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RURAL SCHOOLS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

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History and Physical Setting

British Columbia is the most westerly province of the Dominion of Canada. It extends from the watershed of the northern Rocky Mountains and the 120th meridian to the Pacific Ocean, and from the northern boundaries of the American states of Washington, Idaho, and Montana to the Yukon Territory at 60° North Latitude. Its area is 355,855 square miles (greater than the combined areas of Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas), and its population is approximately 600,000 (less than half of the population of the single state of Florida and about one fifth that of Georgia).

The Province is almost wholly mountainous, consisting of great geologic folds, from the Rocky Mountains proper on the east to the coastal range on the west. Off the coast, Vancouver Island, Queen Charlotte Island, and a multitude of large and small islands to the north are parts of another mountain fold now largely submerged.

Over this vast mountainous and islanded territory the inhabitants are very unevenly scattered. More than three fourths of the total population of the Province are concentrated in the extreme southwest corner: Vancouver Island (on which is the provincial capital, Victoria) and a small strip of coastal plain on the opposite mainland (on which is the metropolis and port of Vancouver City). This southwest section has an equitable and mild climate influenced by the warm Japan current. .In Victoria the mean monthly temperature varies only from about 40° Fahrenheit in January to 60° in July and August, and the mean annual rainfall is 27.65 inches.

The mild climate and fertile lowlands of Vancouver Island and the adjacent mainland are in strong contrast to the extremes of the inland and the north, where winter temperatures tax the lower capacities of thermometers and where average rainfall varies from scarcely 10 inches per year on the arid south central plateau to over 95 inches in the northerly coastal district around Prince Rupert.

British Columbia is a very recently developed region. It was not until the very closing years of the 18th century (following its discovery in 1774 by the Spaniard, Perez) that the coast was surveyed by the British navigator, George Vancouver. At about the same time, the interior was entered by MacKenzie and the traders of the North-West Company which, in 1821, was amalgamated with the Hudson Bay Company. For the first half of the 19th century, the whole territory consisted of scattered colonies of trappers and traders and was ruled by the Hudson Bay Company.

The discovery of gold in the 1850's on the Frazer River and in the Cariboo district, and the consequent influx of miners and adventurers, took the territory out of the trading post class. In 1871, following the organization and later union of the crown colonies of Vancouver Island and the mainland, British Columbia entered the confederation and became a part of the Dominion of Canada. With stable political organization and the building of roads (including the extension to the coast of the Canadian Pacific Railroad) and with the occupation of rich belts and pockets of soil along water courses and in the mild wet climate of the coastal region, the population gradually developed from the frontierism of trapping and mining to settled agriculture and commerce.

The population is predominantly white, of Anglo-Saxon descent, although there are considerable colonies of Chinese, Japanese, and Indians. Chinese immigration has been forbidden by law since 1923 and Japanese immigration is

closely restricted by agreement with the government of Japan. The Indian population of approximately 22,000 is made up of many different tribes.

The historic industry of trapping and trading in furs has ceased to be a major concern. Mining is still important, although lead, copper, coal, zinc, and silver have supplanted gold as major interests. Characteristic items in British Columbian commerce are fishing (especially salmon, halibut, herring, and cod) and lumbering (including the fine Douglas fir which is often found standing 300 feet high and 8 to 10 feet in diameter). Shipping is also important as Vancouver and Victoria are strategic ports in Pacific commerce. The Canadian Pacific railway system connects here with its own ships and with those of other companies running to the Orient, the Pacific Islands, and Australia.

Agriculture, however, has now become the most valuable industry of the country. Excellent farming land lies in the long valleys between the mountain ranges of the interior and on the lower mountain slopes and river deltas of Vancouver Island. Small mixed farming is predominant. Among the chief crops are wheat, oats, clover, potatoes, and a great variety of vegetables and fruit. There is some sheep and cattle raising, and a growing industry - tame replica of more venturesome days - is the breeding of fur-bearing animals.

The history and geography of British Columbia are reflected in the development of its school system. In the early days of isolated settlements, the Hudson Bay Company assumed responsibility for schools as it did for almost all services, and the beneficence of its despotism was shown in the relatively good salaries it was willing to pay its pioneer teachers. As early as 1855 the company had established schools in three communities with salaries of $750 plus additional fees ranging from $60 to $250 per year - about the sums received on the average by rural teachers today. When British Columbia joined the Dominion of Canada and efforts were made to develop strong and efficient government, the

schools became the responsibility solely of the central government. Then slowly, with the development of cities and local wealth, the school authority was decentralized, first by the establishment of local school boards and later by the shifting of increasing proportions of school expense to local communities. But the provincial government has always retained considerable control of school policy and has continued from the beginning to share in the payment of teachers' salaries.

The government has been interested in school facilities for all the people of the territory and has stimulated the development of schools under able personnel in rural and isolated areas by paying higher subsidies to those communities which were the more sparsely settled. The constant concern of the government for rural schools and the special subsidies for rural teachers are chiefly responsible for the high educational standards to be found in this province (no matter how small and remote the school community).

The strong central school authority was made necessary by the very geography of the Province. While the concentration of population in the southwest corner has greatly eased the geographic difficulties so far as three fourths of the population are concerned, it has left the other fourth of the people (scattered thinly over a vast area in communities isolated from each other by the mountain folds) in greater dependence upon central planning and government support. The necessity of furnishing adequate schools to these small and widely scattered communities has tended to build up a strong provincial department of education and to habituate its officers to thinking and planning with broad statesmanship.

The Present School System *

Four things contribute to the excellence of British Columbia schools: first, the quality of the teachers, made possible by the high salary and stringent certification requirements; second, the adequacy of books and physical equipment; third, freedom from political interference; and last, the people's own interest in the education of their children.

The Teachers

Since the fundamental educational processes are the responsibility of the teacher, the thoroughness with which subjects of study are grasped by the children depends primarily upon the ability of the teacher. On the whole, it will be found that salary and teaching ability (as exemplified by well-trained teachers) are directly related. Wherever high salaries are paid, there will be found the greater percentage of good teachers. British Columbia has accepted this as an axiom, and the application of this principle is well illustrated by the provisions for salary grants.

With a view to equalizing educational opportunity, the provincial government has set minimum salary requirements, below which no district is allowed to go in the payment of its teachers - $780 for elementary teachers and $1,200 for high school teachers. The government pays a certain per cent, the amount being in inverse ratio to the density of the population. These amounts vary from 25 per cent in highly developed city districts to 90 per cent in some of the sparsely settled frontier areas. The local districts are urged to pay their teachers more than the minimum. In order to encourage higher salaries,

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* This informal report is based on a five-week stay in British Columbia by James and Margaret Simon. The actual visits to schools were supplemented by conferences with Department officials and by study of the literature of the Province dealing with its educational problems.

the per cent of government aid is based, not on minimum salaries, but on the actual amounts which the teachers are paid.

In elementary schools, the highest salary paid a city teacher is $275 per month, the lowest $78, with an average for all teachers of $113. In rural districts, the highest salary is $289, the lowest $78, with an average of $89. On the basis of a ten-month term, which is required by law and which has not been deviated from during the entire depression, it is clear that the lowest-paid rural teacher receives $780 for the year's work and the average rural teacher $890. Contrasted with this is the average of $490.34 for all teachers in Louisiana (including city and high school teachers).

The beneficial effects of these high salaries are immeasurable. Teaching has become a dignified and honored profession. Since the salaries are equal to or in excess of the incomes of the average farmer, a teacher is regarded as a prominent, well-to-do member of the community. The payment of a decent living-wage and the assurance of regular employment have tended to keep better teachers in service and have made possible the demanding of higher academic requirements.

The validity of the principle behind the payment of higher salaries is borne out by an analysis of the training of teachers in service. Of the 3,873 teachers employed, 862 or 22.3 per cent hold academic certificates (graduation from a Dominion university plus a diploma in education from the University of British Columbia); 1,490 or 38.5 per cent hold first class certificates (one year in a university and two years of normal school); 1,218 or 31.4 per cent hold second class certificates (two years of normal training); 231 or 5.9 per cent hold special certificates (university or normal training with emphasis on home economics and technical preparation); 66 or 1.7 per cent hold less than a second class certificate. Thus it will be seen that 98.3 per cent of the teachers in British Columbia have at least two years of university or normal

school education.

The educational qualifications of teachers are the only accurate objective criteria which can be used in their selection. However, important as it is to have adequately trained teachers, it is equally important to secure people who have the ability to give their knowledge to the children, and who have the personal qualifications which fit them for their task. With the knowledge that the teachers in British Columbia have adequate educational training, it was interesting to see some of the teachers themselves. In most cases, we felt that the teachers we saw were excellent personalities, good teachers, and had been able to build up a mutual confidence between themselves and the children and community members. Of course, the number of schools we saw was relatively small. It would be unfair on the basis of even rather extensive visits to make a blanket statement of approval of the teachers in British Columbia. But certainly the ones we met and saw in action were attractive and personable, interested in their children and their work.

The Schoolhouses and Equipment

Every few miles along the highways one sees a well-kept schoolhouse in the center of a two- or three-acre clearing, the Canadian flag flying from the top of the building or from a special mast set up for the purpose in the schoolyard. A substantial stock-proof fence surrounds the entire area within which (in addition to the schoolhouse proper, wood shed, and outhouses) are generally found swings, teeter-totters, and parallel bars.

Almost without exception, the school buildings have concrete walls the height of the first floor, and frame construction for the second story. All classrooms are on the second floor, the first or ground floor being used as playground during wet weather. In striking contrast to the large majority of schools in our own rural South, in no instance did we see a school lacking an

adequate coat of paint or needing any sort of carpentry repair.

Even the most casual observer is struck by the completeness of equipment: well-kept desks of a size to fit the needs of each student, each desk with its own bottle of fresh ink; a teacher's desk, and several chairs for the use of visitors; cupboard space for books and elementary scientific equipment; hard surface blackboards which, after ten years of use, are as serviceable as new ones. The "Manual of School Law" states that the minimum requirement and supplies for a one-room school (these must be furnished by the local board) are:

1 teacher's desk, with good lock
1 teacher's chair
1 visitor's chair
1 waste basket
120 sq. ft. of blackboard with moulding and chalk trough
1 blackboard pointer
1 globe - 12 inch
1 box colored chalk (half gross)
1 box white chalk
½ doz. blackboard erasers
5 lbs. Harbuth's plasticine
cupboard with lock
linear and liquid measures
1 qt. ink
1 box colored shoemaker's pegs (for counting)
1 pkg. colored sticks (1,000 - assorted lengths)
1 broom
1 dust pan
1 pail
1 thermometer
2 wash bowls
1 first aid cabinet
1 axe
1 flag pole

In addition, the Provincial Department of Education furnishes pupils' desks, wall maps, and a Canadian flag. That the school once possessed these minimum supplies is not sufficient evidence of good faith. A provincial school inspector is constantly checking the conditions of the school and can withhold provincial assistance if the requirements are not met by the local board.

No school which we visited failed to possess at least one hundred books and many had as high as three or four hundred volumes. This very gratifying

showing is due to a provincial provision making possible the purchase of one hundred dollars worth of books per year or any proportion of this amount on a matching basis. No new school is ever started without a library of forty volumes furnished by the Provincial Free Textbook Division.

Every school child has a full complement of the books used in his grade. Certain prescribed texts are issued free by the Textbook Division while others are sold for a very modest sum. The total cost of textbooks for the individual is: first grade, no cost; second grade, twenty-five cents; third grade, one dollar; fourth grade, twenty-five cents; fifth grade, two dollars; sixth grade, one dollar and five cents; seventh grade, five dollars and eighty-five cents; eighth grade, one dollar and seventy cents.

The large variations from one year to another as, for example, $5.85 for the seventh grade and $1.70 for the eighth grade, are because books bought for the one grade are often also used for the next. In many instances, prescribed texts which are not free are furnished to indigent children without charge, through the local school boards. The law provides for an increase in local taxes to cover the cost of books which children are unable to procure for themselves. It is the duty of the local board to exercise this power whenever required.

The Absence of Politics

Educational administration in many countries including the United States too often has been under the control of political factions. Politics have chosen state, county, and city superintendents, and many minor officials. Often these office-holders are not interested in education. Their positions are the result of a combination of circumstances, the least of which is their ability to promote better schools. As a result of political control, the United States has become a vast checkerboard of varying educational intensity. The occasional

state superintendent of ability finds himself facing the impossible task of dealing with the rank and file of county superintendents, and the technically trained county superintendent is as likely as not to find himself dominated by a corrupt or indifferent state department. To circumvent these political defects, British Columbia offers but one elective position in the entire Department of Education - that of Minister of Education. All other positions are held under the Civil Service Code. Under this system it is necessary for the people of the Province to elect only one individual who lends only a little political color to the permanent and well-qualified administrative staff. British Columbia has also been fortunate - or wise - in electing very superior persons to the post of Minister of Education.

The permanent staff is made up of a Superintendent of Education, his assistant, various specialists, and a corps of school inspectors. Each inspector is in charge of a provincial district over which, with the support of the provincial department, he exercises absolute authority. There are no persons corresponding to our county superintendents who can sit in their own private bailiwicks and defy state authority as long as an unenlightened electorate will support them.

Under present provincial law, local district school boards administer the funds for school maintenance and select teachers within their own district. But they have these powers only so long as they perform these duties adequately and honestly. If they fail in their duties, the district inspector may appoint an official trustee to succeed them, who, although he has all the powers of a local board, is not dependent upon local support for election. This provision for superseding local boards is more than just a book statute, as evidenced by the existence of 160 official trustees out of a total of 826 boards.

The People's Desire for Schools

The people could not have obtained their present educational facilities unless they were the type to demand and support them. The Anglo-Saxons who predominate are well-known for their devotion to education, while the Japanese and Chinese - the other important racial groups - are, in their pursuit of learning and in their demands for adequate schools for their children, among the most zealous of peoples.

Furthermore these people are willing to work and to sacrifice in order to get what they want. The hardy pioneers of British Columbia are mostly fishermen, loggers, or farmers. As fishermen, they risk their lives every day among the treacherous tidal currents of the sounds or in combating the southeasterly gales of the Pacific. As loggers, their days are full of danger in felling the gigantic timber of the warm coastal region. And as farmers, they move in after the loggers have finished. Their tiny cabins squat among towering stumps, and day by day they whittle a few more yards of arable land from the pile of gargantuan jackstraws around them. The spirit to do, to accomplish in the face of all odds, is as much a part of these people today as it was when our own forefathers a century ago hacked their homes from the forest. The country is young, and even the most densely populated sections find the end of civilization at their back doors. Here there is no looking back on past splendors, no resignation to the dictates of a medieval economic system, and no decadent community to slow the tempo of the people. In this rugged country there have been no past splendors. The future holds them all.

Farm tenancy is almost unknown, since the expense of clearing lands would make prohibitive rents necessary. The individual settler himself can afford to clear, for no price is too great to pay for independence. Communities are too new for the development of a defeatist spirit, and under existing cir-

cumstances, it is hard to conceive of it ever developing. The business of agriculture is predicated on use rather than sale; local markets are all these people hope to exploit. There is neither sufficient business nor room for vast urban populations, and foreign markets are too far removed to prove remunerative. Salvation as these people see it is not to be found in competition with others but in the careful building-up of personal wealth in the form of well-stocked pantries, rich lands, substantial buildings, and the advantages attained through better education for their children.

The children of these sturdy pioneers are a clean, happy, wide-awake group possessing an astonishing amount of assurance and poise before strangers. Due probably to the feeling of independence and spiritual well-being in the family circle, they need not look upon every unknown individual as a possible new overlord, for their homes and lives are their own. Neither need they simper and kowtow in the hope that the visitor be a possible Santa Claus to the community.

Traditional academic procedure does fix on them a certain amount of regimentation which tends to suppress natural spontaneity in the schoolroom. The English school disciplines of marching in and out, rising and sitting down in seats with military precision, and standing to recite with hands clasped behind them, are universally used in all schools. These, however, do not seem to inhibit feelings of ease and independence, and are quickly forgotten as soon as the door is reached where the children are transformed into as lively a group of youngsters as is to be found anywhere.

Some school groups present as international appearance as a Geneva conference. Chinese, Japanese, Scandinavian, and English children struggle together in their effort to learn the three R's. They are all bound together in the common cause of learning and make no social distinctions. Racial discrim-

ination exists but it does not present a major problem in school administration. Antagonism is limited almost exclusively to sporadic outbreaks among labor groups, and to the inevitable dislikes and prejudices of individual persons. There are no segregated schools, as such, although there are schools with one hundred per cent oriental enrollment. This is due not so much to racial feeling as to the proclivity of people of a single race to band together. In one instance, a settlement of Japanese miners was found some two miles from the existing school, and a large enough group of children was involved to make it advantageous to start a school in the community. In so far as school authorities are concerned, they have unequivocably maintained the attitude that there is no such thing as racial difference. As citizens of a commonwealth, Asiatics as well as others must be absorbed into the population as quickly as possible, not made to feel that they are groups apart.

The schools are operated for ten months of the year, from September first to June thirtieth, and for this exceptionally long term they are able to maintain an average daily attendance of over 90 per cent. When first introduced, the long term was attacked on the ground that it caused an unnecessary increase in the budget rather than, as in our own southern states, on the ground that it occupied a child's time in school when he should be in the fields. The fiscal complaint was only natural because the urban population carried most of the educational burden, as the relatively small per cent of rural population has only a small tax levy. Now that the system is well established, even urban people do not object to the school tax although other general taxes are vigorously opposed.

With a rural population amounting only to 16.5 per cent of the whole, it might be concluded that rural education in British Columbia represented a relatively small problem. However, when it is realized that this rural popula-

tion is scattered over an area greater than all our southeastern states, is separated by vast mountain ranges and wide stretches of water, and isolated by lack of transportation facilities, the problem of administration and standards assumes proportions unequalled in our own country.

In spite of the difficulties imposed by geographical factors, the Department of Education has been able to provide teaching personnel for every twenty pupils and a school for every twenty-six pupils. There is even a school on a log raft that is towed by a tug from one logging settlement to another in order that the children may receive at least some education from year to year.

The one great lack in rural education in British Columbia is that no real attempt is being made to fit that education to the special needs of the people whom it serves. Rural education is almost identical with that given to city children. The officials are aware of this discrepancy and are searching for ways and means by which these children can be offered something in the school which will be of more direct benefit to them in their continued life in rural areas.

Correspondence Courses for Primary Pupils

Not satisfied with less than universal opportunity for education, the British Columbia government has been carrying on one of the most significant experiments in modern elementary education. Until 1932, many children in remote areas of the Province were unable to obtain any sort of education. Then the government conceived the idea of making available to children outside regular school districts a set of materials based on the prescribed curriculum. This material was divided by subject and grade, mimeographed, and sent to the pupil in lesson form. Upon completion of a given number of lessons the pupil returned the papers for correction by the elementary correspondence division of the Department of Public Instruction in Victoria. If correct, the student

was credited; if too low a mark was received, the paper was returned.

It was soon discovered that an enormous amount of labor was being expended in the correction of repeat lessons. In 1933, an ingenious idea was incorporated into the correspondence work. Two sets of lessons were sent out covering the same kind of material. One was a practice set which included an answer sheet. The other set was known as master work. The student first completed his practice lesson and corrected it himself. If not proficient enough to pass, he repeated it until his answers were all correct. He then did the master work and sent it in to headquarters for correction. Obviously, much repetitious paper correction was eliminated and an increased amount of self-instruction was given the pupil.

"But how," one may well ask, "can a child learn by correspondence when neither he nor his parents can read or write?" This is not generally the case but when it is, the department calls upon the postman in that area for assistance. Although the postman may make delivery but once or twice each week, he sits down with the child and teaches him how to begin to read and write. It may take a long time and a lot of trouble, but the postmen have taken eagerly to this role of extension teacher. Since there is no time limit and no such thing as failure, the child eventually learns to study by himself.

For the school year 1934-35, eleven hundred children took advantage of this type of training. Many of them were unable to buy the necessary books and material. These were supplied by the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire who bought the books and lent them to needy pupils. The pupils, having finished the course, return the books so that they may be sent to someone else.

The success of the experiment cannot be too highly praised. There is evidence to support the view that the average of the children who study by

correspondence and later transfer to an organized school receive better marks than the average of those who have received all their education in school. And all this is accomplished at an expense to the provincial government of less than $12 per pupil per year.

Health

With education available to all children on a reasonably equable basis, most governments would have felt their duty done. Not so in British Columbia. To them, universally available meant universally used. Therefore, in order to get the greatest utility from their school resources, they were convinced that children must not be penalized by poor health.

As early as 1911, British Columbia passed a law providing for the medical examination of all school children once a year. Since that time, a record card has been kept, showing the results of these examinations during the school life of the child. The law also provided for a report to be sent to the parents, pointing out any defects and advising the consultation of a physician or dentist.

Such laws, or such health facilities, are not new in the United States, and any one familiar with them is also familiar with the difficulty of obtaining any substantial benefits from them. In some cases, parents are violently opposed to having their children's defects pointed out. In others, there is a general lack of interest; and in still others, the defects are visible only to a physician and as long as the child is not in pain, nothing is done. The first efforts of British Columbia's health program suffered from all these difficulties.

Realizing that there was too much lost motion in the examination of pupils who received no treatment for the ills revealed, the Public Health Department provided for the employment of public health nurses who could do the

necessary follow-up work with the parents in order to make examinations more effective. Although there were plenty of hospital-trained nurses, it was found that nurses experienced in the preventive side of health were few and far between. This discouraging state of affairs brought about the establishment, in 1920, of a course in public health nursing in the University of British Columbia. The course required eight months' residence, and the first class was composed of graduate nurses.

Recognizing that there would be a public demand for professionally-trained public health nurses, the course was expanded and the degree of Bachelor of Science in Nursing was made possible. Dr. H. E. Young, Provincial Health Officer, explains, "For this course, the first year is taken up in the University. During the following vacation, the nurses are in the hospital for four months, which four months is used practically as a selective course and allows us to weed out those whom we deem not fitted for the fall course or fitted for the work. The second year is spent in the University. The nurse then goes to the hospital for two years, at the end of which time she receives her Reg. N. This means that she has had hospital work for two years and four months. Then the final year is spent in the University, after which she graduates with the degree of Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Such a nurse is fully equipped in regard to her work. The course is comprehensive and fits her for meeting public bodies and for carrying on a health program, particularly in regard to the health education side."

In earlier years the annual examinations of children, required by law, were made by local physicians employed on a part-time basis by the health department. A public health nurse or school nurse was neither required by law nor were there funds to pay for either. It was understood that to organize a university course in health nursing without providing a means of employment was

useless. The "Public Schools Act" therefore was amended to include dental surgeons and nurses under the provincial salary grant regulations for teachers. Communities could then acquire the services of a public health or school nurse for a very modest cost to the community.

Once employed by a district, her duties were of an educational and preventive nature. She assisted during the examinations of pupils, and it was her responsibility to call on all parents whose children had physical defects. It was also her duty to prevent the spread of communicable diseases as well as give health talks to the school children and to parents, and in general to stimulate the children, parents, and teaching staff in health education and hygienic conditions within the school environment.

Under such a system, there existed two separate health authorities within a community: a part-time district health officer who was in charge of sanitation, mortality statistics, epidemic diseases, inspection of dairies, water supplies, and a multitude of other duties; and the school nurse, dentist, and part-time physician who were responsible for the condition of school children. Obviously, local antagonism sprang up, which resulted in a lack of correlation in the findings of the two health divisions and an absence of interest in the common needs of the community as a whole. The only solution to this fairly general situation was a unified health service, with a full-time health officer and public health nursing personnel.

This unified health service is now a fairly common practice under an arrangement whereby the Department of Health supplements the salary of the community's health officer and assists in the payment of nurses employed under the "Public Schools Act." In exchange, the community or district supplies the necessary quarters and transportation facilities as well as part of the salaries. We found a striking example of this type of centralization in the Saanich municipality.

The Saanich peninsula extends some twenty miles north of the city of Victoria, on Vancouver Island. From a maximum width of eight miles, at a point where it joins the Island, it tapers off to some two miles wide. The population is composed of small well-to-do farmers evenly distributed over the major part of the arable land, with here and there small villages or towns built by people who are employed in Victoria and commute from home to office over excellent highways.

The municipality of Saanich covers about 125 square miles in which are located twenty schools, including three high schools. One full-time doctor and four full-time nurses are in charge of all health work in these schools as well as in the communities which the schools serve.

Every child is given a thorough examination once each year. As contrasted with the superficial glance a physician must have given children in order to examine 2,300 pupils in two weeks under the old regime, the examination of these same students now takes nine months. The record cards of physical defects are turned over to the assisting nurses who call upon the parents and urge them to take remedial measures. It is through these discussions between parents and nurse that the health department learns whether or not a family can afford medical treatment. When the family is financially unable to take care of the child, outside funds are sought. Various social clubs are willing to help the good cause, while members of the medical profession do the work free or, in the case of operations, for the cost of anesthesia and operating room charges. For instance, tonsillectomies are performed for around $10 to $15.

Immunization is going forward by leaps and bounds. This work is done by the health department free of charge, all serum and vaccines being furnished by the Provincial Department of Health. Vaccination is not compulsory and, as in all communities, there are those who have violent objections to "putting

germs in my child." However, the community as a whole has given such wholehearted cooperation that there is little chance of a serious epidemic.

Possibly the most significant feature of centralization of health facilities is the control of communicable diseases. At the time a full-time health service was installed, the municipality of Saanich was paying an average of $2,942 per year in isolation costs. Since the service has been adopted, isolation costs have fallen to $336 per year. The excellent results are entirely due to periodic inspections and to the regulation which requires an examination before re-entrance of every pupil who remains away from school more than two days.

The reduction of epidemics as a result of examinations and immunization has naturally raised the average daily attendance in the schools. The per cent of enrolled pupils in average daily attendance was 82.6 before the full-time health work was begun. After it, attendance jumped to 93.2 per cent. On the basis of a 10 per cent rise in pupil attendance for a school population of 2,300, there has been a gain of 230 pupil years. In dollars and cents, the community has saved $17,484 in school costs every year the health service has been in operation. There is no way of knowing how much the reduction of the hazards of communicable diseases has saved the community as a whole.

The valuable service performed by the health unit is not limited to the schools. In the more densely populated sections, a great drive has been going on to replace pit toilets with septic tanks and to insist that all new buildings have enclosed sewage systems. A constant watch is kept on the milk supply as well as on the inspection of new wells and the analysis of water from doubtful ones.

One of the chief factors contributing to the success of the movement is the control of health over larger areas than was possible when every community

provided its own health authority. The geographical limits of full-time health units are not subject to political or educational subdivisions. In the more open section of the Province, economical administration of the area with the personnel allowed is the determining factor. In the mountainous regions, physiographic features settle the question. Wherever a sufficient number of people, living contiguous to one another, demand a health service and are willing to pay their portion of the costs, the Department of Public Health with the assistance of the Department of Education gladly arranges for the service.

While the authorities have been pushing forward the organization of public health units as the ideal means of promoting health, training in the schools has not been neglected. Education in health is prescribed for all children from the first through the eighth grade. Although it is taught as a separate subject, the teacher is warned that "health education for young pupils is not a matter of acquiring up-to-date information pertaining to healthful living" but is a means of bringing good health to the child and that "a great deal can be done incidently and in conjunction with the teaching of other subjects as well as in regularly planned health lessons."

The whole program is carefully graded to enlist the enthusiasm of the child. In the first grade, health posters, dramatization, and games play the major role. Since the health program rests so largely on the formation of habits, there is also a toothbrush drill. There is no humbug here. A child doesn't use his finger or pencil and make the proper motions - he uses a toothbrush and toothwash made by placing a lump of stone lime in a jar of water. He not only begins to acquire the habit but gets at least one good brushing every day under the watchful eye of the teacher.

By the time a child has reached the fifth or sixth grade, his health habits are fairly well-defined. From this point on, education in health becomes

a broadening-out of interest in general health matters - group investigation of community health problems, supplementary reading in the biographies of famous men and women, such as Pasteur, Lister, Koch, Reed, Florence Nightingale, and the history of great health achievements. The more complex problems of health - nutrition and physiology - are taken up in connection with home economics and nature study.

The examples for good health habits are set by the school itself in the immaculate appearance of the teachers; the neat, clean schoolhouses; the well-kept grounds, not always formally planted but certainly free of all trash and litter; and the general condition of all sanitary facilities. School toilets in British Columbia are as substantially built and as neatly kept as the schools themselves.

In British Columbia, education and health are held to be of equal importance. In one sense, "education is health" for no child can take advantage of the educational opportunities offered, and no person can capitalize on his education, unless he is free from illness. At the present time, both health and education are receiving an exceptional degree of attention. The Hon. G. M. Weir, who is well-known for his studies in public health and as former head of the Educational Department of the University of British Columbia, is both Provincial Secretary and Minister of Education. In his capacity as Provincial Secretary, he is responsible for the administration of the health department. In this field he has not only committed himself to the program of unified health services but has also introduced a plan of public health insurance to be acted upon by the next legislature.

BRITISH COLUMBIA MAKES AN EXPERIMENT IN CENTRALIZATION

Although, to an outsider, British Columbia appears to have solved rather adequately the problem of rural education, the Ministry of Education is far from satisfied with either the administration or the content of rural schools.

The weakest part of the present public school system is the great number of local school boards. Since they are elected by their communities, these boards must needs resort to political maneuvering. Although the provincial government reserves the right to depose any local board found guilty of misusing or failing to use its authority, it is obviously difficult for the school inspectors to check adequately on each of 826 boards. Quite aside from politics, the local boards, untrained in educational methods, are not equipped to make the best judgments and decisions where education is concerned. The Department of Education is of the opinion that these local boards should be replaced by trained non-political managers, directly responsible to the Department.

The Minister of Education therefore appointed last year a commission to review the entire administration of British Columbia schools. This commission, under the direction of Major H. B. King, published the report of its findings early in 1935. With Major King's permission, we are quoting at length from his report. The very minuteness of the objections which are made to the present administrative set-up (particularly the local district trustees) shows more clearly than anything else could, that British Columbia has succeeded, in broad outline, in establishing a sound and workable system of

schools, and is now in the enviable position of being able to perfect and enrich an already great accomplishment.

The following pages are direct quotations from Major King's report. The sections are

I. The successes already achieved by centralized authority in a single section, the Peace River District.

II. Proposals for Centralization of the Schools of the entire Province.

A. The School Boards

B. The General Plan of Organization

III. The Central Organization (Department of Education).

I. Success of Centralization in Peace River District

The advantage of centralization, with larger administrative units, has been demonstrated in a striking way by Mr. W. Plenderleith, recently appointed Inspector of Schools for the Peace River District. Mr. Plenderleith was asked to make a report upon the reorganization....

Mr. Plenderleith, formerly Principal of the Elementary, Junior High, and Senior High Schools of Ocean Falls, and a postgraduate student of education, quickly perceived, upon becoming an Inspector, the disorganized state of rural education. With the ready assistance of the Government Agent, he proceeded to rationalize the organization of education in Peace River. The benefits of this are clear from the reports which follow. These benefits would be reaped from similar rationalization in the Province as a whole. These satisfactory results should remove from the public mind the fear of innovation, which is always aroused when it is proposed to discard an outworn system. Special attention is called to the improvement in business management, the improved accounting, and the clear analysis of receipts and expenditures. This is in striking contrast with the financial statements of Rural School Boards sent to the Department in Victoria.

Inspector Plenderleith's Report

.... In submitting the following outline to you, I shall trace the development of the scheme for consolidation under the following three headings:

I. The disadvantages of the single school unit of administration.
II. The plan proposed to remedy the present defects.
III. The results produced in the consolidated districts....

I. After I finished the first circuit of my inspectorate, the one outstanding fact that was in evidence everywhere was that there was a great lack of coordination and cooperation among the various local authorities who were

supposed to be fostering educational activities.

The three chief divisions of these conflicting authorities may be summed up as follows:

(1) The school trustees and the ratepayers.
(2) The health authorities (nurses and doctors).
(3) The Inspector and teachers.

I found that in the above three groups there was a complete lack of unity of aim. For example, the Medical Health Officer's reports and suggestions were very seldom carried out by the trustees. Again, in many cases, the trustees failed to support the two other authorities in their efforts to improve the efficiency of the school. In one instance, the services of the School Nurse (which were paid for by the Board) were discontinued because the School Nurse quarantined the Secretary's children to prevent the spreading of a communicable disease. In another case, in a district where bachelors were in a majority, three bachelors were elected to the School Board with instructions to create as much discord as possible so that the school would be closed. In this district the Inspector's suggestions were disregarded; the School Doctor's suggestions were disregarded; the School Nurse's suggestions were disregarded; and the wishes of the married settlers (who were in the minority) were disregarded. No school supplies were ordered, the leaking roof was left unrepaired, and an insufficient supply of firewood purchased. The administration of this school had, therefore, to be taken out of the hands of the trustees.

Other points I had remarked during my visits to the various districts were:

(1) That the system of local administration in the rural schools districts was very unsatisfactory, for the following reasons:

(a) That in the majority of these small rural school districts there are usually only two or three persons who have their taxes paid and are there-

fore legally entitled to hold office as trustee.

(b) That in many cases those few who are legally qualified to hold office as trustees are, from a cultural and educational standpoint, absolutely unfitted for such office.

(c) That the majority of the rural school trustees are not familiar with the British Columbia "Public Schools Act," and in many cases, when an infraction of the Act is pointed out to them, they will make no attempt to enforce the Act because of fear of stirring up ill-feeling with a neighbor.

(d) That in most of the rural districts the direct and indirect authority wielded by the trustees over the teachers amounts to downright tyranny. An actual example of this is found in the following incident: A teacher with a first-class certificate, a good personality, and an excellent teaching record was making a personal application to the members of a Rural School Board for a teaching position. She visited the Chairman, who looked over her qualifications and said that he would support her if she would board at a certain place. She next visited the Secretary. He looked over her qualifications and said that they were the best he had seen. Then she went to the third member, who agreed that the teacher would be quite suitable if she would board at his place. The applicant told the third member that she had already promised the Chairman that she would board at the place he had recommended. The result of this was that the Secretary, who wielded the balance of power, utilized this power by making himself offensive to the teacher if she did not comply with his wishes in personal matters.

(2) The division of the inspectorate into small rural school districts was found to be unsatisfactory, for the following reasons:

(a) That it engendered sectional jealousies among adjoining districts because of difference in tax rates. The following example illustrates

this: A settler had two quarters of land; one quarter was in one rural school district with a tax rate of 18 mills. The other quarter was in the adjoining school district with a tax rate of 7.5 mills. It so happened that this settler had six children of school age, and that the attendance of these children at the school in which the rate was 18 mills was necessary to keep it open. This man told the members of the School Board that if he did not get the contracts for wood and ice, he would move over to his adjacent quarter and thus the school would have to close down. The settler eventually did this and the school was closed. The consequence is that there is a great deal of ill-feeling existing between these two districts.

(b) That once a rural school district is formed, the members of the School Board are usually unwilling to give up any portion of the district to accommodate the needs of a new school district. In many cases short-sighted local School Boards in this way retarded educational progress instead of assisting it.

(c) That the differences in tax rates in small rural school districts result in a yearly crop of applications from taxpayers (who are usually situated half-way between two schools) to be transferred from a district with a high rate of tax to a district with a lower rate. I notice one settler that has been transferred back and forth, from one district to the adjacent one, three times in the last five years.

(3) That in the majority of cases in this inspectorate, neither the Secretary-Treasurer of the School Boards nor the Auditor is qualified to keep the financial accounts of the school districts.

(a) This leads to general inefficiency amounting to approximately $300 in this inspectorate.

(b) That several of the Secretaries are making a regular racket of

their handling of accounts. In one case the ratepayers, none of whom were qualified to vote, voted a salary of $60 to the Secretary. In addition to this salary, the Secretary charged up transportation at the rate of $5 per trip every time he came into town, whether it was on school business or not. The grand total of his expenses amounted to $202 for the school year. Then, again, there is the family-compact system that has been worked for years in these small districts. In this system two members of the School Board agree to distribute all school moneys to their friends. In one particular case a salary of $25 was voted to the Secretary; a salary of $7 to the Secretary's 11-year-old girl to act as janitress; and a special monthly clean-up salary of $5 voted to the Secretary's wife. The Chairman's and the Secretary's sons together handled the supplying of wood and ice. *

(4) (a) That a non-uniformity of salaries is unfair to teachers. As an example of this unfairness the following may be cited: In a rural school district with twenty-six pupils and poor equipment, an excellent teacher with several years' experience and a first-class certificate is receiving $780 per annum. In the adjacent district, where there is an average attendance of eight pupils with adequate up-to-date equipment, a fair, inexperienced teacher is receiving a much higher salary.

(b) That the small rural school system does not supply an incentive for teachers to do their best work. In other words, when a good position is open it is usually filled by some teacher from the Coast instead of being filled by one of the good teachers of the inspectorate.

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* These examples of waste and corruption seem mild to persons acquainted with the more heroic examples in the United States. What would an American politician or a business man engaged in graft say if accused of personal acquisition amounting to "the grand total of $202" for the school year or of family perquisites from the payroll of a total of $12 a month for wife and daughter!

(5) That there is a general lack of uniformity in the services and administration in these small rural schools.

(a) Some of the rural school districts employ the services of the Public Health Nurse; others do not.

(b) Some school districts vote sufficient funds for school purposes; others do not.

(c) Some School Boards take sufficient interest in school affairs to produce good results; others do not.

(6) That there were settled lands outside the regular school districts which were not being taxed for school purposes.

(a) That when a new school had to be built on these lands the Educational Department had to provide the initial grant.

(b) That the people owning these lands in most cases were holding them for speculative purposes instead of settling on them.

(c) That by holding the above lands for speculative purposes the owners were preventing bona-fide settlers from settling in the district.

(7) That the handling of the finances by small rural school districts is both uneconomical and inefficient.

(a) That a saving of $2,000 can be made on Secretaries' allowances alone in this inspectorate.

(b) That a saving in bank charges of over $600 can be made by putting small rural school accounts into one Official Trustee account. At the present time the bank charges a minimum of $6 per year to handle each School Board's account.

(c) That a saving can be made by buying school supplies from wholesalers in bulk.

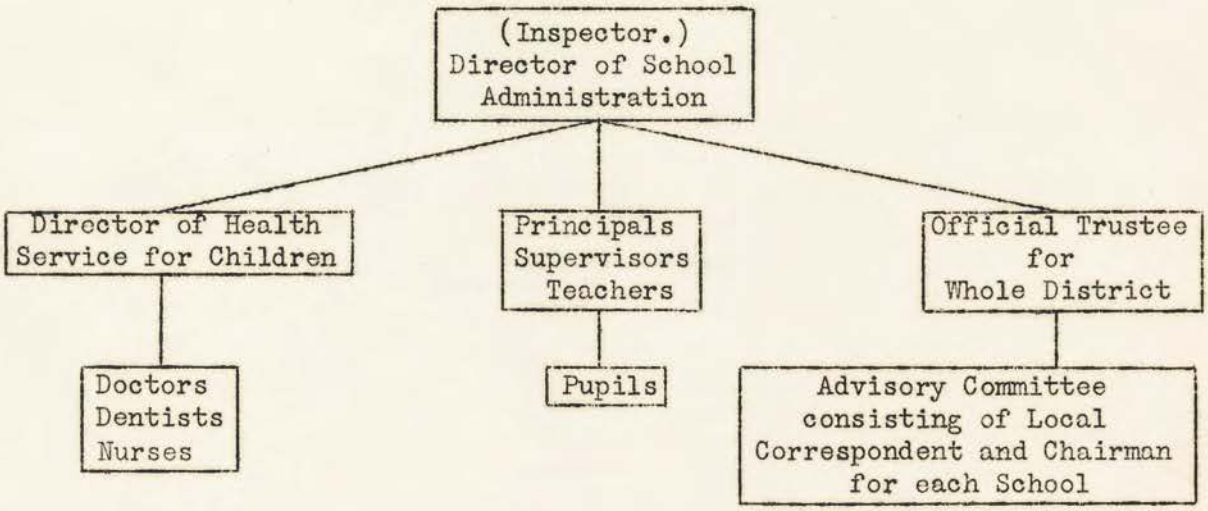
(d) That a considerable saving can be made in the insurance rates by

taking out a group-insurance policy to cover all schools in the district.

(8) That a saving of at least 10 per cent can be made on the cost of fuel and ice.

II. Because of the above conditions obtaining in the schools in this inspectorate, I suggested to the Superintendent of Education that it might be worth while considering a plan for the consolidating of all one-room rural schools and districts in the Peace River Inspectorate under one Official Trustee, and the unifying of the whole system by making the Inspector directly responsible for all school work connected with the health authorities, the school trustees, and the teachers.

The following diagram was submitted to the Superintendent to illustrate what I considered to be the most efficient plan of organizing and administering such a rural school inspectorate as this:



By this plan the Director of School Administration (the School Inspector) would have direct control over the school health service, the school trustees, the school itself.

With these three groups working as a well-organized unit, directed by one head and with one policy of action, the efficiency of the whole school

system would be greatly increased.

The duties of only two of the above departments - namely, those of the Official Trustee and the Correspondent - need be commented upon.

(a) The Official Trustee's duties are outlined in the "Public Schools Act." The office-work and accounts of the Official Trustee could easily be handled by a part-time stenographer at a very small cost to each school district. The actual administrative work of the Official Trustee would be based upon the suggestions offered by the Inspector, the teacher, and the Correspondent. In the appointment of teachers it would be advisable for the Official Trustee to make the appointments only upon the recommendation of the Department of Education. The Official Trustee would be responsible for the receiving of one quarterly cheque for the whole consolidated district, and for the administering of all finances connected with school activities.

(b) The Correspondent is the means by which local opinion is given expression. The Correspondent for the present year would logically be the Secretary of each local Board. After the present year I believe it would be advisable to have a Correspondent elected by the qualified ratepayers adjacent to each school, so that the Correspondent can keep the Official Trustee fully informed regarding the condition and requirements of the school for which he is representative. In addition to these duties, the Correspondent should act as secretary of the annual meeting of the ratepayers and should immediately after any meeting furnish the Official Trustee with a certified copy of the minutes. In order to be eligible for office, the Correspondent should be the assessed owner of lands within 3 miles of the school building. It will be noted that the duties of the Correspondent and the powers of the annual meeting of ratepayers are advisory only....

Dr. Willis (Deputy Minister and Superintendent of Education) very wisely

suggested that it would be advisable to make a few experimental groups of seven or eight schools each, in which we could experiment with the administration of the larger unit. This suggestion was carried out and four consolidated districts were formed for experimental purposes. The following table gives some idea of the conditions in each district:

Name of Consolidated District	No. of Schools	Range in Taxation Mills.
South Peace Rural School District	9	13
North Peace Rural School District	6	10
Central Peace Rural School District	14	10
East Peace Rural School District	10	22

In order to conform with school law the above districts were consolidated under section 12 (a) of the "Public Schools Act;" and since none of the local School Boards in the consolidated units were eligible to hold office on account of delinquency of taxes, the Government Agent at Pouce Coupe, Mr. M. S. Morrell, was made Official Trustee.

III. As a result of the consolidation of the above school districts the following improvements have been made in efficiency and economy of administration:

(1) There is a unification effected among the three chief authorities responsible for school administration.

(2) There is complete coordination and cooperation between the health authorities and the Official Trustee. All reports suggesting improvements receive immediate attention, instead of being side-tracked as formerly with the reply, "We haven't the money to carry out these recommendations."

(3) That the Official Trustee carries out the provisions of the British Columbia "Public Schools Act" without fear or prejudice.

(4) That the teachers have been freed from the petty tyranny which was often wielded.

(5) That the sectional jealousies caused by differences in mill rates are eliminated.

(6) That there are no short-sighted local School Boards who can retard educational progress by local prejudice.

(7) That there are no applications this year from taxpayers desiring to be transferred from one district into another.

(8) That all books and accounts in connection with school expenditures are kept accurately and come under the supervision of the Government Auditor.

(9) That a saving of $1,600 has been made on Secretaries' Allowances from school districts under the Official Trustee.

(10) That a uniformity of salaries is being arranged to give each teacher a salary in proportion to services rendered.

(11) That there is a definite system of promotion being arranged. In this system any teacher coming from the outside has to take the most undesirable school, and the best teacher in the consolidated unit is given the first chance to move to a better position.

(12) That there is now a general uniformity in the service supplied to the rural schools in the consolidated unit. Arrangements are being made to supply all schools with an adequate health service, sufficient supplies, and proper accommodation.

(13) That in the case of new schools having to be built within the consolidated areas the Department of Education will not have to provide the initial grant.

(14) That a saving on bank-service charges amounting to $240 has been made.

(15) That a saving of about 10 per cent has been made on the cost of fuel and ice.

(16) That a saving of about 5 per cent has been made in the buying of supplies.

(17) That the average mill rate for the consolidated districts is 5.89 mills, whereas in the schools forming the consolidated districts the individual rates, as approved by the last annual school meeting, would have ranged from 3.2 mills to 28 mills.

(18) The old family-compact systems are smashed and the ratepayers feel that they have a chance of getting a contract when they submit a fair estimate.

(19) The Secretary racket is stopped.

(20) The teachers are satisfied. Those teachers outside the consolidated districts at the last Federation meeting voted unanimously on a recommendation that the Department form one Official Trustee district for the whole inspectorate.

(21) There is now no desire on the part of the bachelors to close the school down and save money, because being in a consolidated district they pay their school tax whether they have a school in their locality or not.

(22) Settlers who formerly had a sufficient number of children to warrant the establishment of a school, and who would rather have their children grow up in ignorance than pay for the building of a school, are now paying school taxes under the flat-rate assessment. These settlers are now, therefore, quite rightly petitioning to have school service provided.

(23) People who have been holding land purely for speculative purposes are turning it back to the Government, and it can now be redistributed to <u>bona-fide</u> settlers.

There are dozens of other phases of this situation that I could explain to you in person. The main point to remember, however, is that the consolidated school system (under an Official Trustee) is an outstanding success. In my opinion, if one Official Trustee were to be appointed for each assessment district in the Province, to take charge of all rural schools within the assessment district, a great step in advancement would be made in school administration....

Trusting that this report will be of assistance to you, I am

Yours very truly,

WM. PLENDERLEITH,

Inspector of Schools.

II. Proposed Centralization for Entire Province

A. School Boards

In 1933-34 there were 826 school districts (excluding the Provincial School for the Deaf and Blind) classified as follows: 32 city districts, 24 district municipality school districts, 37 superior school districts (rural), and 733 rural school districts. Each district had its Board of Trustees, although in 160 of them the system of elected Boards had broken down, or was otherwise unworkable, and elected Boards had been replaced by Official Trustees appointed by the Council of Public Instruction.

The 733 rural elementary schools had 930 teachers. Except in so far as the number was reduced by the existence of Official Trustees, there were 2,199 trustees in charge of these 930 teachers!

These School Boards are subordinate governing bodies, miniature governments, all of them spending bodies. In the case of municipal school districts,

the Municipal Councils exercise a check upon their expenditures. In the case of rural school districts, the annual meeting of ratepayers by direct vote decides what shall be raised and spent by the school district.

The financial affairs of the Municipal School Boards are managed with varying efficiency - some well, some none too well. The same thing, of course, is true of Municipal Councils. Great variability is found with Rural School Boards also. The great number of them that are badly managed are very badly managed indeed. In December, 1934, out of 613 one-room rural school districts, 161 had not yet submitted the annual financial statement and the Auditors' report required to have been made the previous July. Often these two statements, when submitted, do not agree. The financial reports from rural school districts are, moreover, so inaccurate that the total figures for the cost of education in rural school districts must be received with caution.

There is no effective control over the business management of Rural School Boards. The School Inspector inspects the work of the teacher and inspects the school buildings. He has, however, no effective executive powers over the teachers.* The number of School Boards is too great for effective control from Victoria.

In the case of municipal school districts, business management is better. Trustees are less numerous and petty inferference with teachers tends to be rarer. In most of the municipalities, however, professional supervision is inadequate. The Government Inspector is a supervisory and inspecting official. He is not responsible for either the business administration of the schools nor for their educational condition....

The Superintendent, or Director of Education, should be the executive head of the system. All other officials and employees of the Board should be

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* That is to say, an inspector does not have the power to remove an inefficient teacher without first obtaining the consent of an often biased local board.

mediately or immediately responsible to him. The Board should be a legislative rather than an executive body. It should be responsible for determining policy within the limitations imposed upon it by the Act, for general financial control, and for seeing that its officials perform their duties properly. It should leave executive action to the Superintendent and his chief subordinates. It should not undertake to perform the duties nor to make the decisions proper to professional experts....

In municipal school districts generally this is not the case. There is no adequate professional direction and control. The Government Inspector of Schools lacks executive power. While he may be consulted by the Board, he may also be ignored. Moreover, the municipal school districts are small, and many of them are poor and they cannot afford proper professional direction. The law permits the union of municipal school districts in order that they may be grouped into units large enough for such organization, but no such unions have occurred. Therefore, among the thirty-two city school districts (with the exception of Vancouver, Victoria, and New Westminster) and the twenty-four district municipality school districts there is no well-organized, well-integrated, and coordinated business administration and professional direction such as exists in the Peace River District for the thirty-nine schools administered by the Inspector of Schools of that district.

The municipal school districts are thus too small to be efficient administrative units from the professional viewpoint. It is no reflection upon the trustees of these districts to make this statement. They have for the most part given a loyal service which merits grateful recognition. They have, however, been required to perform tasks which are the proper work of professional administration.

An example of this is the appointment of teachers, which calls for

highly technical professional knowledge and judgment. It is incredible that teachers can be properly chosen and assigned to their positions when there are 826 appointing bodies scattered over the Province. Inevitably local favouritism will appear, and many other irrelevant factors will enter into the making of appointments. A life-like picture of what occurs is given in the description of things as they used to be in the Peace River District before the school system in that area was rationalized. These conditions were not peculiar to the Peace River District. They exist in rural school districts all over the Province, and in some of the municipalities conditions are not much better.

School finance is as much concerned with the proper spending of money as with the raising of it. Education now costs just over $8,000,000 yearly. It has cost over $11,000,000. There is too much money involved for either the Government or the public to view with equanimity the waste and inefficiency which arise from defectiveness of organization. An improved system of financing the schools must be accompanied by an improved administrative organization, so that the money which is raised may be spent economically and effectively. The Peace River solution offers promising suggestions.

B. The General Plan of Organization

A rationalizing of the system involves the inauguration of a form of organization more of the British than of the pioneer American type. In England and Wales, cradles of democracy, there are only 317 Local Educational Authorities; in British Columbia, there are 826. The Canadian kind of administrative organization has disappeared in all other British countries. It is destined to disappear in the United States, where the American experts have condemned it, but it may be slow in disappearing there as the Americans are a very conservative people.

The Province should be divided into educational areas, upon the basis of some social and topographical unity. With modifications the present inspectorates would constitute such areas. These areas should be administered by an educational official who might be called the Director of Education - a term not as yet common in Canada and therefore available for this purpose. The present Inspectors would be the Directors of Education, so that no new officials need be appointed. The Directors of Education would be appointed by the Council of Public Instruction as the Inspectors are now and would be subordinate to the Provincial Superintendent of Education. A Director would be responsible for the professional and business administration of his area. He could also be the Official Trustee for the area. (There should be no misunderstanding as to the professional qualifications necessary in a Director of Education. It is an educational position. Director of Education is not a new name for School Board Secretary. The Director of Education would be not merely the chief administrative officer of his area; he would be the educational leader of it. He would be the equivalent of the Superintendent of Schools in a modern city.)

Where an area, for reasons of topography and population, is too small for a Director of Education, it could be administered by an Assistant Director of Education. The Director of a very large area could have one or more Assistant Directors to aid him, just as the Superintendent of Schools in Vancouver has Inspectors and Supervisors upon his staff.

As in this matter ambition may overleap discretion, provision should be made to ensure that only qualified persons be appointed as Directors of Education. An administrator's certificate should be created and only those with this certificate should be eligible for Directorships of Education or for other high administrative positions. The administrator's certificate should be in advance of the present academic certificate. It should involve at least one

year of graduate study in education beyond the academic certificate, and this graduate work should be mainly in administration.

The Director's chief function is educational - the appointment, promotion, and transfer of the teaching staff, the improvement of teaching, and the general professional growth of his teachers. It would be well to free him of the details of business administration, especially as he must move about his area.

The Peace River experience shows that the addition of a stenographer is all that in some cases is needed. The savings from dispensing with School Board Secretaries will, as found in the Peace River, more than pay the cost of necessary clerical assistance.

With uniform school accounting, as advised in the chapter on economies, control of expenditure will be possible when this administrative system is established....

The work of the Department of Education will be greatly simplified by this plan. Instead of dealing with 826 School Boards, the Department will deal with fewer than twenty Directors of Education. This will free the officials of the Department to deal with the larger aspects of policy and with the general improvement of education. It is a well-known principle of administration that the number of subordinates an administrator can deal with directly is limited. With organization as proposed a proper conspectus of the whole system is possible.

Local Interest

It is desirable that local interest in the schools be maintained. This can be done in various ways. In a system such as has been sketched, Parent-Teacher Associations would find a fine field for their activities and a real reason for their existence. Alternatively elected school committees chosen by

resident ratepayers or parents could be elected for each school. Or, as in the Peace River plan, the parents or ratepayers of each school community could elect at an annual meeting a Correspondent to put the local point of view before the Official Trustee or the Director of Education and, because of his local knowledge, to act as friend and counsellor to the local teacher.

That local interest and local initiative thrive in such conditions is evident from the experience of other British Dominions where school administration is centralized in the manner herein proposed. The following extract from the report for 1933 of the Director of Education for the State of Tasmania shows this:

Self-Help.

"During the last three or four years, with the vote for repairs to school buildings very largely diminished, the Parents' Associations have done excellent work in maintaining and improving the premises.

"Large numbers of schools have been painted, the work being carried out by the local Parents' Associations, and the Department supplying the material only.

"In a similar way considerable improvements have been made to school grounds on the ½ for ½ principle.

"In a general way the people have come to realize that the school in each center is <u>their</u> school rather than simply the State school. This sense of personal responsibility and cooperation with the Department has been one of the very pleasant effects of the depression.

"At the same time, there are many centers where the parents are quite unable to help in this way, and in consequence we have numbers of schools which are in very sore need of painting and repairing. It is to be hoped that larger sums for repairs and repainting may be available at an early date."

Appointment of Teachers

The appointment of teachers will be put upon an impersonal, objective basis. There should be a Departmental Appointments Committee, with no political appointees upon it. This Committee should consist of such persons as the Director of Personnel, the Registrar of the Department of Education, the Principals of the Normal Schools, and the Professor of Education of the University Department of Education. These would be permanent members so that a continuity of policy might be followed. To prevent the development of the Appointments Board into an arbitrary body, a few additional fresh members should form part of it and should change from time to time; these additional members should have educational qualifications. Directors of Education would be suitable as such additional members and there should be a representative of the Teachers' Federation, so that the teachers might have knowledge of the fact that appointments were made wholly upon merit. A fair system has been worked out in New Zealand.

Each year, by the end of July, each Director of Education will know how many teachers he will need, and the qualifications which they should have for the new or vacant positions. He will meet with the Appointments Board. The Appointments Board will have similar information from the Directors of Education of the other educational areas. They will also have the names, the qualifications, and the record of all available appointees. Appointments will then be made with the situation of the Province as a whole in mind. The Board will allot new teachers to the Directors of Education and these Directors will assign the teachers to their posts within the areas.

Promotions

For minor positions the area will be a promotional area for the teachers employed there. (This is now the case in the Peace River district.) For the

more important positions the Province will be a promotional area.

While local influence as such will cease to act, in order to save travelling expenses, both the Appointments Board and the Directors of Education will give consideration to the geographical location of the teachers' homes.

Promotions should be made from those teachers who display the desired qualities and who improve themselves by raising their qualifications. Lists of such persons should be compiled and kept up to date. The putting of promotion upon this basis will be a great incentive to professional growth.

Local Boards for Educational Areas

Should there be, in these educational areas, lay Boards similar to the existing School Boards?

Under the plans here sketched, with centralized financial control, such Boards are unnecessary. The areas can be administered without them.

Should, however, a less centralized system be approved, with money raised locally, upon local initiative, then, upon accepted democratic principles, some kind of Board will be necessary.

As the areas will be larger and in most cases include both municipal and non-municipal territory, the Boards would have to be chosen upon some new basis. They might consist of representatives of the municipalities contained within the area, together with appointed members chosen because of special fitness.

In any case, the appointment and promotion of teachers should be made upon the principles outlined above.

Cities Within the Educational Areas

The sense of local autonomy in some municipalities may be so strong, or those who feel the desire for autonomy may be so influential, that such municipalities may wish to remain outside of the reorganized system, and it may be expedient to let them be organized separately. They should, however, be organized upon the same principles and be subject to the common Provincial school law. They would, in fact, be educational areas, like the other educational areas, but because of their autonomy be financially more independent and empowered to spend money upon their own initiative. Vancouver would probably wish such special autonomy, and the privilege of raising and spending more money for local projects.

The autonomy of these districts should not, however, interfere with the success of the system as a whole. They should not, for example, have the pick of the teachers, leaving the Provincial Appointments Board to get along with what is left after they have had the first choice. The Directors of Education for such autonomous areas should have the same relations with the Appointments Board as the other Directors of Education will have.

III. The Central Organization (Department of Education)

The Province generally, as divided into educational areas with area staffs, may conveniently be referred to as "the field." The reorganization of the field (discussed above) involves the reorganization of the Department of Education itself. This Department is naturally organized to deal with the situation as it has developed and as it exists. It has direct relations now with the most remote School Boards. Under the reorganization plan much of the present routine of the Department will be attended to in the educational areas.

While there will be simplification in this respect, there will be more stress upon general direction and guidance.

The Superintendent of Education will, as now, have his staff. He will deal with the Directors of Education of the areas either directly, or through his staff, who will be understood to be speaking in his name. He will be able to deal directly with any individuals, though normally communication will be from himself or his staff to or through the Directors of Education.

A suitable staff is suggested here:

(1) The Assistant Superintendent of Education, in charge of all business and financial affairs, acts as Superintendent in the absence of that official.

(2) Director of Secondary Education.

(3) Director of Elementary Education.

(4) Director of Vocational Education.

(5) Director of Personnel, Research, and Teacher-Training. It will be his duty to promote the professional growth of the entire personnel, to study trends in education, and in general to keep the system from becoming static.

(6) The Director of Vocational Guidance.

(7) Director of Health and Physical Education.

This list indicates the more important functions of the Superintendent's staff. For economy, some of them may be combined in one person; for example, Nos. 4 and 6.

Cost

It is clearly to be understood that the provision of this staff, together with the Directors of Education, does not require the appointment of a host of new officials. The officials already exist. What is proposed is a reorganization of their functions and titles. Vocational Guidance has been added, because Vocational Guidance (which includes the giving of vocational

information) should be Provincial in scope. A Director of Health has been suggested as health is the first objective of education and the promotion of it should be energetic, continuous, and planned.

What actually will happen is that a host of officials, now receiving stipends and expense money of varying amounts, will disappear....

The Danger of Politics

It may be suggested that a centralized organization of education such as proposed here would mean the introduction of politics into education. Appointments of teachers would be political appointments, the result of intrigue. The proposed Appointments Board will effectively remove appointments from political influence. On the other hand, are politics unknown under School Board administration? Does intrigue never occur now?

The other objection is that political influence may affect the building of new schools. Pressure will be brought upon the local member, who will bring pressure upon the Government. Or school buildings may be promised and even built to affect elections. This is a possibility unless provision is made to prevent it. It is suggested, therefore, that the construction of new buildings, if a centralized system is established, be made only upon the recommendation of an Interdepartmental Board composed of permanent officials, one each from the Department of Education, the Department of Public Works, and the Treasury. This provision will free both local members and the Government from local or political pressure.

The writer is of the opinion that justice requires it to be stated that both Liberal and Conservative Governments have kept what is known as party politics out of the administration of education. Liberal Governments have appointed Conservatives to official positions under the Department of Education,

and Conservatives have appointed Liberals, because these persons were the best available, and others have been appointed who had no connection with either of these parties.

Salaries

A rational basis of salaries will have to be worked out. The following elements would enter into the determination of salaries:

(1) The nature of the duties.
(2) The geographical location of the school.
(3) The relative cost of living.
(4) The social conditions of the community (including desirability and undesirability.)
(5) The certification of the teacher.
(6) The experience of the teacher (including the nature of the experience.)
(7) The general rating of the teacher.
(8) The advanced qualifications which the teacher has gained through graduate or other study.

Teachers in municipalities now under Commissioners have stated that they prefer their positions now even upon reduced salaries because of the greater peace of mind which they have under impartial administration. Teachers who have passed from serving under elected Boards to serving under Official Trustees prefer the latter system. Teachers in the Peace River District not yet under the consolidated system have voted unanimously in favour of being incorporated into this system. Teachers should also note that the whole Provincial field will be open to them as a promotion area. Some of the salaries may be lower than the present nominal scales, but they will be more secure.

The Question of Democracy

It may be objected that a more centralized system of education would be undemocratic. In that case democracy must have already died out in practically all British countries. Likewise all Provincial functions administered

centrally must be administered in violation of the principles of democracy. It hardly needs to be pointed out that the Provincial Legislature is elected upon democratic principles and that its members represent the democracy of British Columbia. The Legislature will continue to be the means through which democracy will cause its will to be felt.

In the British Isles many of the Local Education Authorities have under them greater total population, more teachers, and more pupils than there are in all British Columbia. If England and Wales find 317 Local Education Authorities sufficient for their needs, 826 in British Columbia would seem more than are necessary.

It is a current sophistry that catering to the whims of small groups is the essence of democracy. This would mean that democracy is necessarily inefficient. A rational well-integrated system is necessary for efficiency, and efficiency includes economy. So long as the people of British Columbia are in ultimate control such a system must be truly democratic. It may be found in the last analysis that there is freedom and therefore democracy only in rational action. As the schools are the concern of the State, it is the business of a democratic State to see that they are controlled only in a rational way. The present administrative structure is too full of inequalities, permits too much oppression and injustice to be viewed with complacency.