
CHAPTER XXXI

SCOTTISH EDUCATIONALISTS

THE beginnings of education in the old Red River Settlement were witnessed about the year 1833, when the Selkirk colonists received among them a University man from Scotland who was to be the educational leader of the country. It is true that something had been done for the Indian children by the English Church clergyman between 1821 and 1831; but the advent of John McCallum, a Scotsman, and a student of King's College, Aberdeen, marked the commencement of the educational era in the Selkirk Colony. McCallum's School was the precursor of St. John's College, which, as we have seen, was raised and extended by another Scotsman, Bishop Machray. Founded under Church auspices, the school grew to be an independent institution, controlled by McCallum, with an allowance from the Hudson's Bay Company. McCallum died in 1849, having performed a good work for Red River Settlement, and the forces set in motion by him did much to make the settlers of all classes, as a people, superior in intelligence and education to those under the old Hudson's Bay Company régime.

Scottish Educationalists

Reference has already been made to Archbishop Machray's work in establishing on a firm basis St. John's College in 1866. On the transference of Rupert's Land to Canada in 1870 the Scottish people of Kildonan demanded the foundation of a higher institution of learning for Manitoba. The Kildonan School had been, as was to be expected from a Scottish settlement, much the best school in the Selkirk Settlement. Here young men of promise had each in turn grown up to give a year or two of life to the vocation of local school-master. Indeed, the Scotsman, Donald Gunn, of whom we have spoken, had made the Little Britain School, near Lower Fort Garry, the leading example in the perpetuation of the parish school of his native land. Among those who performed good service for their native parish of Kildonan was the Rev. Alexander Matheson, who left a fine reputation as a teacher. He afterwards went to Knox College, Toronto, for his theological training, and was one of the most acceptable preachers in Ontario and Manitoba for nearly half a century. In 1869 a student and trained teacher of Scottish parentage, David B. Whinster, came to Kildonan from St. Mary's, Ontario, as principal of the local school. A fine disciplinarian and an earnest teacher, he raised its standard to a high pitch of excellence, and greatly increased the attendance. He also had much to do in 1871 in framing an Education Bill, which, though not adopted by the First Legislature of Manitoba, yet presented a model for subsequent legislation. In 1871 a

