strategic Management Journal*, 8 (1987) pp. 211 - 231.

who, perhaps inevitably, see only what they are shown.[857] Furthermore, agents might visit foreign countries because of rumours that these nations are the best administrators of a certain policy. This was undoubtedly the case with Prussia's system of education in the nineteenth century. Müller (1987) summed up German's international reputation during that period:

> The educational reforms in the German states at the beginning of the nineteenth century initiated a development in which collections of diverse school types and vocationally oriented institutions were transformed into an educational system that has become paradigmatic for modern industrial societies.[858]

Information about the innovative Prussian system had reached the shores of Canada and the United States. Therefore, it was not odd that Ryerson travelled from Canada to Prussia, despite dissimilar educational provision, political structures and language between the two nations. Prussia was inspected because it was a model of a nation perceived to be doing something right.

These three entities (agents, elements and foreign examples) are placed within the first stage of the conceptual framework under the heading of policy formulation. The arrows between these entities symbolise the fluid environment of bargaining and negotiating. Policy makers may have specific elements that they wish to amend, or they may visit a foreign location and be inspired by new ideas. The variables are not independent; instead they influence and are influenced by one another.

The left side of the diagram shows a representation of the time elapsed between the 'former' time period and the 'period of analysis.' However, these dates are not concrete but remain transparent. People do not simply forget what occurred before; they reflect, reference and

[857] D. Phillips, 'Investigating policy attraction in education,' *Oxford Review of Education*, 32 (2006) 5, pp. 551 - 559 (p. 553).
[858] D. Müller, 'The process of systematisation: the case of German secondary education,' in *The rise of the modern educational system: structural change and social reproduction 1870 – 1920*, ed. by D. Muller and F. Ringer and B. Simon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) p. 18.

build upon earlier experiences. This directs our attention to the fourteen variables on the right-hand side of the framework, called *enabling and constraining actions*. What I am attempting to show with these variables is that education is placed within a larger environment. Amendments in domestic policies are aligned with the context, boundaries and constraints of that location. Each setting has its own distinct history, culture and norms, as well as the more formal elements of organisation, decision making, rules and regulations.[859] Thus, a review of political, economic and socio-cultural features must be undertaken alongside an analysis of governmental structures, levels of employment and demographic settlements.[860] Likewise, the presence of specific institutions (primary and secondary schools, colleges, vocational institutes, teacher training institutes and so on) must be acknowledged, as well as the existence of epistemic communities, social movements, technical assistance, school promoters, competing interest groups, teacher and parent associations, and school and pupil committees.

Although these bodies may not be directly involved in policy formulation, they are part of a network involved in the education system, and they will all be substantially affected after policy implementation. Consequently, their goals, strategies, complaints and issues are important features and form an integral part of the policy process. I will examine their roles later. Because policies are about real-world problems and real-world decisions, policy analysis must involve a scrutiny of the setting and the actors within that environment.[861] It is therefore insufficient to examine educational policy transfer without taking into account the setting, or while dismissing issues surrounding individual agents' incentives, beliefs or capacities. Many analytical political agendas argue that issues do not simply arise out of

[859] J. Gill and L. Saunders, 'Toward a definition of policy analysis,' *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 76 (1992), pp. 5 – 13.
[860] Ibid.
[861] Ibid.

objective conditions; rather, they are 'continuously constructed social phenomena' created by people trying to make sense of their world and deciding how to act.[862]

7.3.4.1 Policy formulation: the example of Ontario

In Ontario, the impulse for change was the overall dissatisfaction with schooling opportunities in a rapidly developing society. The changing landscape brought about by the rise of immigration and a population move towards city centres put pressure on the existing state of schools. At that time there were no regulations monitoring the curriculum, no admission requirements, no teacher classifications or compulsory pupil attendance. There was, however, a pre-existing educational legislature, in the form of the first Act, directed towards the establishment of fee-paying grammar schools. Thus, the push for educational reform was driven not only internally, by students and parents, but also by societal, political, and economic developments during the century. The 'causes' of change were promoted by individuals and groups both in and outside of government. Figure 9 conceptualises the first stage of policy borrowing in Ontario.

[862] P. Burstein, 'Policy domains: organization, culture, and policy outcomes,' *Annual Review of Sociology*, 17 (1991) pp. 327 – 350.

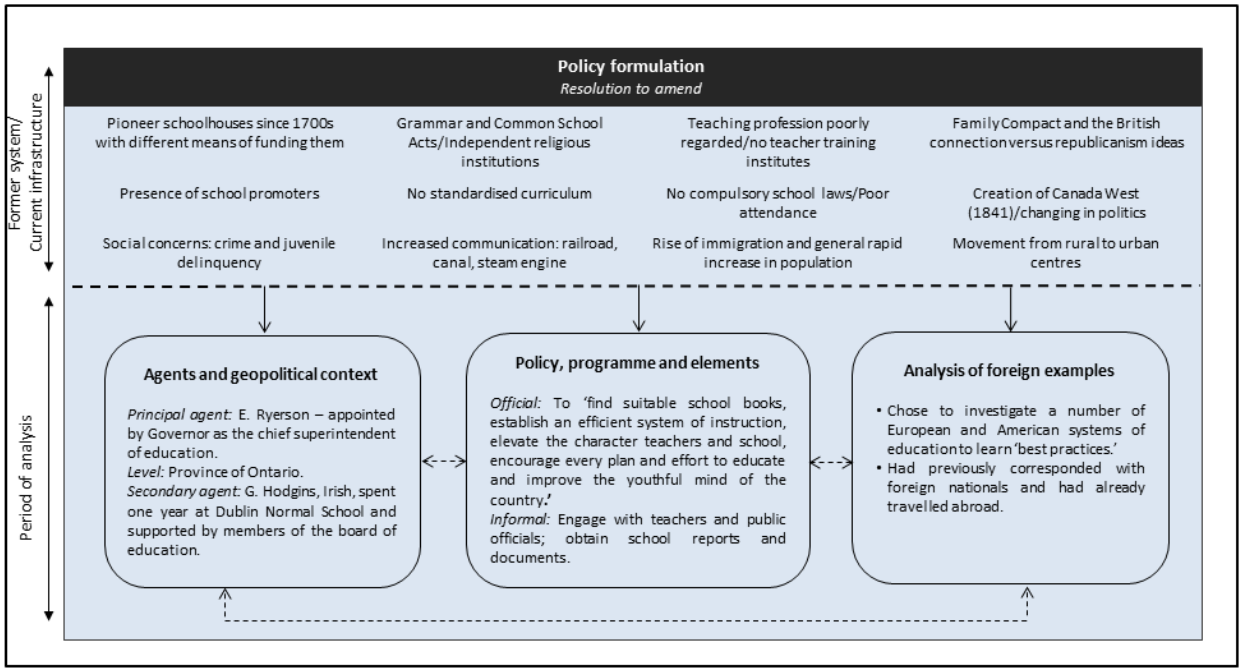


Figure 9: First stage of policy transfer, the example of Ontario

The responsibility for seeking examples and enforcing a revised legislation was placed in the hands of Egerton Ryerson. The Governor gave clear instructions about what Ryerson was supposed to change. He was to 'provide suitable school books, to establish the most efficient system of instruction, to elevate the character both of teachers and of school[s], and to encourage every plan and effort to educate and improve the youthful mind of the country.'[863] However, Ryerson was not averse to foreign travel, or to tackling the current educational problems in the colony. First, as a saddle-bag preacher in his early twenties, he had helped build schools for Indian children. He then toured foreign countries, assisted in obtaining the Charter for Victoria College, and eventually became president of that institution. He later published pamphlets in defence of Methodist preachers. It should therefore come as no surprise that he was not initially in favour of separate schools for Catholic children; rather, his preference was for a united, Christian education under one roof. Ryerson was therefore a researcher as well as a policy maker. This is relevant and important since he was able to

[863] E. Ryerson, 2 October 1844, AO RG 2-8-LB.

identify with the 'underdog, the powerless and the outsider', while simultaneously being 'action-oriented, practical' and concerned with the obvious, immediate issues.[864]

Similarly, the relationship between Ryerson and the deputy superintendent George Hodgins constitutes a significant but neglected theme in the history of Canadian education. A native of Ireland, Hodgins arrived in Ontario in 1833 and was educated at the Upper Canada Academy. After Ryerson accepted his position, Hodgins was made chief clerk and then deputy head. In 1845, he travelled to Dublin and spent one year without pay at their Normal School. He attended the courses, collected documents and took notes. In the autumn of that year Hodgins even joined Ryerson in London, visiting Normal schools in the metropolis and afterwards David Stow's Normal training seminary in Glasgow as well as others in Scotland. He later helped Ryerson to secure an Irish inspector as the first master of the teacher training institute in Toronto.

In the spring of 1864 Hodgins proceeded to the United States to purchase books for the educational depository and played an important role in encouraging community libraries.[865] He published numerous books, including the history of prison libraries, the importance of agriculture, of school architecture and hygiene. He referred to the experiences of foreigners regarding such matters as their methods of proper ventilation, the size of seats and desks, and the construction of playgrounds, wardrobes and urinals.[866] Careful and minute instructions were given, even down to recommendations for the location of the school pump. In 1871 Hodgins went again to the United States to report on technical and science schools. He subsequently reviewed eight American institutions in terms of their admissions, courses of

[864] S. Neilson, 'IDRC-Supported research and its influence on public policy,' *International Development Research Centre* (Dec 2001).
[865] 'Circular to school trustees in regard to school libraries,' 30 November 1876, AO F1201-16; G. Hodgins, *Establishment of prison libraries in Upper Canada, 1855* (Toronto: L.K. Cameron, 1905); G. Hodgins, *The importance of education to an agricultural people* (Toronto: L.K. Cameron, 1900).
[866] G. Hodgins, *Hints and suggestion on school architecture and hygiene with plans and illustrations* (Toronto: Education Department, 1886).

study and methods of funding.[867] Hodgins' sixty-plus years as part of Ontario's board of education were significant and worthy of acknowledgment. He wrote school manuals, visited Europe and the United States and helped to advance educational interests in the province.

7.3.5 Stage 2: Policy decision process: proposed adoption of educational policies and programmes

Richard Rose (1991, 1993) coined the term *prospective policy evaluation* as the stage at which agents evaluate the conceivable effects of a proposed policy or programme before it is put into place.[868] This assessment is not a straightforward process because it assumes that agents can predict future outcomes. As Geller and Johnston (1990) describe:

> Even if one could accurately predict the more sensitive variables, there is yet another level of unpredictability in the system. A policy enters a dynamic environment, which it influences, but which in turn influences the policy which again changes the environment.[869]

The literature has nonetheless pointed to strategies that policy makers can employ to avoid inappropriate transfer.[870] For instance, the agents must be well-informed about the current state of their setting, including demography, religion, infrastructure, political, social and economic institutions, public opinion, available resources, and the existence of other policies. The agents must decide whether any differences in environment, problems or goals will impact on the effectiveness or the viability of their proposal. Geller and Johnston (1990) have also pointed to organisational and personal factors as well as resource allocation as

[867] They are: The Lawrence Scientific Schools (Harvard University), The Sheffield Scientific School (Yale College), The School of Mines (Columbia), The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (City of Boston), The Free Institute of Industrial Schools (Massachusetts), The College of Chemistry, Physics, Mechanic Arts (Cornell), The Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (New York), The Cooper Union of Science and Arts (New York).

[868] R. Rose, 'What is lesson drawing?' *Journal of Public Policy*, 11(1991) 1, pp. 3 – 30; R. Rose, *Lesson-drawing in public policy* (Chatham: Chatham House, 1993).

[869] H. Geller and A. Johnston, 'Policy as linear and nonlinear science,' *Journal of Education Policy*, 5 (1990) 1, pp. 49 – 65 (p. 57).

[870] D. Dolowitz and D. Marsh, 'Learning from abroad: the role of policy transfer in contemporary policy making,' *Governance*, 13 (2000) 1, pp. 5 – 24.

features that may affect an agent's decision.[871] This is not to say that policy transfer cannot occur if there are differences in environment; indeed, it often does, given differences in national contexts and politics. However, resolutions must address whether the recommended solutions run counter to political beliefs or public opinion, or how partisan and interest group politics may perceive the revised scheme. It is at this point, after all these considerations have been taken into account, that the agent will introduce a new policy or programme influenced by foreign nations into the local environment.

Chapter Three outlined the many definitions that authors studying policy transfer have developed in order to describe the process. They include policy borrowing, transfer, emulation, lesson drawing, learning, band-wagoning, copying, diffusion, transplantation, synthesis, convergence, hybridisation and 'pinching' ideas, to name but a few. However, in attempts to conceptualise education in nineteenth-century Ontario, a number of key problems emerged in direct response to those definitions. For example: can a researcher consider it policy transfer when a similar policy was already in place in the local context? How can we be certain that a specific foreign programme or policy had a direct influence on a particular local feature? What are the origins of innovative ideas?

It is from these questions that I propose a new spectrum of educational policy borrowing (Figure 10). The spectrum defines five types of policy transfer: 'amended' policies or programmes; 'descriptions' of foreign examples; 'diffusion' of themes and trends; 'transfer' of foreign ideas; and 'copying' or direct importation. I believe that there is a need to redefine the policy transfer process and better differentiate the degrees of transfer. Claims about transferring policies and practices must be treated with some suspicion if all that is occurring is the spread of rhetoric and ideas. The fact that people applauded foreign policies does not automatically mean that they were implemented.

[871] H. Geller and A. Johnston, 'Policy as linear and nonlinear science,' *Journal of Education Policy*, 5 (1990) 1, pp. 49 – 65.

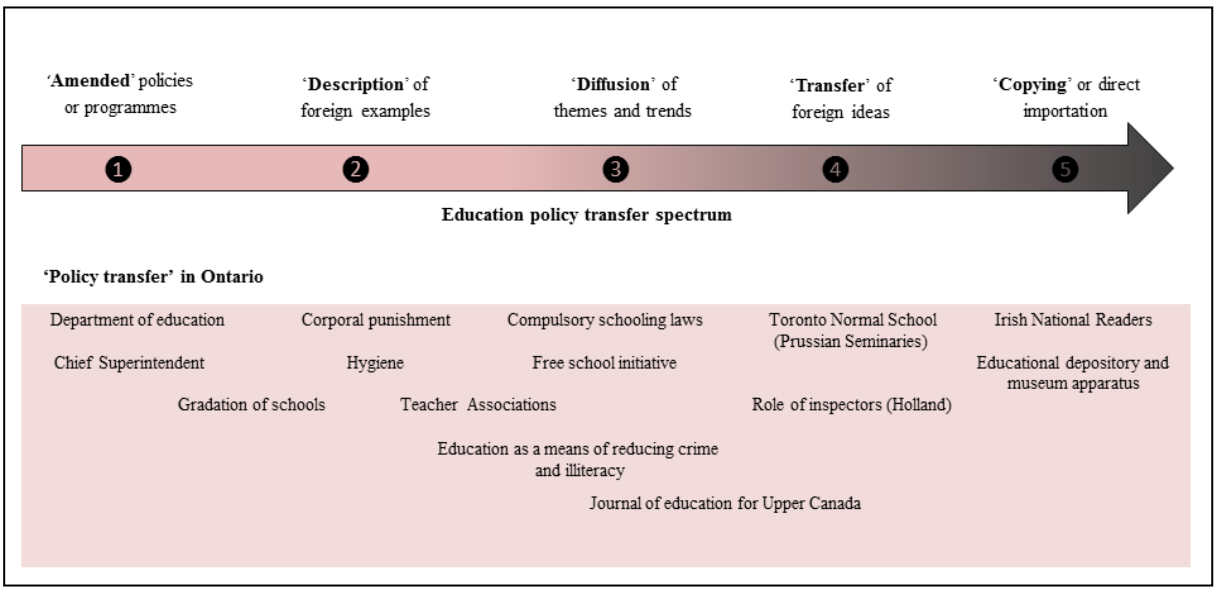


Figure 10: Education policy transfer spectrum

The far-left side of the spectrum constitutes the first stage, the notion that policies and practices can be *amended* based on lessons learned in foreign nations. This feature does not appear in current frameworks because there is often the assumption that policy transfer involves innovation rather than modification. However, I consider that existing policies or programmes that are amended by examples learned from foreign nations are equally important a feature of any policy-transfer framework. As Rose (1993) argues:

> Policy makers are inheritors before they are choosers; as a condition of taking office they swear to uphold the laws and programs that predecessors have set […]. New programs cannot be constructed on green field sites […] they must be introduced into a policy environment dense with past commitments.[872]

The importance of this feature is illustrated in this present study by the roles of the chief superintendent and the board of education. The Common School Act of 1846 amended their responsibilities to make them more like the examples of similar bodies in American states. The board would manage the Normal School, authorise textbooks and assist the superintendent by providing advice. It would also be in charge of the library and book depository as well as the provincial museum. However, both entities had previously existed

[872] R. Rose, *Lesson drawing in public policy: a guide to learning across time and space* (New Jersey: Chatham House, 1993) p. 78.

in educational legislation (see section **6.2.3.1**). Although their former duties were not as heavy and they were not answerable for as many responsibilities, their introduction was not a novel feature. Therefore, some policies are new and innovative, while others are merely incremental refinements of earlier policies, amended as a result of lessons learned from foreign nations.[873]

The second stage in the spectrum is the *description* of foreign policies and programmes. The agent provides anecdotes, publications, lectures, statements and so on, sharing ideas and public information to expand thoughts, inspire fresh ideas, or describe failures and inadequacies. The agent may also identify approaches that are admired, enthuse the public, warn against inefficient practices, or, as Steiner-Khamsi (2004) points out, 'glorify' or 'scandalise' the home situation.[874] Peter Hall's (1993) notion of 'policy learning', Rose's (1993) 'inspiration' and Weiss's (1997) 'enlightened function' would fit this category.[875] What description implies is that agents acquire new knowledge and shift their thinking over time as a result of learning from others.[876] However, policy description does not imply policy transfer, although it may eventually lead to it.[877] This is an important feature in the spectrum because it suggests that foreign description is not innovation. In Ontario, Ryerson recounted lengthy anecdotes about the usefulness of teacher associations in France, pupil discipline in Prussia and the value of parents reading to their children in Massachusetts. However, these were descriptions and do not necessarily denote transfer.

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[873] C. Bennett and M. Howlett, 'The lessons of learning: reconciling theories of policy learning and policy Change,' *Policy Sciences*, 25 (1992) 3, pp. 275 – 294.
[874] G. Steiner-Khamsi, 'Blazing a trail for policy theory and practice,' in *The global politics of educational borrowing and lending*, ed. by G. Steiner-Khamsi (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004), pp. 201 - 217 (pp. 207 - 208).
[875] P. Hall, 'Policy paradigms, social learning, and the state: the case of economic policymaking in Britain,' *Comparative Politics*, 25 (1993) 3, pp. 275 – 296. C. Weiss, 'Research for policy's sake: the enlightenment function of social science research,' *Policy Analysis*, 3 (1977) 4, pp. 531-545; R. Rose, *Lesson-drawing in public policy* (New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, 1993) p. 27.
[876] Ibid. Hall (1993); D. Stone, 'Transfer agents and global networks in the 'transnationalisation' of policy,' *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11 (2004) 3, pp. 545 – 566.
[877] H. Wolman, 'Understanding cross national policy transfers: the case of Britain and the US,' *Governance*, 5 (1992) 1, pp. 27 - 45.

In Duncan's (1964) thesis on American influences on Ontario's educational laws, she claims that Ryerson 'borrowed' from Horace Mann's policies as shown in a letter written by the Canadian educator to Mann in late 1846.[878] There is only one communication between Ryerson and Mann that is still in existence, and considering its importance, it is quoted here in full:

> I have to apologize for not acknowledging before now, the receipt of a valuable School Report, which you were so good as to transmit to me several months ago, and for which I most cordially thank you. I take the liberty to enclose you herewith my own Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada, and several other papers relating to our common schools. You will perceive from my Report, how largely I have availed myself of your observations on European schools, and how fully I concur with you in the opinion as to the merits of German methods of teaching. I shall have pleasure in transmitting to you future reports and documents on common schools in Upper Canada. I will at the same time feel extremely obliged by any reports or other papers on education in your state, which may be at your disposal.[879]

Ryerson's letter indicates his agreement with Mann's reports and his admiration of German schools. However, at no point in the letter does Ryerson say that he borrowed Mann's ideas. Similarly, in Onn's (1969) examination of Ryerson's philosophy of education, he said that a letter 'from the Rhode Island superintendent, Henry Barnard, further shows that, if anything, there was a desire on the part of American educators to 'borrow' Ryerson's idea.'[880] Onn alludes to the following passage sent to Ryerson: 'I have lately seen both that [the Report of 1846] and a Supplementary Report of yours at Mr. Mann's. I write to say, that I shall be very glad to procure a set of your reports.'[881] The fact that a policy maker labels foreign policies or practices favourably, or writes about them extensively, does not of course indicate that they were utilised. Barnard did not openly say that he copied Ryerson's educational plans. Nor did Ryerson state that he imitated Mann's ideas. A researcher must therefore be cautious

[878] M. Duncan, '*American influences on Ontario's elementary school legislation, 1836 – 1850'* (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Rochester, 1964).
[879] E. Ryerson to H. Mann, 23 December 1846, AO RG 2-9-1-45.
[880] D. Onn, 'Egerton Ryerson's philosophy of education: something borrowed or something new?' *Ontario History*, LXI (1969) pp. 77 – 86.
[881] H. Barnard, Commissioner of public schools for Rhode Island to E. Ryerson, 20 October 1847, AO RG 2-12.

in labelling certain individuals or institutions as influential if individuals are merely commending them or admiring their achievements (see section **1.3** regarding Ryerson and foreign influence).

The third stage of policy transfer deals with *universal themes or trends*. These themes are the result of the existence of collective ideas among a network of elite actors, who share common problems and are concerned with their resolution at a particular period. This implies that policy makers learn about widespread, emerging policies and programmes, which in turn inspires local changes. Policy makers then 'spread the word' in their respective societies and governments. We may even consider this a process of intellectual osmosis. Heichel, Pape and Sommer's (2005) theory of 'sigma convergence' adequately describes this idea which implies a 'growing together' or a decrease in variation in domestic policies, as well as a natural spread of ideas, instruments and organisational forms across borders.[882] Domestic circumstances in each nation differ, but there is a consensus of motivation and concern at an international level.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the spread of democratic ideas and the application of industry to science, in conjunction with an increase in population, urbanisation and industrialisation, transformed all aspects of life. Waves of immigration also required educators to devise new schemes to prepare children for citizenship and changing work roles. According to Musgrave (1988), this was a time when the role of education and the duties of state and society were redefined.[883] Similarly, Rose (1993) pointed out:

> Every country has problems, and each thinks that its problems are unique [...] However, problems that are unique to one country [...] are abnormal [...] confronted with a common problem, policy makers in cities, regional governments and nations can learn from how their counterparts elsewhere responded.[884]

[882] S. Heichel, J. Pape and T. Sommerer, 'Is there convergence in convergence research? An overview of empirical studies on policy convergence,' *Journal of European Public Policy*, 12 (2005) 5, pp. 817 – 840.
[883] P. Musgrave, *Society and Education in England since 1800* (Mehuen: London, 1968).
[884] R. Rose, *Lesson-drawing in public policy* (Chatham: Chatham House, 1993) p. 3.

As a result of these changes, a tidal wave of questions emerged – for example: was there a relationship between pauperism, juvenile crime and illiteracy? What sort of education should be given as the basic minimum? What duties, if any, should the state perform?

The questions that Ryerson posed were therefore not unusual; rather, they were universal during that period. His basic educational philosophy was that education should be founded on Christian principles, and should be practical, free and compulsory. These were not new ideas but part of a common school movement. In Europe and the United States, universal education would soon replace the earlier independent fee-paying or charity schools.[885] According to Miller (2004):

> Schools could destroy the habits of insubordination among industrial workers, prepare serfs for wage labor, or bring new industries to a backward region. In communities where the family or the church was thought to be in crisis, schools could rebuild both faith and the hearth.[886]

Sections **1.3** and **4.5** documented the way that education was considered to be the solution to juvenile delinquency and crime, as well as changes in industry, commerce and immigration. Ryerson, along with foreign educationalists, considered public instruction to be the cheapest and best method to deal with these social factors. Victor Cousin remarked, 'when we open a school, we close a prison.'[887] Although the history of education in each nation is unique, they all shared a quest to form or maintain a complete system of instruction that would benefit all children. If one acknowledges the prevalence of these existing ideas in the nineteenth century, then Ryerson's attempts to implement such practices in Ontario must be related to his attempts to 'catch up' with foreign nations. He was part of an international community that was dealing with common problems.

[885] J. Richardson, 'Common, delinquent, and special: on the formalization of common schooling in the American states,' *American Educational Research Journal*, 31 (1994) 4, pp. 695 – 723.
[886] P. Miller, 'Gender and education before and after mass schooling,' in *A companion to gender education*, ed. by T. Meade and M. Wiesner-Lanks (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) pp. 129 – 145 (p. 133).
[887] A. Gillis, 'Institutional dynamics and dangerous classes: reading, writing, and arrest in nineteenth-century France,' *Social Forces*, 82 (2004) 4, pp. 1303 - 1332.

The fourth stage of the policy spectrum is the *transfer of policies and practices*. A foreign country's policy and programme serves as a blueprint that pushes ideas and produces some level of policy change in the local context. The notions of adaptation, hybridisation, synthesis, imitation, mimesis and emulation all fit within this category. What is implied is that policy makers reject copying every detail, but accept that particular features of foreign policies may help in the design of legislation at home. According to Bennett (1991), 'the central characteristic of emulation is the utilization of evidence about a programme or programmes from overseas and a drawing of lessons from that experience.'[888] The transfer can occur at all stages of the policy process: during policy formulation, decision making or internalisation. This feature is illustrated by Ryerson's description of school inspectors in Holland. In that nation inspectors were efficient, effective and highly regarded. However, the performance of inspectors in Ontario is the result of individual behaviours. Ryerson may have hoped that they could control and monitor the schools in the same way as in Holland, but the outcome of local behaviour cannot be attributed to a policy in a foreign nation.

Another example is the argument that Prussian seminaries were the blueprint for the Toronto Normal School. Ryerson's reports offer ample information about the worthiness of these establishments, and provide great detail about the manner in which they advance the status of teachers, curricula and student participation. However, the design of the Prussian seminaries was not directly imported into Ontario. Instead, the rules and regulations were designed on Canadian soil, and the first master was from Dublin.[889] Three years after that institute was opened, a new one was built in Ottawa and designed to be similar to the New York State

[888] C. Bennett, 'What is policy convergence and what causes it?' *British Journal of Political Science*, 21 (1991) 2, pp. 215 – 233.

[889] With the assistance of the Irish Board of Education, Mr. Rintoul, head master of Model School in Dublin was offered the position. However, before coming to Canada, he resigned in April 1847 due to the poor health of his wife. The position was then accepted by Thomas Robertson of Dublin. Robertson completed his studies at Trinity College (Dublin), afterward established a classical school followed by being selected as inspector of schools under the direction of the National Board of Education in Ireland. He later rose as Head Inspector of National Schools. He would serve as Head Master of the Normal School in Toronto for nineteen years (*DHE* vol. 19, p. 311).

Normal School at Albany.[890] Thus, the success and value of the Prussian seminaries influenced the creation of Toronto's institute, but they were not directly copied.

Similarly, elements of the process can fall within two phases of the spectrum. The JEUC, for example, was proposed to assist with the diffusion of information as stipulated in the 1846 Common School Act. Ryerson suggested that the journal should be structured (in terms of its column layouts, size and so on) like *Blackwood's Magazine* or the *London and Westminster Review.* He even wrote to the Provincial Secretary asking for the journal to be supported financially, as in the United States and France:

> Such a publication entitled 'the Common School Journal' is published at Boston Massachusetts by the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, for the publication of which the legislature for the state of Massachusetts granted assistance. A similar journal is published at Albany […] and to the circulation of which the state of New York has contributed [...]. In Paris they are published, under the sanction of the Minister of Public Instruction, two monthly journals.[891]

Foreign examples provide a reference point on size, format and method of financing. However, the notion of a journal of education as a means of communicating information was widespread during the century.

Although the third and fourth stages of the spectrum seem to be similar, there are nonetheless important differences. In the fourth stage (transfer), it is evident that policy makers learn from specific foreign nations and utilise the material in the construction of their policies and practices. During their planning process they may overtly state that they have visited specific nations to gather information to use back home, or to copy elements into their own policies. This is a 'hard' transfer of features such as policy tools, structures and practices. The third stage of the spectrum (universal trends) implies that similar developments occurred in many foreign nations. I suggest that this is a 'soft' form of transfer (for example, the spread of norms and knowledge, ideas, concepts and attitudes), and

[890] 'Proceedings of the provincial board of education, 25 March, 1850,' *DHE* vol. 9, p. 157.
[891] E. Ryerson to Hon. Daly, Education Office, 29 December 1846, *DHE* vol. 6, p. 271.

subsequent structural or modernising factors can account for policy adoption.[892] Jordana and Levi Faur (2005) propose a similar distinction between policy learning (stage three in the spectrum) and policy emulation (stage four). According to these authors, policy learning has to do with a redefinition of interest and behaviour after watching both the actions and outcomes of others, whereas policy emulation has to with a redefinition of interests and behaviours after watching only the actions of others.[893]

The right side of the spectrum is the most overt form of policy transfer, termed direct *copying* or importation. This form of mimicry implies that policies are copied *in toto*, or that programmes or instruments are imported from one context to another.[894] Direct copying can be observed by reviewing the wording of legislature or programmes, which will be identical to the foreign example. In this thesis, the Irish National Readers would fit into this category. Minutes from the board of education confirm that the Irish textbooks were sought, and receipts from ministers, teachers and trustees confirm that they were received.

Moreover, during Ryerson's additional tours in Europe and the United States, he visited foreign countries and obtained material intended for the Provincial School of Art and Design, the book depository, the educational museum and community libraries.[895] While at the Universal Exhibition in Paris (1855), he wrote to Hodgins about supplying globes, maps, models and books for Ontario:

> The best map of the kind (raised maps) was one of British India, on paper maché, published in London. We must get it. There were some good globes *en relief*, in the Prussian department, manufactured in Berlin. Some printed and books also, *en relief*, for teaching the blind. I think some prints and models and various other articles may be selected, which will be useful.[896]

[892] D. Stone, 'Transfer agents and global networks in the 'transnationalisation' of policy,' *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11 (2004) 3, pp. 545 – 566.
[893] J. Jordana and D. Levi-Faur, 'The diffusion of regulatory capitalism in Latin America: sectoral and national channels in the making of a new order,' *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 598, pp. 102 – 124.
[894] F. Dobbin, B. Simmons and G. Garrett, 'The global diffusion of public policies: social construction, coercion, competition, or learning?' *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33 (2007) 1, pp. 449 - 72; C. Shipan and C. Volden, 'The mechanisms of policy diffusion,' *American Journal of Political Sciences*, 52 (2008) 4, pp. 840 – 857.
[895] E. Ryerson, 16 July 1850, *DHE* vol. 26, pp. 220 – 222.
[896] R. Ryerson to G. Hodings, 23 April 1867, *DHE* vol. 19, pp. 304 – 305.

To assist Ryerson, Hodgins himself left Canada for England in July 1867 to obtain objects for the educational museum similar to those in Britain. There is evidence that Hodgins returned with models of school furniture, coins and objects from London, Paris, Berlin and Vienna.[897]

The spectrum of analysis shows the degree to which policy transfer occurs. It ranges from foreign influence in amending existing policies, through dialogue, to direct importation. This is a stark contrast to Bennett's (1991) claims about policy transfer, according to which it must be proved that transfer is not the result of the effects of similar modernising factors having the same, but separate effects in different states.[898] I consider this feature to be a part of the process (see section **3.3.5**). Similarly, Rose's (1993) development of lesson drawing to include 'adaptation, hybrid and synthesis' is another way of saying that foreign elements were altered or combined for the new context.[899] The spectrum includes five categories, which show that differences do exist. A researcher must be cautious in using the term *transfer* when the type of borrowing merely takes the form of ideas from a foreign nation.

7.3.6 Stage 3: Policy internalisation

The next stage in conceptualising policy borrowing is investigating what occurs once these policies and programmes are internalised in the local context. As Chapter Three has outlined, case studies show that policy transfer failure may be the result of the rush to emulate without due reflection on local appropriateness and efficacy.[900] Likewise, the successful adoption of policy innovation depends to a large extent on local factors in the native country. Sufficient support and training, resources and knowledge all help to facilitate internalisation.

[897] G. Hodgins, 'Reports to the chief superintendent of education by the deputy superintendent in regard to the depository and museum, 1867,' *DHE* vol. 20, p. 5.
[898] C. Bennett, 'What is policy convergence and what causes it?' *British Journal of Political Science*, 21(1991) 2, pp. 215 – 233.
[899] R. Rose, *Lesson drawing in public policy* (New Jersey: Chatham House, 1993).
[900] A. Gibb, 'Small and medium enterprise development: borrowing from elsewhere?' *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 7 (2000) 3, pp. 199 – 211.

Of course, the response to policy implementation differs from person to person and from location to location. It is only natural that the participation of heterogeneous groups, with different norms and perhaps incompatible goals, is likely to result in different outcomes. Individual resistance to change is the result of basic human characteristics such as perceptions, personalities, needs, habits, security and fear.[901] As McLaughlin (1987) notes:

> The implementation process itself creates a new reality and changes the system, often unanticipated problems or counter-cynical consequences emerge […]. Every implementation action simultaneously changes policy problems, policy resources, and policy objectives.[902]

It is for this reason that to recognise the success or failure of policies in a particular environment, one must understand the greater context of that environment. Changes in economic, technological, ideological or institutional structures all facilitate the space for policy transfer as well as affecting the nature of the transfer itself. In acknowledging the number of factors that may assist or undermine these changes, we must discuss the role of *teachers* and *educational conventions*. At the internalisation stage these are important vehicles for the spread of policy, interpreting and disseminating information.

7.3.6.1 Role of teachers, educational conventions and exhibitions

Although the influence of teachers is seldom felt at the policy formulation stage, their power during implementation is massive. If they accept the proposals, they can facilitate compromise and integration while helping to inspire and recruit support. If they are dissatisfied with the current plans, they may dismiss the requirements out of hand. Raab (1994) sees teachers acting as filters for a policy which is being transformed into the local context.[903] A similar remark is made by Elboim-Dror (1970), who explains:

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[901] A. Lau, 'Making sense of contemporary strategic implementation: towards a conceptual model,' *Public administration and management: an interactive journal*, 4 (1999) 4, pp. 494 – 507.
[902] M. McLaughlin, 'Learning from experience: lessons from policy implementation,' *Educational Evaluation and policy analysis*, 9 (1987) 2, pp. 171 – 178 (p. 174 - 175).
[903] D. Raab, 'Theorising the governance of education,' *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 42 (1994) 1, pp. 6 – 22.

> In education, teachers, as the main and nearly sole means of educational technology, play the central role in the achievement of educational policies […]. Education's uniqueness in this respect [is the] degree of the teachers' acceptance of *and* identification with the policies that direct their work, especially those concerned with intangible goals, as the crucial determinant of the success of those policies.[904]

Remarkably, this is precisely the tone taken by a school official in Stanford when writing to Ryerson:

> Journals of education, however useful, annual reports, superintendents' visits and lectures, visitors and libraries have no permanence in the school room. There the teacher like the sun on the natural world diffuses his kindest, gentlest, warmest influences.[905]

The role of teachers in Ontario following the 1846 school act shows the importance of their efforts and their influence on other members of society. Although the perception of school teachers during the nineteenth century was often one of low occupational status (see section **4.4**), I believe that their efforts greatly propagated the use and acceptance of the Irish National Readers.

As chapter **6.4** described, many criticised the importation of the Irish texts. Textbook choice had traditionally been the decision of parents, with many opting for American publications because of their readability and price. However, many teachers wrote to the department advocating the usefulness of a standardised curriculum and requesting the creation of a regulatory body to oversee the matter. The content of the Irish National Readers was commendable, and they solved the endemic problem of textbook diversity. At their conferences, teachers discussed this topic in addition to more general elements of the school law. By the 1860s, teachers' associations had formed in a number of counties including York, Oxford, Prince Edward, Grenville, Northumberland, Bruce, Middlesex, Huron and Wentworth. In 1861 the Teachers' Association of Canada West was founded, later renamed the Ontario Teachers' Association. An entry in Toronto's *British Colonist* said that after a

[904] R. Elboim-Dror, 'Some characteristics of the education policy formation system,' *Policy Sciences*, 1 (1970) pp. 231 -253, (p. 244).
[905] J. Jones to E. Ryerson, 1 February 1855, AO RG 2-12-18-788.

school meeting 'a considerable number of parents remained, and enrolled the names of young persons as pupils.'[906] Public meetings increasingly took place to discuss school initiatives and even submitted suggestions to the Council of Public Instruction on ways to improve the school bill.[907] All these measures were the prerogative of the people. Their existence helped to create an intellectual atmosphere that was supportive of the policy makers' proposals, and which ultimately helped to promote the Irish books. In many ways, teachers acted as 'policy champions' who had the expertise to be leaders in their groups, with negotiating skills and the drive to be persistent in their tasks.[908]

Educational exhibitions played an equally important role in disseminating information. For example, a provincial exhibition took place in 1857 showcasing agricultural designs, specimens, philosophical apparatus, furniture, maps and charts. During Ryerson's second educational tour of the United States and Europe, he attended the Universal Exhibition in Paris (1855) and bought objects and apparatus for the educational museum.[909] In 1860, Ryerson was invited to attend the International Industrial Exhibition at Buffalo (New York). The goal of the exhibition was to share information on the mechanical arts, and countries were encouraged to display samples of their engines and machinery, chemistry, mineralogy, agriculture, horticulture and dwelling designs.[910] Three years later, Ryerson was invited by John Pruyn, the chancellor of the University of the State of New York in Albany, to meet to discuss 'subjects of common interest, the means of elevating and improving college instruction and of securing harmonious effort in advancing liberal education, the relations of the academics and colleges, and their mutual influence on each other.'[911] Other topics that they wished to discuss at that meeting included methods of instruction, the value of lectures and recitations, prizes, and whether examinations should be written, oral or both. The

[906] 'Opening of the New Toronto Academy,' The *British Colonist*, 2 October 1846.
[907] 'Report of a committee of the Ontario Teacher's Association on the Grammar and Common School Bill, 30 December 1868,' *DHE* vol. 22, p. 24.
[908] J. Kingdon, *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1984).
[909] 'Dr. Ryerson's second letter to the provincial secretary, 1 January, 1856,' *DHE* vol. 12, p. 127.
[910] D. Bell to E. Ryerson, 28 July 1860, AO RG 2-12-151-3.
[911] J. Pruyn to E. Ryerson, 15 April 1863, AO RG 2-12-51-243.

exchange of material and the subjects discussed, often printed in the local press facilitated the spread of information.

There is also evidence that Canadians actively participated in international educational conventions. For example, Mr. Robertson, the principal of the Normal School, attended a convention in Philadelphia in 1850.[912] Likewise, a report from the teachers' association of Upper Canada (1865) described a lively discussion between Ryerson and Reverend James Fraser, a representative from England. The mere presence of this individual and the dialogue between him and Ryerson are significant in terms of their discussion of educational themes.[913] Similarly, school inspectors often quoted foreign educationalists such as Matthew Arnold in their annual reports to the board of education, describing why certain educational features would be advantageous for Ontario.[914] They, too, had an opinion about how education should be run.

Any significant new proposal will be interpreted, responded to and implemented differently. This is especially the case for education, where local contexts are typically separated from the policy makers at the formulation stage. However, policies and programmes can be successfully transplanted from one area to another if the conditions are favourable. Strong leadership by significant actors who are knowledgeable about the domestic circumstances helps, as does the company of and communication between principal policy makers and networks, such as epistemic communities, school promoters and interest groups. The presence of these networks of actors from both inside and outside government assists in the application and operation of novel features. In fact, the dialogue between school advocates (teachers, pupils, Normal School graduates) and adversaries enabled education in Ontario to advance. It was not Ryerson who dictated how schools would be maintained, but the

[912] 'National common school convention at Philadelphia, 17 October 1849,' *JEUC* 2 (1849) 167.
[913] Teachers' Association of Upper Canada (1865), *DHE* vol. 19, pp. 52 – 66.
[914] This was the case in J. Mackenzie, County grammar school inspector's report to Ryerson (January 1870) whereby he quotes Matthew Arnold's view of schools in Prussia and Switzerland, *DHE* vol. 22, p. 63.

inhabitants of the local areas. Nor was it Ryerson who led school meetings; instead it was community leaders who took the initiative by their own will and motivation.

Figure 11 explores the features discussed above, as well as the different factors that assisted in internalising foreign policies and practices in Ontario. It is based upon the earlier framework introduced in Chapter Six, 'Internalised foreign examples: steps to end point', which described the five different stages that Ryerson used to justify the introduction of his external policies and practices. These efforts were influenced by the interaction between the public and policy makers, by their active communication and involvement.

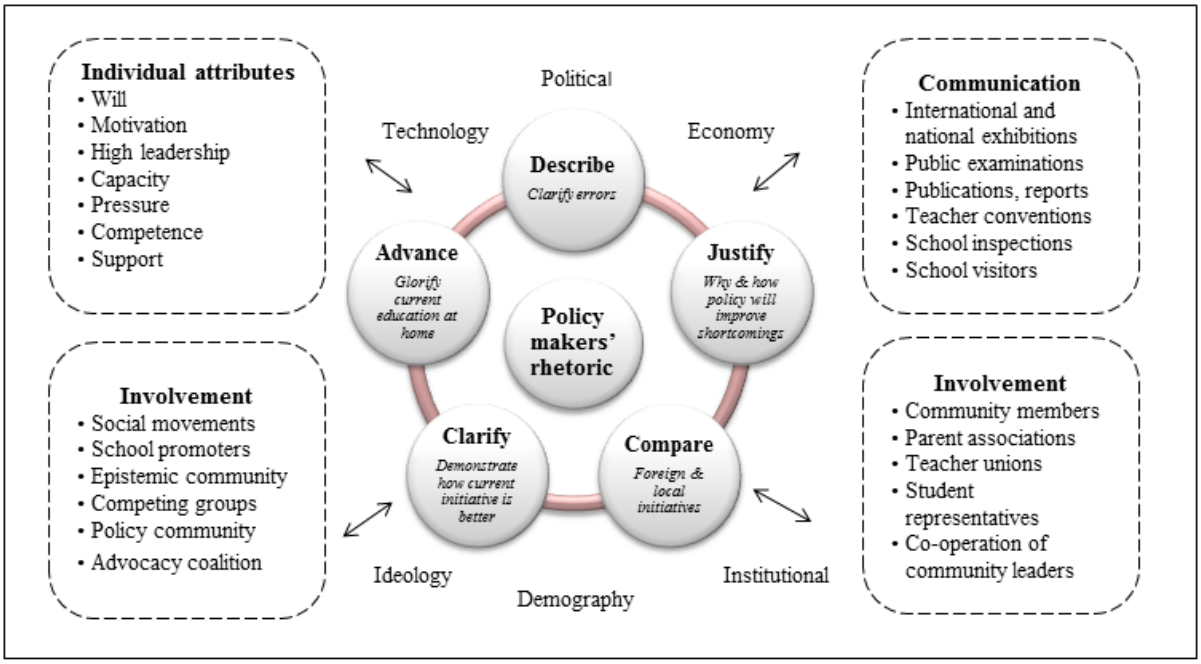


Figure 11: Factors influencing the internalisation of foreign policies and programmes

Any evaluation of the internalisation process must bear in mind the larger, evolving process of policy transfer; it should not be restricted to the discourse of policy makers, because this would be to disregard or underplay larger economic, political and administrative forces.[915] These elements shape policy development because policy transfer is located within a wider

[915] K. Boal and J. Bryson, 'Representation, testing and policy implications of planning processes,' *Strategic Management Journal*, 8 (1987) pp. 211 – 231.

social context. Immediately following internalisation, new topics, new requirements and new concerns emerge. It is only natural for individuals to interpret and respond to policies and practices differently. Funding that was previously accessible may disappear, and there may be shifts in individual interest, drive and participation. There may be philosophical conflict (about what should be done), conflict over location (about where something should be done), conflict over means (about how something should be done), conflict over timing (about when something should be done); and conflict over extent (over how much of something should be done).[916] The assessment of the outcome of a policy or programme in isolation from its context ignores the fundamental character of the implementation process. The analyst must therefore be familiar not only with the broad stages of implementation, but also with the substantive aspects of a policy programme.

7.3.7 Educational policy borrowing redefined

The 'educational policy borrowing conceptual framework' is a broad model that draws from and contributes to wider epistemological debates about the policy process. It includes four basic elements: the 'context' within which the planning occurs; the preparation 'process' itself, the result or 'outcome' of the arrangement and the 'interconnections' among these three elements. The framework is written from top to bottom but this does not imply that these are concrete stages, decisions or veto points.[917] On the contrary, policy transfer is not hierarchical and linear; rather, it is a continuous, evolving setting. Problems are never 'solved'; instead they evolve through multiple routes where each action simultaneously alters the original objective. As the process unfolds, new issues, new requirements and new considerations emerge. It is for this reason that there are permeable boundaries between

[916] K. Boal and J. Bryson, 'Representation, testing and policy implications of planning processes,' *Strategic Management Journal,* 8 (1987) pp. 211 – 231.
[917] P. Sabatier and D. Mazmanian, 'Implementation of public policy: a framework of analysis,' *Policy Studies Journal,* 8 (1980) 4 pp. 538 - 560.

phases. The model anticipates that transfer may be stalled (deliberately or not) from stage to stage.

As educational systems exist and operate within and as part of other institutions and larger social forces, the framework shows how peripheral and variable contexts affect all stages of policy transfer. Societal interests, historical experiences, ideologies, values and alliances permeate the world of decision makers. School promoters, support groups, consultants, competing interest groups and adversaries all play important roles in the internalisation stage. These groups perceive policy acceptability differently. Their support may hasten the spread of policy and can enlighten the public; alternatively, their dissatisfaction may impede the transmission of knowledge or create rivalries. As Kandel (1933) rightfully pointed out in his discussion of policy borrowing:

> In order to understand, appreciate and evaluate the real meaning of the educational system of a nation, it is necessary to know something of its history and traditions, of the factors and attitudes governing its social organization, of the political and economic conditions that determine its development.[918]

The framework discussed in this chapter has attempted to create a better relationship between the structure and individual efforts that can help to facilitate the process of transfer.

Moreover, the success of policy transfer at the internalisation stage cannot be 'weighed' or 'compared' without something to weigh or compare against. The historical background, the types of educational institutions, legislation and philosophies all lay the groundwork for and guide the nation's view of education. A measure of success might therefore be a comparison with previous entities. The political, economic and social structures that form the constitution of the given nation or institution (formal authority structures, the legislature, the legal system and public administration) all play a role in the process of transfer.[919] The

[918] I. Kandel, *Comparative Education* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933) p. xix. This quote was discussed earlier in Chapter 3.
[919] B. Hjern and C. Hull, 'Implementation research as empirical constitutionalism,' *European Journal of Political Science*, 10 (1982), pp. 105 - 115.

current environment (resources, social institutions, employment, population, immigration) may enable or undermine the goals of the policy maker. Similarly, as Sweeting (2005) points out, education can be influenced by such things as life-style adaptations, fashions in other academic fields, or even attitudes to children.[920] There is no end to the interrelations between school and society. As education policy transfer takes place within a multi-organisational setting, its analysis requires a framework that acknowledges the wider contextual variables, enabling and facilitating the examination of factors that affect the process. This new explanatory framework, derived from my exploration of policy transfer in nineteenth-century Ontario, has redefined the process and built on the legacy of policy studies in Comparative Education. It may serve as an additional analytical device for those engaged in researching educational policy transfer.

[920] A. Sweeting, 'The historical dimension: a contribution to conversation about theory and methodology in comparative education,' *Comparative Education*, 41 (2005) 1, pp. 25 - 44.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

It appears to me, sir […] that this young country has had the advantage of profiting by the experience of older countries – by their failures and disappointments, as well as by their successes; and that experience, improved by your diligent exertions and excellent judgement.

Lord Elgin, 1851 [921]

The Act he framed after making personal inquiry into the school systems which then prevailed in the United States and in the several countries in Europe. He never thought it perfect, and had introduced amendments from time to time as suggested by experience, and after consultation with the people of the country.

The Constitutional, 1866 [922]

During my connection with the Education Department from 1844 to 1876, I made five educational tours of inspection and enquiry to educating countries in Europe and the United States […] and thus developed the school system as a result of repeated inquiries in foreign countries, and the freest consultation with my fellow-citizens of all classes, in the several county conventions.

Egerton Ryerson, 1884 [923]

[921] Lord Elgin, Governor General to E. Ryerson at the laying at the Normal School building, 2 July 1851, in G. Hodgins, *Ryerson Memorial Volume*, (Toronto: Warwick and Sons, 1889) p. 88.
[922] 'County School Convention,' St Catherine's *The Constitutional*, 18 January 1866, AO RG 2-12-85-35.
[923] E. Ryerson, *The Story of my life* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1884) p. 351.

8.1 Modern education in Ontario

When Egerton Ryerson was appointed chief superintendent of education, his task was to modernise, streamline and advance the system of public instruction. Although a basic infrastructure had been in place since the eighteenth century, a large proportion of children remained uneducated. There were private venture and grammar schools, but these could only be attended by paying tuition. There were also Sunday Schools, but these facilities were available in select locations. What was taught, and by whom, were both dependent on what resources were available and who was willing to teach. The emphasis at that time was on providing schools for children of the elite members of society.

Following his appointment, Ryerson travelled to nations with established systems of public instruction as a precursor to devising a new school law. His elaborate Report of 1846, written following his tour, provided the blueprint and outlined theories explaining pedagogical methods and the societal importance of education. He commented favourably on universal free education, a proper gradation of schools, competent inspectors, teacher training institutes and a broad curriculum covering topics from the basic three Rs to moral and religious instruction, civil government and linear drawing, all based on the subjects employed in Europe and America.

The school system that Ryerson proposed, influenced by the Report, was approved by the government and became law in spring of the same year. Subsequent amendments to that Act followed, but they continued to be based upon resident involvement. The freeholders and householders of each school section needed to come together and decide that they wanted to support a school, whether by voluntary subscription, rate bill or property tax. The school trustees elected by those same individuals determined how much they wanted to pay to build and maintain their school and cover the teacher's salary. Thus the system gave the right to arrange its own meetings to each municipality, the right to select their own teacher through

elected representatives to school ratepayers, and inviolable rights to each parent with regard to the religious instruction of their children. Local superintendents, appointed by the County Councils, apportioned the legislative grant, and government aid was only to be given to assist local efforts.

Despite numerous school bills passed during Ryerson's appointment which modified features of the original, the legislation continued to be based on the principles of individual self-reliance and local exertion under a central authority. Ryerson's last notable legislation, passed in 1871, brought city, town, village, grammar, Model and Normal Schools all under one educational bill. Free schools supported by property tax became mandatory. As a natural corollary, so did attendance for all children aged between seven and twelve years. Other features were strengthened, such as an increased teacher pension, more stringent qualifications for inspectors and the creation of Township Boards of Trustees to assist with arbitration. Ryerson's original framework, envisioned nearly thirty years earlier, was finally realised.

The focus of this thesis was to examine the reaction of stakeholders, both within and outside of government, to utilising foreign educational policies and programmes. Using *Picasa 3* as an image management resource, over 150,000 documents from Archives Ontario were digitalised and coded. This has enabled a chronological review of the perception of internalising foreign educational policies. The documents included Ryerson's personal notes and circulars, incoming and outgoing correspondence of the board of education, minutes of meetings, the journal of education, and articles from the popular press. This mass of written material has provided a remarkable variety of opinion, illustrating the inner life and struggles and the success and growth of education in the province.

These historical sources revealed that features of the 1846 school bill received mixed reviews. Conflict was found over the location of schoolhouses, boundaries, the roles of local

officials, and teacher appointments and responsibilities. In the township of Rosborough, for example, the superintendent was unsure whether it was the pupils' parents or the teacher who decided the programme of studies.[924] In Tuckersmith, the superintendent complained that the arrival of immigrants spread smallpox throughout his district, compelling the school to close for one month. Who was responsible?[925] As districts grew, locational disputes continued: what material should be used to construct a new building, or who should be hired to build it? With the establishment of the Toronto Normal School and the granting of first, second and third class certificates, residents were unsure whether they would have the funds to pay for qualified teachers. Such was the dilemma faced in the townships of Walpone and Oneida:

> I am aware that the intention of the act is to raise the standard of qualification in the teacher and the quality of the instruction given, but in the state of society here, that is, in newly settled townships or those only partially settled, the effect is to depreciate instead of raising the value of education afforded. The settlers are not able to give such a sum as would compensate a teacher of high qualifications and therefore giving up all hopes of obtaining the government aid they are content to engage any young lad or female or person of the very lowest attainment because they can hire them for a small sum and from month to month.[926]

Schools taught by disliked teachers, built in unpopular places or at a considerable expense, were from time to time burned.[927]

This thesis focused on the dialogue surrounding the chief superintendent and board of education, schools supported by taxed property, and the introduction of the Irish National Readers as the approved textbooks. These initiatives were described in the Report of 1846, have links to foreign nations, and were both supported and criticised. Studying these three entities has shown the numerous difficulties faced following their introduction. For instance, the move towards a centralised board of education, and the role of the chief superintendent

[924] D. Foolies, School section No. 3 in the township of Rosborough, 27 April 1863, AO RG 2-12-48-17.
[925] W. McConnell to E. Ryerson, September 1869, AO RG 2-12-66-100.
[926] W. Bethune, superintendent for the townships of Oneida and Walpole to E. Ryerson, 6 May 1850, AO RG 2-12-8-458.
[927] B. Curtis, 'Patterns of resistance to public education: England, Ireland, and Canada West, 1830 – 1890,' *Comparative Education Review*, 32 (1988) 3, pp. 318 – 333.

as head of that body, was labelled 'Prussian despotism' in Canadian schools. Many resented local or regional educational decisions being made by a group of men in the thriving city of Toronto. The law now obliged specific rules to be followed, and if they were not, schools could be refused their government grant. Others focused their criticisms on Ryerson himself. Some resented his religious affiliations; he was a Methodist, not an Anglican. Others begrudged Ryerson because of his relationship with Lord Metcalfe. Ryerson was appointed by Metcalfe, rather than by being elected or by virtue of a connection to the political party in office. Many felt that this decision went above the rule of law and contrary to the provisions of a responsible government, which the colony was supposed to be enjoying.

The free school question created another conflict. Between 1850 and 1870, common schools could be financed by three means: general subscription, rate bill or property assessment. However, many wealthier residents objected to paying a larger share of the burden – or, conversely, settlers protested at paying taxes to educate their wealthier neighbours. Others resented having to pay for education which they had no stake in. Meeting minutes revealed that a number of free schools were narrowly lost by two or three votes, such as in Aylmer:

> At a public meeting held in said section […] it was decided by a large majority that the teacher's salary and the expense for the school house, be raised by a tax on the ratable property in the school section, but the time for raising the teacher's salary in this way, was not specified, as there is some opposition getting up, by some wealthy persons who have no children to send to the school, it is thought that they may have a majority.[928]

When the votes did go in favour of free schools, individual taxpayers fought the matter on technicalities or refused to pay their contribution altogether so that the entire burden fell on the trustees.

Lastly, introducing the Irish National Readers was not an easy task. Like the previous features of the bill, books were an independent affair provided by parents or teachers. Where some residents preferred the traditional use of the Bible, others opted for popular American

[928] A. Weldon of Aylmer to G. Hodgins, 9 November 1850, AO RG 2-12-9-496.

editions because they were cheap and easily procurable. As one irate superintendent wrote regarding the use of books from the United States:

> They can do us no harm and often do us much good. It is illiberal and pusillanimous to suppose that they can injure our institutions as we have them now. It is not consistent with free trade principles […]. It is a retrograde memoranda and here very unpopular.[929]

People also challenged the board's book depository. They felt that the sale of school supplies and apparatus should be left to private enterprise. These three examples show the disapproval of fundamental principles in Ryerson's school law. Although a central department to oversee education, enabling all children to access schools and providing a uniform curriculum, seem like the norm today, these features of the new framework were fiercely criticised.

8.2 Citizens' reactions and larger contextual changes

In the Victorian era in Europe and in Canada, complex transformations affected many nations. The shift from a rural, agrarian, mercantilist world to one of markets, commercial and industrial capitalism proceeded at an unprecedented rate. This unavoidably necessitated the reorganisation of education. Reform movements on both sides of the Atlantic began to reflect a child-centred ethos through mass education. No longer could education be left in the hands of volunteers (Church schools, dame schools, charity schools, Sunday schools); the new philosophy demanded a framework that was centralised, standardised and modernised. The ideas of Froebel, Fellenberg and Pestalozzi infiltrated the works of school promoters, while industrial, technological and mechanical schools were being set up for industry. To improve the nation, it was necessary for individuals to acquire specific skills, whether these might be how to drain the land or grow vegetables. By the late nineteenth century

[929] W. Hutton to Billa Flint, local MPP of Sidney, 21 May 1850, AO RG 2-12-8-547.

compulsory school laws had been passed in Prussia, England, France and the United States, among other nations.

However, where some regions were commercialising and industrialising rapidly, poorer districts were left untouched. Where some appreciated the government's involvement, others did not. Basic skills needed to be acquired for the workforce, and there needed to be some guidelines to ensure that this was accomplished. Children roaming the streets were now a major concern for society, and could not be left solely to parents to manage. Therefore, the misconceptions, misrepresentations and hostility towards certain tenets of Ontario's school bill had as much to do with a reaction to educational changes as to alterations in the province.

Moreover, at the time, Ontario was enjoying the first steps of responsible government. Men in government were now to be elected, rather than appointed based on their religious affiliations. However, and as Curtis (1983) suggests, this system had different meanings for different classes of people. To some, responsible government referred to the colonial state being self-directed and independent from the British government. For rural settlers, it meant local autonomy and therefore home-grown improvements. To members of religious sects, it meant sound administration and the abolition of the privileges enjoyed by those in the Church of England. However, for members of the Family Compact, the term was a threatening republican idea which looked to sever the colony's connection with Britain.[930] The significant issue is that people contemplated the relationships between the state and the British government and between local and national affairs. One cannot help but see how this consideration runs parallel with questioning what direction educational matters would take.

One of Ryerson's most pivotal moments was his response to John Strachan's 1825 sermon. Ryerson was offended that Strachan represented Methodist preachers as disloyal Americans

[930] B. Curtis, Preconditions of the Canadian state: educational reforms and the construction of a public Upper Canada, 1837 – 1846,' *Political Economy*, 10, pp. 99 – 121.

and the Church of England as the established Church of the province. Religion and politics were intertwined. In Ryerson's rebuttal, which pushed him to public prominence, he stressed the importance of equal opportunity, religious tolerance and the lack of a need for a Church of the province. Ryerson represented those classes that struggled against the control and the centralised, land-granting power of the traditional churches. Ryerson, along with others, desired a move away from the influence of the clergy to give more power to the state. Therefore, the reaction of stakeholders to educational provisions must be placed into a larger historical context.

8.3 Ryerson's school bills

When Ryerson was appointed superintendent, he immediately set out to review the best practices of countries with mature educational systems. As illustrated in Chapter Five, he commented on Prussian teachers and their gradation of schools, problems with omitting religious instruction in the United States, and the value of teacher associations in France. He also commended Dutch inspectors, Swiss educators and English manufacturers. Because of the numerous nations mentioned, it is easy to see how different authors might credit different nations as influencing Ontario's system of education. If a researcher fails to adequately differentiate between Ryerson's own remarks as opposed to his quotations of foreign comments, they may incorrectly credit a particular nation. It is perhaps for this reason that so many authors credit so many nations as influencing Ontario's school law.

As this thesis demonstrates, no one nation had sole influence over Ontario's educational policies. The 1846 act was based on a hybrid of features: lessons learned from foreign examples, familial roots, and the larger socio-political environmental that characterised the era. Ryerson did not lose sight of the fact that each nation has its own set of rules and

regulations, histories and cultures. He recognised which features needed amending, looked at foreign examples, and framed his new school law to fit into the Canadian context.

In many ways, criticism was to be expected. With Ryerson's revised school bill, education became much more centralised and streamlined. It would not favour schooling for the wealthy or a strictly religious education, but would provide a service that could be accessed by all. A board of education was established to oversee general supervision and outline basic rules and regulations. A chief superintendent of education was obliged to frame school laws, recommend textbooks and lecture on the importance of education for all. Parents who kept their children away from school became subject to fines.

Unlike previous legislature, the role of the board and the chief superintendent would be independent of the political party in office, and they would have the express purpose of reforming and unifying education. The examples of Prussia, France, England, Ireland and the United States all served as examples. These nations all had one man overseeing a board to coordinate school provisions and be responsible for the diffusion of education. However, these nations served as examples, not as blueprints. As this thesis has outlined, the board and the chief superintendent had existed in Ontario nearly thirty years before. There was nothing original about having people in charge of education. Therefore, a community's resistance to the new law was in many ways an attempt to assert their accustomed rights in school management. The new law took power away from autonomous control into a consolidated system. However, it also made communities more liable for regulating what transpired in their schools.

Likewise, people objected to Ryerson years before he became superintendent. As early as 1833, his *Impressions*, written following his tour of England, provoked attacks from the Reformers who perceived Ryerson as a Tory and closely connected with the British establishment. Ontario's Reformers wanted to move away from monarchism in favour of

republican ideas. On the other hand, people also objected to Ryerson because he was affiliated with Lord Metcalfe. Thus, one must be cautious in interpreting criticism of the role of chief superintendent as indicating hostility towards the idea of an educational leader, when it was really hostility towards Ryerson as a Methodist preacher or as a colleague of the Governor.

Regarding free schools and property tax, why should people be compelled to pay for the instruction of others? In that period, many believed that individuals were destined for certain occupations, and therefore acquiring training in the arts and industries was a waste of money. Similarly, as education had traditionally been a private affair, parents who desired their child to receive an education either instructed them at home, hired tutors who ran private-venture schools, or sent them to Europe and the United States for higher education. By the passing of the 1807 District School Act, government grants became available to support grammar schools. This support was extended in 1816, with the first bill to frame an education system that was intended for the common people. However, such schools were in general the concern only of the subscribers. There was no local taxation, no broad community participation and no geographical school boundaries. The parents paid the bulk of the expenses, framed the curriculum to suit their own notions, and hired whom they pleased.

By the 1850 School Act, residents could be liable for a tax on their property to support free schools. As outlined in the Report of 1846, this had been the established method in the United States, and it had originally been borrowed from Europe. Foreign nations also demonstrated that providing schools resulted in a decrease in crime and juvenile delinquency, both issues which were a concern in the province. Therefore, there was nothing unique about Ryerson's proposal. Moreover, this method of funding schools was a suggestion, not a mandatory imposition. It was not until nearly two decades after it was proposed, that it finally became law.

Lastly, the question of Irish textbooks and the exclusion of American editions must be put in perspective. Where some schools used books, others did not. Some schools employed the Bible, others used American editions. As with the other complaints, the board now took more active control of what transpired in the schools, and the Irish National Readers were chosen because of their use overseas, their general content, and because they addressed the problem of textbook diversity. The Five Readers were written so that lessons progressed from simple words to complex issues. They embodied basic teachings on truth and morals, as well as more advanced lessons on mathematics and linear drawing. The universal use of a single book series meant that it did not matter if pupils moved schools or boundaries; their knowledge would still be transferable. These books would streamline and unify the system of education.

American textbooks were discouraged because of the nature of their content, not because they were from the United States. The choice was available for residents to maintain their own independent, private schools if they were discontented with the board of education's recommendations, such as the exclusion of American books. Moreover, this question of anti-Americanism or republicanism was a widely discussed topic, which did not begin when Ryerson was appointed as superintendent but started years before. Following the War of 1812, there was a general fear amongst the citizens that Americans would bring their ideas to the British colony. Therefore, those individuals who had links to the Family Compact or the British connection would have little problem excluding American textbooks. For those who emigrated from the United States and brought their Readers with them, this was problematic. Thus, the difficulties that Ryerson faced in implementing his school act were not only due to misunderstanding or confusion, but were also in response to broader circumstances.

8.4 The internalisation of Ryerson's school bill

Despite the issues discussed above, a survey of general responses and figures reflects favourably on Ryerson's school bill. Between 1844 and 1876 the numbers of schools and teachers nearly doubled and the enrollment in schools increased, as did total educational expenditure. Schools were filled with maps, globes and blackboards, and residents quickly saw the advantages of a centralised board and free schools. Even the Irish Readers proved to successfully develop a pupil's knowledge. Other features that had caused initial unrest met with similar acceptance. The parsimonious spirit exhibited against teachers' salaries was sustained until it was shown what a difference was seen after employing a teacher trained at a Normal School. The hindrances of uncomfortable schoolhouses and irregular attendance were intertwined. When schools were built to withstand the winter by paying for brick and stone, or when desks and chairs were fitted for scholars, attendance increased. The historical sources reveal that many celebrated the school act, and among those who resisted, with time many realised the value of the new innovations. Based on these findings, one may conclude that Ryerson's school act was successfully internalised in Ontario. How was this achieved?

In Ontario, three significant factors enabled Ryerson's school bill to prosper. Firstly, general *political, economic and social affairs* had an unavoidable impact on education. The 1840 Act of Union and 1867 Confederation changed the political makeup of the country. Each province now had its own law-making body with an established federal government in Ottawa. Affairs were no longer dictated by the British government, but by Canadian citizens themselves. Likewise, the era of responsible government meant that officials were elected to office not because they were Anglican or affiliated with members of the Family Compact, but because of their skill. As the population of the united colony of Canada grew, so did the number of talented individuals with considerable leadership qualities. They recognised the needs of the Canadian people.

As described in Chapter Four, in the early part of the century, life was about survival. It was about enduring independently in small communities and relying on one's own resources. However, with the forces of industrialisation and commercialisation, everyday life changed. More money went towards infrastructure. Canals, roads and railways improved transportation, and communication united scattered towns. Inevitably, this had an impact on education. Children no longer suffered from illness as hygiene improved, and better access and transport meant they could attend school all year round. Inspectors could visit schools more regularly, and as towns grew, neighbourhoods became linked, which led to school competitions, all features that would excite educational interests. The men on the board of education represented different religious persuasions, but all recognised the importance of providing a system for all the pupils of the colony. Therefore, the success of Ontario's school laws had to do with a pre-existing groundwork, as well as political and social restructuring.

The second important feature that enabled education to succeed was the result of the *philanthropic efforts* carried out by teachers' and parental associations, superintendents, trustees, masters and visitors. These entities recognised the importance of education, and through their individual will and perseverance, they demanded that their children and their neighbours' children should be properly instructed by qualified teachers. Acquiring the basic three Rs was no longer sufficient: they expected an education that developed advanced skills and expertise. They wanted to fulfill this task themselves, and could now do so with the government actively enforcing basic laws. Participating at annual school meetings was essential to decide on school sites, methods of school finance and public examinations. If conflicts occurred, it was up to local magistrates, trustees and parents to come to a solution. Only in the most extreme cases, did the chief superintendent get involved. These promoters utilised their power, which led to increased support. Likewise, the local press reported on school examinations, the results of inspections or arbitrations between teachers and parents. These would also have stimulated the interest of the residents. Even the JEUC encouraged

teachers to write about their success or offer suggestions to their peers. The activities of these individuals played a crucial role in internalising the school bill.

Lastly, it would be wrong not to give credit to the architect of the educational system itself, *Egerton Ryerson*. It is remarkable to think that he was in charge of public schools for thirty-two years, through numerous changes in politics, economic crises and social developments. Through his own determination, he tolerated personal and professional attacks on the grounds of his religion, his alliances and his educational philosophy. It was his own idea to meet with the public by visiting municipal councils every five years. He lectured on free schools, institutes for agriculture and mechanics, and the value of libraries. He also addressed the issue of vagrant children and anti-social behaviour. At the end of his lectures, Ryerson had face-to-face, frank discussions with residents. These served as opportunities to listen to their complaints and address their concerns.

With reference to contemporary policy borrowing literature, in many ways Ryerson's educational law was successful because he made it clear that the problems faced in the province were *real*, and what he proposed was an adequate solution. Applying Rose's hypothesis (see section **3.3.6**), it can be seen that Ryerson effectively borrowed foreign policies because he provided ample information to the public, and he was knowledgeable about the state of things in Ontario as well as the infrastructure of foreign nations. He engaged the public, and ultimately it was the public that implemented his suggestions. He defended the law by way of the Journal of Education, newspaper submissions, manuals and lectures, demonstrating that what was effective abroad could also be prosperous in the province.

Subsequent amendments to the school law solved emergent problems, and Ryerson continued to pursue foreign travels to gain information, fresh ideas or resources. In fact, he never stopped referencing foreign examples. Ryerson even used Victor Cousin's famous

quote as a rationale for policy borrowing (see the introduction of this thesis). He later wrote that a superintendent must be a 'person of literary and scientific experience like in Pennsylvania' and the secret of the success and efficiency of the school systems in Holland, Switzerland and other European countries 'is traced to their securing thoroughly qualified teachers.'[931] Even Ryerson's circular to town-reeves on the establishment of libraries stated:

> [That] most of these regulations, especially those which related to the forfeitures incurred for the detention, loss or abuse of books, are adapted from the corresponding regulations of the state of New York, where much experience has been acquired in the management of public school libraries.[932]

Ryerson unrelentingly sought foreign best practices for possible transferral to Ontario. Perhaps it was this direct comparison between Canadian and foreign examples that instigated rivalry in their respective populations about the elevation of education for all classes.

As the literature indicates, policy transfer can succeed if the right ingredients are present. Ontario's new school bill prospered because it was framed in a way that addressed real problems and concerns. Nothing about Ryerson's school act was entirely original. His measures had been tried and tested in foreign nations. However, there was support at the ground level from teachers, communities and cooperative leaders, who all showed willingness, capacity and motivation to support the proposals. Similarly, internal changes in the province inescapably stimulated education. Better roads, faster means of communication and a higher standard of living all affected perceptions of the value of education. Participation at conferences and exhibitions engaged the public; the more people embraced the initiative, the more power and support the policy maker gained. It was this critical mixture of a man of tremendous skill and perseverance, the presence of a significant number of school promoters and internal changes in the colony that enabled the new school law, based on foreign examples, to succeed.

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[931] E. Ryerson, *A special report on the systems and state of popular education on the continent of Europe, in the British Isles, and the United States of America: with practical suggestions for the improvement of public instruction in the Province of Ontario* (Toronto: Leader Stem Press, 1868) p. 189.
[932] E. Ryerson, 'Circular to town-reeves of townships on the establishment of public school libraries,' 3 August 1853, *DHE* vol. 11, p. 31.

8.5 Conceptualising education and beyond

Much has been written on the history of education in Ontario, covering the development of elementary and secondary schools, higher degree institutions, the rise of the teaching profession, and the separate Catholic movement. There have also been many studies on Egerton Ryerson's life and his work in establishing the public school system in Ontario. However, there was no study that traced the growth of education with reference to foreign influence in the context of political, economic and social factors, and which examined what the Canadian people thought of those initiatives. This thesis has attempted to fill that gap and therefore contributes to Canadian historical literature.

As the early educational comparativists stressed, to study policy borrowing, one must be knowledgeable about the history, culture and philosophies of the nations involved. It is insufficient to study the process without recognising the host nation's political structure, economy, demography, cultural norms, and social institutions. It is for this reason that this research paid particular attention to Ryerson's background, goals and motivations as well as the infrastructure of the province itself. The analysis of these domestic features and the people's perception of Ryerson's bill guided the framing of the 'educational policy borrowing conceptual framework.' Policy borrowing is not one-dimensional, linear or straightforward but involves various factors and forces that drive or in some occasions, impede the process. Equally, one must be cautious in labelling an event 'policy borrowing' when it might merely be a change of idea. Larger historical movements need to be recognised in order to differentiate between complete, direct policy copying or the amalgamation of policies or the convergence of ideas. Perhaps Canadian historians need to re-evaluate the degree to which Prussian seminaries influenced Toronto's Normal School, or the extent to which the laws of New York and Massachusetts formed the basis of the duties of the chief superintendent and the board of education. The new framework developed in

response to the limitations in the current literature, may be useful for those engaged in educational policy borrowing research.

Ryerson's contribution to education was exceptional. Upon his death, the bishop of Manchester accurately said that 'what national education in England owes to Sir. J. K. Shuttleworth, what education in New England owes to Horace Mann that debt education in Canada owes to Egerton Ryerson.'[933] During Ryerson's thirty-two years in office, he made five educational tours in Europe and the United States and visited each county in Ontario to lecture on the importance of education. Ryerson was part of a generation of nineteenth century school planners who proposed education for the masses, not only for their own reasons but for the security of the nation. It was about resolving deficiencies and not remaining stationary.

In the field of Comparative Education, there is often caution about the phenomenon of educational policy borrowing. This is certainly the argument made by Michael Sadler, whose famous statement was quoted in the introductory chapter of this study. However, as this thesis shows, policy borrowing can occur, and it can also be a successful process. The school act that Ryerson framed was not only accepted by Canadians, but was also praised overseas. It is perhaps this reverse cross-national attraction that ultimately affirms the significance of Ontario's initiatives. This historical investigation has reconsidered an aspect of the history of education in the nineteenth century. In doing so, we may continue to learn something new, and perhaps we may even borrow features from the past to shape the future.

[933] E. Ryerson, *The Story of my life* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1884) p. 601.

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Appendices

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Appendix 2: *Picasa 3*

The following words and expressions were used to tag images on *Picasa 3*. To show the variety of subjects discussed, they are divided into themes.

Theme 1: foreign references

Albany	England	Knox College	Poles
Alien	Eton College	Lancastarian	Polish
American	Europe	Liverpool	Portland (Maryland)
American books	Florida	Lower Canada	Privy Council
Anti-American	Foreign booksellers	Maine	Committee (England)
Arkansas	Foreign publishers	Manitoba	Providence
Australia	Foreign receipts	Maryland	Prince Edward Island
Baltimore	Foreign teachers	Massachusetts	Prussian despotism
Bavaria	France	Matthew Arnold	Quebec
Belgium	German	Michigan	Rhode Island
Bell	Germany	Minister of Public	Rochester
Boston	Grosvenor Library	Instruction (Prussia)	Roman
British	Hamburg	Minnesota	Russia
British books	Hartford	Mississippi	Sacramento
British Columbia	Harvard	Missouri	San Francisco
Brooklyn	Henry Barnard	Monitorial	Scotland
Buffalo	Holland	Mulhuauser	Smithsonean Institute
California	Horace Mann	Nebraska	Springfield
Cambridge	Hullah	Nevada	Switzerland
Canada East	Illinois	New Brunswick	Tallahauser (Florida)
Chicago	Imported	New Hampshire	Tansania
China	India	New Haven	Tennessee
Cincinnati	Indiana	New Jersey	Travellers
Cleveland	Indianapolis	New York	Vancouver
Colorado	Iowa	Nova Scotia	Vermont
Columbus	Ireland	Ogdensburg	Victor Cousin
Connecticut	Irish	Ohio	Victoria
Copying	Irish National	Oxford University	Virginia
Council of the	Readers	Pembroke College	Warsaw
University in France	Italy	Pennsylvania	Washington
Cross-national	Japan	Pestalozzian	West Virginia
Delaware	Kansas	Philadelphia	Wisconsin
Detroit	Kentucky	Pittsburgh	Worcester
District of Columbia			Yale College
Edinburgh			

Theme 2: Department of education correspondence; individuals, locations

Agriculture and Arts Bureau	Executive Council	Ottawa
Apparatus	Government	Police
Attorney General	Guelph	President of the Executive
Bath	Hamilton	Council
Bathurst	Hodgins	Prison

Blank (form)	Jennings	Provincial Secretary
Brockville	JEUC	Public Works
Bruyere	Kingston	Putman
Catholic	Legislative Assembly	Queen's priner
Census	Library catalogue	Ramsay & Armour
Charbonnel	London	Rigaud
Church	Lunatic	Robertson
Coloured inhabitants	Lutheran	Ryerson – anti
Crown lands	McGill University	Ryerson – pro
Dalhousie	Memoralistis	Strachan
Deaf and Dumb	Metereological	Treasuerur
Depository	Methodism	University question
Education pamphlet	Ormiston	Weslyan

Theme 3: Miscalleneous terms

Abuse	Failure	Manual	Shows (performace)
Accomodation	Faith	Map	Sick
Act	Farm	Mechanics	Singing
Agriculture	Female	Model school	Snow
Arbitration	Finance	Military	Sober
Architecture	Fire	Minutes	Society
Archives	Free	Money	Spelling
Assembly	Funds	Museum	Spring
Asylum	Furnishings	Music	Squatter
Attendance	General	National	Stationary
Audit	Geography	Nature	Steam
Backwoods	Girls	Navigation	Stock
Bible	Government	Neglect	Students
Bills	Gradation	Ninetheenth	Sunday schools
Blessings	Grading	Oath	Superannuated
Boarding	Grammer	Orthography	Sweep
Brick	Greek	Pamphlets	Systematically
Buildings	Guide	Periodical	Taxable
Certificate	Gymnastics	Petition	Taxes
Cheap	High school	Philosophical	Teacher
Citizens	High school pressure	Physician	Teaching
City	Holiday	Playground	Terminolgoy
Civilised	Horticulture	Poor school	Textbooks
Classificaiton	Illegitimate	Popular	Thesis
Classified	Illegal	Poverty	Township
Clergymen	Immigraiton	Prizes	Travel
Clerk	Illustration	Qualification	Trustee neglect
Clock	Immigration	Railroad	Trustee/teacher
Clause	Impression	Rapids	Unjust
Contract	Indian	Rate	Upper canada
Convention	Inspector	Recipts	Urgency
Criminals	Instructions	Religious	Vacation
Crop	Internal	Report	Vagrant
Currency	Irregularity	Rights	Variety
Curriculum	Issues	Road	Ventilation
Dangerous	Kindergarten	Robbed	Violence
Depository	Labour	Rod	Visitor

Discipline	Language	Roman	Vocal
Disease	Lantern	Royal	Vote
Distance	Law	Rules & regulations	Vouchers
Drafts	Lectures	Sabbath	Water
Drinking	Letter	Salaries	Wealthy
Drill	Liberty	Sanitation	Window
Elementary	Libraries	Scholarhsips	Wood
Employment	Local	Separate	Yards
Examination	Location	Shipping	Young
Exhibition	Lumber		Youth

The following newspapers have been consulted:

Banner newspaper (Brighton)	Ottawa Free Press
Brantford Courier	Independent (Toronto)
Bytown Gazette (Ottawa)	Irish Canadian (Toronto)
Canada Gazette (Ottawa)	Kingston Chronicle Gazette
Canadian Correspondent (Toronto)	Kingston Daily News
Canadian Freeman 1st Edition (Toronto)	Nation (Toronto)
Canadian Freeman 2nd Edition (Toronto)	Ottawa Times
Chronicle newspaper (Kingston)	Perth Courier
Correspondent and Advocate (Toronto)	Port Hope Watchman
Dundas (Warder)	Simcoe Reformer
Examiner (Yorkville)	Spectator newspaper (Hamilton)
The Expositor (Brantford)	Spirit of the Times (Niagara)
Courier (Brantford)	St Thomas Liberal
Gazette (Toronto)	St Thomas Weekly Dispatch
Globe (Toronto)	St. Catherines Constitutional
Grand River Sachem (Caledonia)	Telegraph (Toronto)
Hamilton Evening Times	Times newspaper (Toronto)
Hasting Chronicle	Toronto British Colonist
Herald (Barrie)	Toronto Examiner
Huron Signal (Goderich)	Tri-Weekly guide (Port Hope)
Niagara Gleaner	True Patriot (Thorold)
Niagara Herald	Voice of the Fugitive (Windsor)
Niagara Spectator	Welland Canal (Toronto)
Niagara Telegraph	Western Herald (Windsor)
Norfolk Observer	Windsor Herald
North American Semi Weekly (Toronto)	Woodstock Sentinel

Appendix 3: Birth places of the people, Upper Canada, 1848

Area Name	Population	England Wales	Ireland	Scotland	French Canadian	French English	United States	Germany	Other countries	Not given
Bathurst	29,566	615	4,628	6,728	788	16,377	258	68	47	57
Brock	29,224	3,614	3,986	2,289	162	15,608	2,881	184	495	5
Bytown	6,275	265	312	2,338	1,103	2,134	70	22	31	0
Colborne	21,361	1,516	2,548	6,274	134	10,587	276	19	7	0
Dalhousie	19,245	520	1,107	8,659	1,584	6,270	197	35	5	868
Eastern	38,673	476	3,345	3,365	2,291	28,375	666	51	90	14
Gore	58,223	7,595	4,941	7,153	396	30,512	2,437	201	555	4,433
Hamilton	9,889	1,592	963	3,256	32	3,383	558	44	57	4
Home	84,312	12,412	6,490	16,120	607	43,842	3,063	511	447	820
Huron	20,450	2,326	2,634	5,832	191	7,400	350	1,501	196	20
Johnstown	43,806	1,738	1,540	11,621	889	25,665	1,838	103	80	332
Kingston	8,416	835	455	3,609	378	2,786	215	16	7	115
London	41,986	3,685	5,272	3,727	99	25,817	2,640	128	594	24
London	4,668	801	366	1,207	3	1,677	354	9	53	198
Midland	36,930	1,816	897	8,189	382	23,663	1,552	64	59	308
Newcastle	48,594	6,635	2,479	10,672	374	26,047	1,762	96	95	434
Niagara	42,968	2,779	1,342	5,359	216	27,609	4,051	1,085	258	269
Ottawa	11,055	256	730	1,837	3,210	4,783	213	6	20	0
Prince Edward	18,065	578	135	1,859	125	13,382	1,204	15	50	717
Simcoe	23,050	2,411	2,871	6,989	642	9,336	469	55	125	152
Talbot	18,082	1,695	558	1,117	105	12,071	1,887	348	301	0
Toronto	23,503	3,789	1,695	9,044	122	7,997	753	59	44	0
Victoria	23,233	1,169	711	4,929	462	14,244	1,221	35	44	418
Wellington	36,865	3,580	5,293	5,640	584	10,476	1,594	3,075	6,623	0
Western	27,440	1,862	2,306	2,860	5,611	12,347	2,070	0	384	0
Total	725,879	64,560	57,604	140,673	20,490	382,388	32,579	7,730	10,667	9,188

Source: Statistics Canada. *UC Table III - Birth Places of the People, 1848 - Upper Canada* (table), 1848 - Census of Upper Canada, Using E-STAT. http://estat.statcan.gc.ca/cgi-win/cnsmcgi.exe?Lang=E&EST-Fi=EStat\English\SC_RR-eng.htm (accessed: 13 September 2011).

Appendix 4: Population by religions, Upper Canada, 1848

Religion District	Population	Baptists	Catholics	Church of England	Congrega-tional	Jewish	Lutherans	Wesleyan	Episcopal	New Connection	Presbyterians	Church of Scotland	Free Church	Quakers	Unitarians	Universalists	Other	Not given
Bathurst	29,566	695	6,461	7,755	82	0	0	2,356	340	6	759	6,763	3,706	56	6	87	77	417
Brock	29,224	3,430	1,216	4,924	298	5	186	2,924	2,542	587	687	1,476	4,848	432	86	198	696	4,689
Bytown	6,275	21	3,633	1,081	37	0	0	444	175	5	19	450	308	0	3	0	0	99
Colborne	21,361	576	6,352	5,139	138	0	3	2,237	238	338	327	2,194	2,715	190	2	29	223	660
Dalhousie	19,245	267	6,410	6,704	2	0	12	1,619	100	13	52	2,171	1,750	8	3	39	12	83
Eastern	38,673	714	11,715	5,895	152	0	1,449	2,964	861	22	775	8,536	3,858	3	45	96	170	1,418
Gore	58,223	2,279	4,369	12,560	471	8	85	8,210	3,397	1,348	3,216	4,369	4,023	115	28	114	1,069	12,562
Hamilton	9,889	354	2,760	2,912	197	0	16	1,128	134	200	212	808	1,004	2	9	19	62	72
Home	84,312	2,345	7,949	19,635	975	10	403	11,013	3,615	3,122	3,289	8,272	5,539	1,594	101	194	3,219	13,037
Huron	20,450	253	3,497	6,937	81	0	1,242	1,603	364	152	1,240	2,543	2,100	3	22	37	280	96
Johnstown	43,806	1,397	7,355	12,139	150	0	10	5,894	3,769	1,025	220	2,301	4,545	278	24	146	412	4,140
Kingston	8,416	135	3,238	2,264	41	2	9	1,151	14	3	0	699	649	0	0	4	148	59
London	41,986	5,072	1,745	7,667	343	11	134	4,266	2,525	700	1,671	2,767	5,026	173	38	222	1,125	8,501
London	4,668	214	804	1,597	180	0	17	593	164	0	114	165	337	22	37	66	76	282
Midland	36,930	178	7,643	9,341	109	0	548	6,872	4,408	407	224	2,951	2,434	512	10	83	309	901
Newcastle	48,594	1,002	4,230	13,033	441	3	26	5,597	2,280	2,782	2,040	2,935	4,498	260	19	45	1,896	7,507
Niagara	42,968	1,434	5,017	8,314	70	11	608	4,417	1,983	575	1,860	1,534	1,830	356	42	123	2,164	12,630
Ottawa	11,055	327	5,075	1,804	91	0	1	807	84	3	82	1,818	920	30	0	8	1	4
Prince Edward	18,065	149	1,749	3,713	45	1	4	5,078	1,889	888	115	200	1,269	986	16	198	564	1,201
Simcoe	23,050	132	3,405	5,824	179	0	14	2,030	170	85	501	2,947	1,635	384	24	15	98	5,607
Talbot	18,082	2,943	691	2,517	261	1	181	3,068	663	545	90	579	830	39	19	283	628	4,744
Toronto	23,503	528	5,903	8,315	575	27	22	2,285	73	607	576	1,108	1,971	7	97	4	229	1,176
Victoria	23,233	998	4,936	4,740	108	0	93	4,117	4,446	99	322	1,286	1,051	265	22	160	146	444
Wellington	36,865	926	5,317	6,160	586	0	2,025	2,570	529	328	1,339	3,246	4,281	116	24	26	4,232	5,160
Western	27,440	1,684	7,340	5,370	321	51	98	4,273	968	664	0	3,644	1,563	120	0	0	324	1,020
Total	725,879	28,053	118,810	166,340	5,933	130	7,186	87,516	35,731	14,504	19,730	65,762	62,690	5,951	677	2,196	18,160	86,509

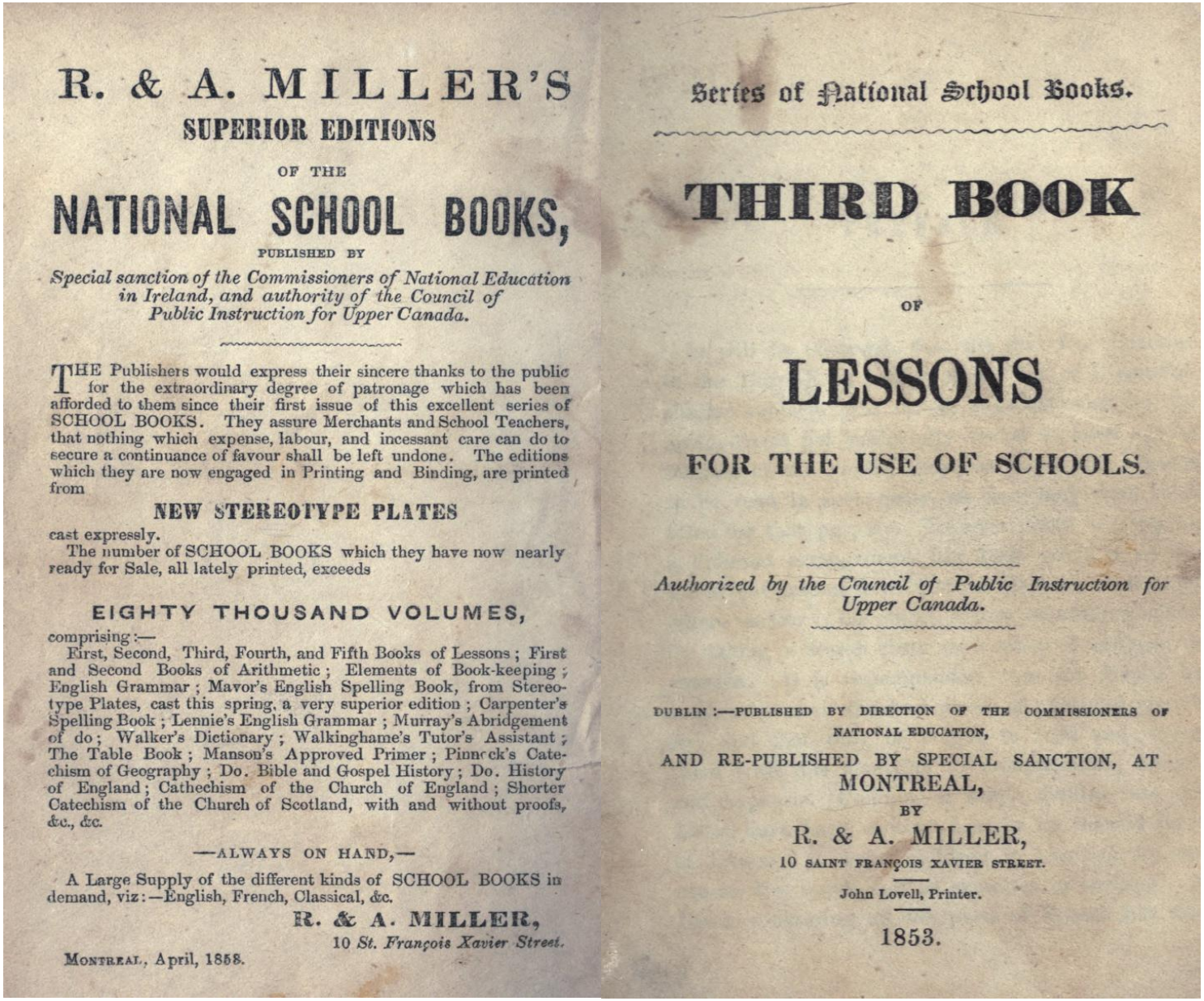
Source: Statistics Canada. *Population by Religions, 1848.* http://estat.statcan.gc.ca/cgi-win/cnsmcgi.exe?Lang=E&EST-Fi=EStat\English\SC_RR-eng.htm (accessed: 13 September 2011).



Appendix 5:

Free public school library map of Upper Canada, 1857

W.C. Chewett and Co, Free public school map of Upper Canada, 1857, **AO,** C 279-0-0-0-60.



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John Lovell, Printer.

1853.

Appendix 6:
Irish National Series reprinted by Canadian publishers

Third Book of Lessons for the Use of Schools (R. & A. Miller: Toronto, 1853)

S s T t U u



Ship



Top



Urn

V v W w X x



Vul-ture



Watch



Xer-xes

Y y Z z



Yew-tree



Ze-bra

The Letters promiscuously arranged.

D B C F G E H A X U Y M V R W N K P
J O Z Q I S L T

z w x o c l y b d f p s m q n v h k r t g e
j a u i

The Italic letters.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t
u v w x y z

Double and Triple Letters.

ﬂ ﬁ ﬀ ﬃ ﬄ
fl fi ff ffi ffl

Æ / AE	Œ / OE	æ / ae	œ / oe	& / and	*& / and*

The Old English Letters.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Stops used in Reading.

, Comma.	; Semi-colon.	: Colon.	. Period.	? Interro-gation.	! Excla-mation.

English spelling book: accompanied by a progressive series of easy and familiar lessons, intended as an introduction to the English language (Robert McPhail, Toronto, 1850)

that flies in the air, and the fish that swims in the sea, are the work of his hands. *Who shall not fear Him, and speak of all His works?*

LESSON II.

near	taste	right
eye	feel	wrong
nose	walk	soul
smell	sense	ought
mouth	teach	serve

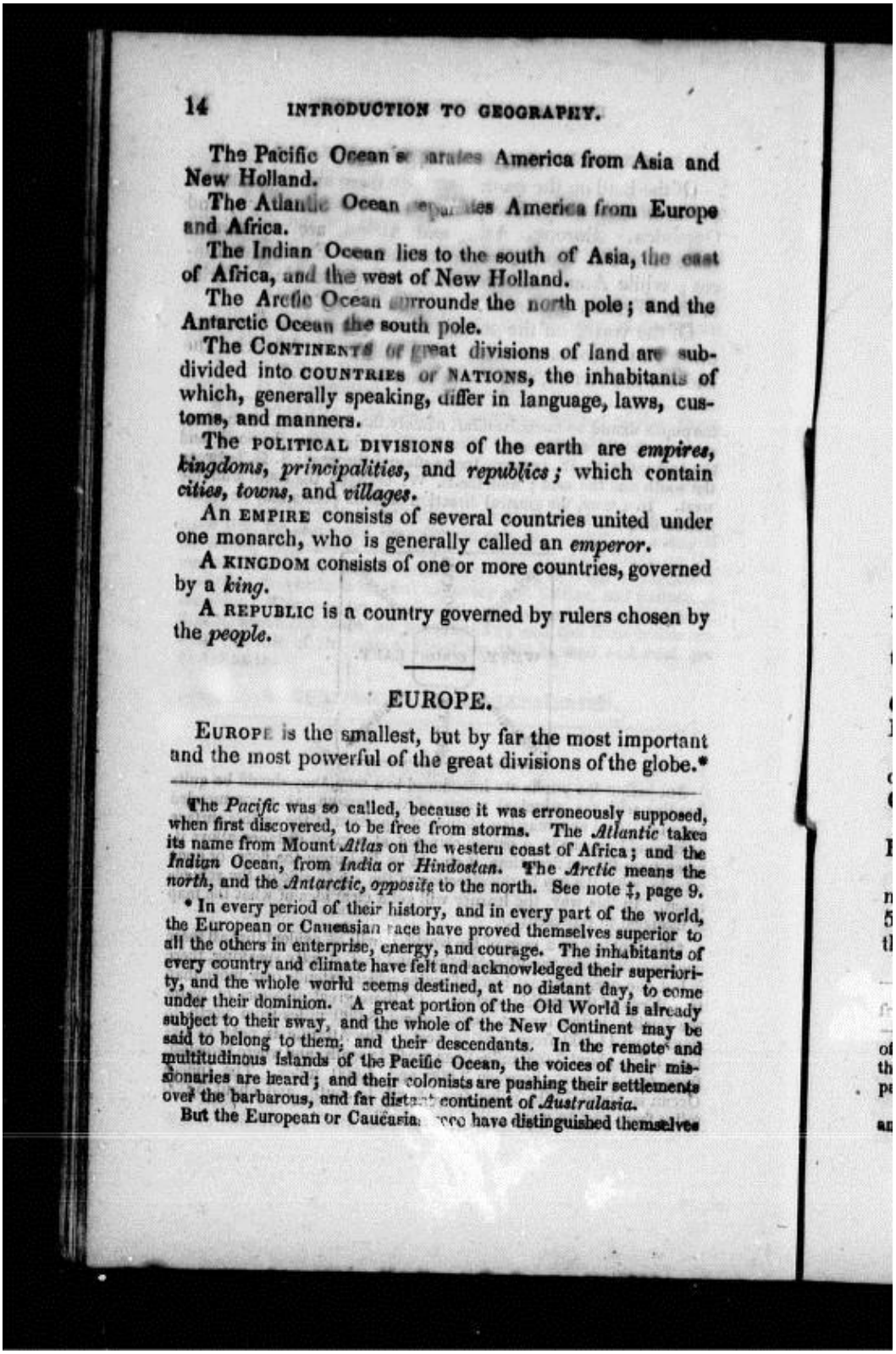
God made man. He gave him ears to hear, eyes to see, a nose to smell, a mouth to taste and speak, hands to feel and work, and legs and feet to walk. He gave him sense to teach him right from wrong, and a soul that cannct die. *My dear child thus are we made; then how ought we to love and serve the great God!*

LESSON III.

cow	hoof	high
horn	duck	said
gill	bill	paw
horse	wing	tail

The cow has a horn, and the fish has a gill;
The horse has a hoof, and the duck has a bill;
The bird has a wing, that on high he may sail;
And the cat has a paw, and the dog has a tail;
And they swim, or they fly, or they walk, or they eat,
With fin, or with wing, or with bill, or with feet.

Second book of lessons: for use of schools (Toronto: R. McPhail, 1864)



14 INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY.

The Pacific Ocean separates America from Asia and New Holland.

The Atlantic Ocean separates America from Europe and Africa.

The Indian Ocean lies to the south of Asia, the east of Africa, and the west of New Holland.

The Arctic Ocean surrounds the north pole; and the Antarctic Ocean the south pole.

The CONTINENTS or great divisions of land are subdivided into COUNTRIES or NATIONS, the inhabitants of which, generally speaking, differ in language, laws, customs, and manners.

The POLITICAL DIVISIONS of the earth are *empires*, *kingdoms*, *principalities*, and *republics*; which contain *cities*, *towns*, and *villages*.

An EMPIRE consists of several countries united under one monarch, who is generally called an *emperor*.

A KINGDOM consists of one or more countries, governed by a *king*.

A REPUBLIC is a country governed by rulers chosen by the *people*.

EUROPE.

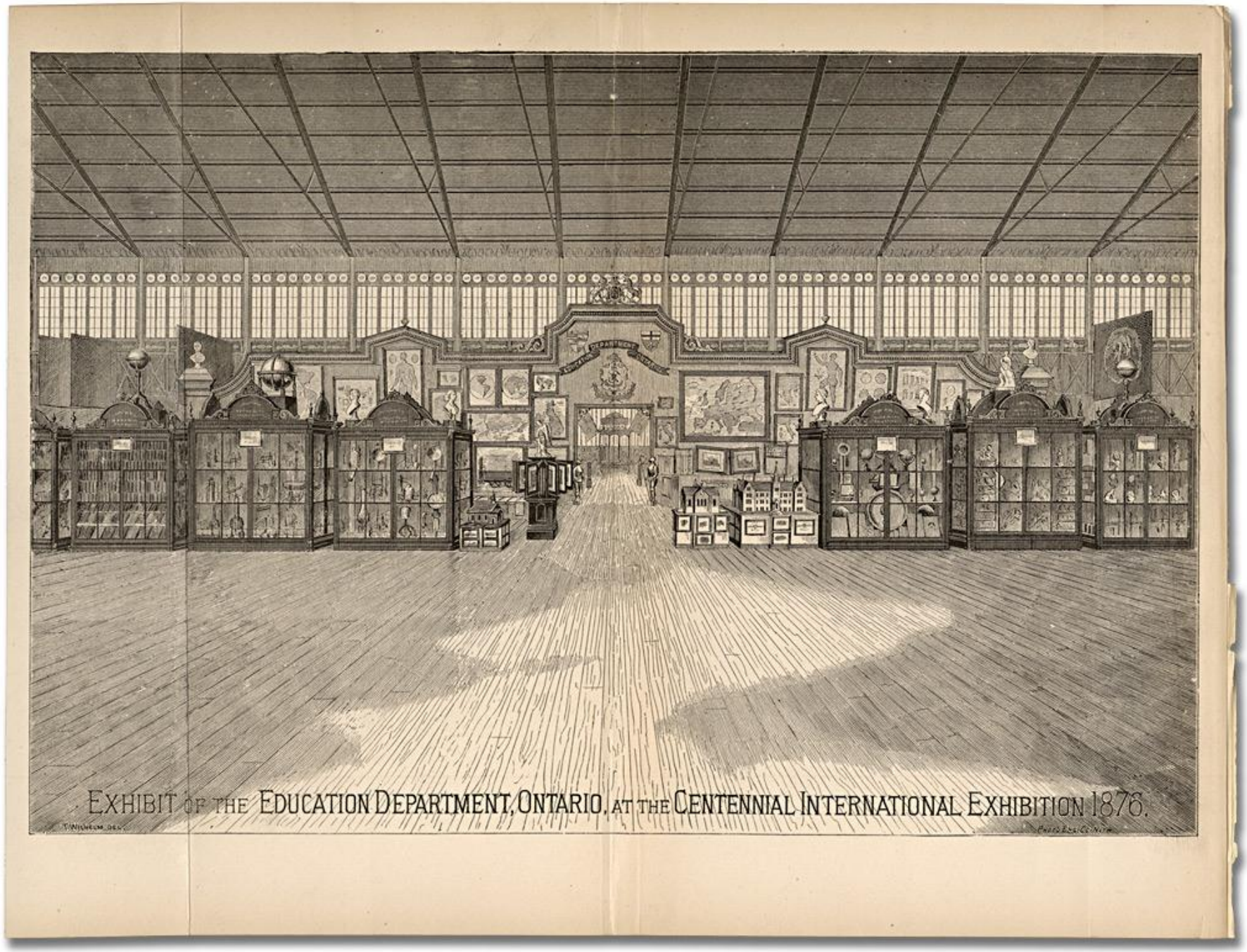
EUROPE is the smallest, but by far the most important and the most powerful of the great divisions of the globe.*

The *Pacific* was so called, because it was erroneously supposed, when first discovered, to be free from storms. The *Atlantic* takes its name from Mount *Atlas* on the western coast of Africa; and the *Indian* Ocean, from *India* or *Hindostan*. The *Arctic* means the *north*, and the *Antarctic*, *opposite* to the north. See note ‡, page 9.

* In every period of their history, and in every part of the world, the European or Caucasian race have proved themselves superior to all the others in enterprise, energy, and courage. The inhabitants of every country and climate have felt and acknowledged their superiority, and the whole world seems destined, at no distant day, to come under their dominion. A great portion of the Old World is already subject to their sway, and the whole of the New Continent may be said to belong to them, and their descendants. In the remote and multitudinous islands of the Pacific Ocean, the voices of their missionaries are heard; and their colonists are pushing their settlements over the barbarous, and far distant continent of *Australasia*.

But the European or Caucasian race have distinguished themselves

An introduction to geography, ancient, modern, and sacred; with an outline of ancient history (Armour & Ramsay: Montreal, 1848)



Appendix 7: Exhibit of the Education Department at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, 1876

International Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1876, AO Gov Doc Ed Misc Box 8 No 5, Archives of Ontario Library Collection