

ARTICLES

ADULT EDUCATION AND PUBLIC FUNDING POLICIES: THE "WHISKEY-MONEY" IN BRITAIN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION IN CANADA

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Abstract

The article begins by considering some of the motives for a study of early experiments in education. It then explores the financial limitations associated with the voluntary educational agencies of Victorian times. Middle class support and philanthropy are shown to have developed an uneasy partnership with working class aspirations in the mechanics' institutes. This partnership was evident in Britain, Canada, and the United States, and its limitations were highlighted by conflicts over the nature of the education provided. The working classes accordingly made efforts to determine and finance their own adult educational programs, free from the prevailing utilitarian ethic. Early public funding of adult education in Britain is shown to have developed from diverse reform agendas, and to have progressed from a centralized and essentially utilitarian policy to locally administered and more holistic policies. Windfall revenues, termed the "Whiskey money", then made possible a decade of unparalleled educational development. That opponents of such expenditures were almost universally defeated is noted in a period when the (male) working classes were being enfranchised, and were increasingly conscious of their educational deprivation. That public funding policies inherited from voluntarism the notion of an education appropriate to one's social class is also noted. In a period of large scale migration to Canada and some pioneer studies of comparative adult education, comfortable Old World precedents of public funding jostled with shared attitudes toward an education "appropriate" to the working classes. It is thus suggested that some residual influences of these developments were experienced in Canada.

Résumé

Dans cet article on examine d'abord la motivation à étudier les premières expériences passées en éducation. On explore ensuite les limites financières des agences d'éducation de l'époque victorienne. On voit que dans les instituts techniques (mechanics' institute) l'appui de la classe bourgeoise et des philanthropes a développé un partenariat qui s'accommodait difficilement avec les aspirations de la classe ouvrière. Ce partenariat qui était évident en Grande-Bretagne, au Canada et aux Etats-Unis, et ses limites furent mises en évidence par les conflits sur la nature de l'éducation offerte. La classe ouvrière a donc fait des efforts pour déterminer et financer ses propres programmes d'éducation des adultes, dégagés de l'éthique utilitariste qui prévalait. On démontre qu'à l'origine, le financement public de l'éducation des adultes en Grande-Bretagne s'est développé à la suite de divers programmes de réforme, et a progressé d'une politique centralisée et essentiellement utilitariste vers des politiques d'administration locale et des approches plus holistiques. Des revenus inattendus dits "whiskey money", ont permis une décennie de développement sans pareil en éducation. On remarque que durant la période où la classe ouvrière (les hommes) obtenait le droit de suffrage et où celle-ci était de plus en plus consciente qu'elle était privée d'éducation, les opposants à de telles dépenses en éducation ont presque tous été défaits. On note aussi que les politiques de financement public ont hérité du volontarisme l'idée d'une éducation appropriée à sa classe sociale. A l'époque des grandes migrations vers le Canada, et de quelques études d'avant-garde en éducation des adultes comparée, les précédents de l'Ancien monde sur le financement public ont côtoyé les conceptions partagées sur une éducation "appropriée" à la classe ouvrière. On suggère que des éléments résiduels de ce type de développement se sont fait sentir au Canada.

Introduction

Canadians new to the field of adult education are often regaled with stories of the affluent 1960s as the one period when funds almost seemed to exceed the imagination of programmers. This perception is shared in countries with a parallel heritage in adult education, notably the United States and Britain. However, despite the similarly shared blight of the Great Depression of the 1930s and the alienation and exploitation of the last century, it is

important to note that education has enjoyed earlier periods of relative prosperity.

Thus, by the standards of the time, largesse was apparent in the occasional public but largely private funding of mechanics' institutes in Canada, the United States and Britain from the 1830s. Certainly the convictions of many contemporary adult educators then reflected a belief in a golden future, with innovation and expansion as inevitable. After a period of disillusionment, hopes were raised again in all three countries later in the nineteenth century when some public responsibility was accepted for libraries, museums and evening classes. To a slender social conscience were then added growing economic and political considerations, as each of these countries sought to maximize its human resources with appropriate educational programs. In this process, the largely informal contacts and comparisons made by their adult educators were to be expanded with such formal government inquiries as by our Royal Commission on Industrial Training and Technical Education. Established in 1910, its inquiries ranged over Canada, the United States and Europe, and its substantial report was published three years later.¹

If there was some naiveté in many early comparative studies, in a belief that educational borrowing was both desirable and feasible, they often provided an impetus for change and growth while Canada matured as nation. Even today, a study of some of the experiments that attracted attention may serve several purposes. These experiments may identify specifics of time and place which are clearly not transferrable but invite comparisons deepening our insights into current provision. For newcomers to our field, they may emphasize that financial constraints are cyclical, not inherent in adult education. The 1960s may then be viewed from a broader perspective of "feast and famine," rather than as a fleeting aberration from the norm. The studies may also identify some of the formative influences on our present government funding policies toward adult education, particularly their tendency to promote utilitarian market oriented training rather than a holistic form of adult education.² Conversely, one needs to be aware of the limitations of such research. Establishing precise patterns to teach us lessons may suggest the need for a quantification of computerized data manipulations, an elusive process in view of the seemingly unreliable scientific factor of the individual.³ Perhaps the least one may expect is that in interpreting a previous policy one may challenge adult educators to re-examine their basic assumptions about current policies.⁴

This article will examine one such policy that excited attention in North America -- the British system of public funding for adult education from the mid nineteenth century. Canada, the United States and Britain shared the middle class ideology associated with the classic adult education agency of that period from northern Scotland to Cornwall, England, from St. John's, Newfoundland to Victoria, B.C.; and from Boston, Mass., to San Francisco, Ca. Indeed, its popularity contributed to proposals for an international adult education agency as early as 1837, and to growing contacts between the adult educators of these countries.⁵

Despite the continued foundation of new institutes after mid century, many older institutes perished. The fundamental problem was that the institutes were experiencing an expansion of learners' needs and interests that often outstripped their traditional human and material resources. Their income had been derived from student fees, donations, community fund raising, and occasional government grants. Their human resources, as instructors, librarians, museum curators and administrators, were typically untrained but dedicated volunteers, although some degree of payment had crept in. Often onerous expenses for accommodation and furnishings had to be met in addition to ongoing expenditures for instructional materials and library holdings. In a period of widespread immigration and a growing official preoccupation with public school education, adult educators tended to look with favour on any precedents seeming to offer more and better resources.

In Ontario, which established over three hundred mechanics' institutes in the nineteenth century, Dr. S.D. May, the responsible government inspector, frequently instanced the merits of the British government funding system. Indeed, by 1868, he was to conclude that his province's adoption of the same principle was even more generous, since it did not impose "such stringent rules".⁶ Disinclined to believe local policies were generous, some institute officials travelled to see the British system in operation. Thus, Andrew S. Hallidie, famed as the inventor of the San Francisco cable car system, and president of San Francisco Mechanics' Institute, reported on one such visit in 1876.⁷ His itinerary had included a meeting with the secretary of the government's Science and Art Department which dispensed the grants, and visits to agencies receiving the grants. He returned impressed with the scope and quality of the work being promoted, and with the products of the system, some of whom he encountered teaching in the United States.

Admiration for the system was by no means an unquestioning one. Thus Otto Klotz, President of Preston Mechanics' Institute, Ontario, was in 1881 to judge the British system as favouring major urban areas rather than the "small towns and villages where by far the larger number of (our) institutes are established."⁸ Nevertheless, comfortable Old World precedents were useful ammunition in this marginal field, even if they were subject to differing interpretations. Indeed, the fullest expression of this model was yet to come, and by the 1890s a case study identifies some of its British beneficiaries finding employment in North and South America, Australia, South Africa, Spain, India and China.⁹ Reliance on such imported talent could however be a controversial political factor. In Canada there were fears that Macdonald's National Policy was now being jeopardized by lack of an adequately educated workforce. This led to a strong advocacy for a comparable government commitment to the kind of education being promoted in Britain and elsewhere.¹⁰

Accordingly, we shall examine the nature of the precedents established in Britain and seek to identify any residual influences on Canadian policies. Consideration will be devoted first to the middle class ideology that led to often impressive support for the classic Victorian adult education agency, the mechanics' institute. This will entail an examination of the education deemed "appropriate" for working class adults. Next, attention will be focused on the criteria proposed for any public support of adult education, and the mechanisms adopted from the mid nineteenth century to implement such policies. Lastly, we shall explore the fortuitous circumstances leading to a golden age of adult education and identify its aftermath. The golden age occurred between 1890 and 1902 and was funded largely by resources popularly termed as the "whiskey money."

Voluntarism and Useful Knowledge

As the growing concern with bible literacy in the eighteenth century was to be chronicled in a History of Adult Schools in 1814,¹¹ so was the early nineteenth century concern with secular "useful knowledge" to be chronicled in The History of Adult Education in 1851.¹² The impressive scope and innovation associated with these developments were to be emulated in other English-speaking countries. They were derived from voluntary societies whose foundation owed much to human and material resources provided largely by middle class philanthropy. The institutes were intended to provide essentially prescriptive and

utilitarian form of adult education for the skilled workers and apprentices. In this sense, their ideology reflected the antithesis between culture and utility formulated by Plato and Aristotle and continued in the apprenticeship system. This assumed that a real education was a liberal education, suited only for the leisured governing classes, while a limited form of technical training was appropriate for skilled workers and slaves.¹³ This social distinction rested on assumptions of merit, and allowed for some class mobility, although Plato also acknowledged the influence of heredity. The governing classes were assumed to possess all the intelligence in the state, while workers were assumed to lack either the inclination or aptitude for intellectual study. Manual workers were thus held in low esteem, although some of the architects and engineers who conceived the Greek and Roman building masterpieces were to be accorded a professional status.

In time, such other professionalizing occupations as medicine and law were also to be associated with a liberal education, whereas the generality of skilled workers depended largely on the training provided by the apprenticeship system. This system prospered from Roman times through the Middle Ages to the Industrial Revolution, and it took root in North America also. It varied from a sometimes nominal instruction to a demanding form of vocational education. Traditional skills were transmitted under the moral religious supervision of employers, and were often supplemented by instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic. Apart from the professionalizing occupations, this system remained separate from the liberal education dispensed in grammar schools, lycees, colleges and universities. Indeed, with the tradition of children inheriting their parents' occupation, the system had been an integral part of the status quo. The impact of democracy and the technological changes of the Industrial Revolution were however to influence a rethinking of educational needs and responsibilities. With the early nineteenth century ebbing of the state paternalism which had long supported apprenticeship privileges, a host of voluntary agencies blossomed to address these needs and responsibilities.

The Mechanics' Institutes

The mechanics' institutes were conceived as a viable compromise response to workers' aspirations, employers' needs and society's expectations. They proposed to offer more than the basic education of the religious ventures, but less than the education for social, economic and political change sought by some working class leaders. Resting on assumptions of a community of interest

between capital and labor, they intended to provide an essentially vocational education for skilled workers and apprentices. This was to incorporate the new scientific and technical discoveries, often neglected in apprenticeship training but of demonstrated interest to many workers.¹⁴

The attempted compromise needs to be viewed against a background of numerous independent workers' initiatives in adult education from the late eighteenth century. Largely excluded from the flourishing middle class literary and philosophical societies, the literate skilled workers read avidly the flood of cheap publications and newspapers, participated in independent study, formed clubs and societies of their own, and joined a variety of political reform movements and embryonic trade unions. Thus, research shows that by the onset of the nineteenth century,

there was certainly a leaven of amongst the northern weavers of self educated and articulate men of considerable attainments. Every weaving district had its weaver-poets, biologists, mathematicians, musicians, geologists, botanists.¹⁵

While skilled workers were a relatively privileged group in contrast with the mass of unskilled and illiterate workers, the general tenor of the period 1790-1840 has been characterized as one of "intensified exploitation, greater insecurity, and increasing human misery."¹⁶ Indeed, the more the middle class promoted this new educational venture, the more suspicious did some labor leaders become. Some continued to support the independent educational projects associated with the cooperative socialism of Robert Owen or the political demands of the People's Charter advocated by William Lovett.¹⁷ Yet others participated in ephemeral mutual improvement societies, or managed to secure control of a few mechanics' institutes.

As early as 1823, the editors of the Mechanics Magazine concluded that "men had better be without education than be educated by their rulers."¹⁸ Such self educated workers as Rowland Detrosier, a Lancashire cotton operative, condemned the middle class initiatives in 1831 as offering "an education which is the veriest mockery that ever insulted the human understanding." Instead, he proposed that workers establish their own reading rooms, coffee house, and mechanics' institutes, in order to obtain a political and moral knowledge necessary for their emancipation.¹⁹ John Doherty, one of the most influential trade union leaders of this period, similarly urged independent working

class initiatives in education and condemned the utilitarian emphasis of the institutes. He wrote in 1832:

Let the huxtering owners of the misnamed mechanics' institutes, and would-be rulers of mechanics' minds, see that the day is gone when the millions will be satisfied with the puny morsel of mental food which aristocratic pride and pampered cunning have been wont to deal out to them.²⁰

While independent working class initiatives continued in adult education, they incurred the powerful hostility of the middle class, and they also tended to suffer from a chronic shortage of human and material resources. Conversely, the traditional mechanics' institute laid claim to such resources because it purported to serve broad community, and ultimately, national purposes.²¹ It was argued that its mission of disseminating "useful knowledge" would promote industrial and commercial efficiency. It would produce a skilled, sober, and law-abiding workforce accepting society's social, economic, and political norms, rather than one intent on overturning them. The novelty of the experiment attracted substantial middle class support and despite misgivings, workers' participation. It attracted also conservative opposition to any educational advances for workers as well as the radical opposition to its utilitarian emphasis.

As the initial middle class support and philanthropy ebbed and these voluntary bodies became more dependent on members' fees, the inherent problems of the compromise became apparent. At one extreme, the original scientific emphasis was sustained and developed until, as in the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, worker participation ceased altogether and the institute became a research body for professionals. At the other extreme, varying degrees of working and lower middle class support were retained in Britain and North America by meeting demands for a more general and even recreational program.²² Unwilling or unable to make such adjustments, many institutes perished. Yet others began to explore the possibility of obtaining sustained and substantial government grants in the hope of continuing with their original objectives. An ongoing transition from essentially paternalistic conservative administrations dominated by landowning interests to administrations more representative of middle class commercial and industrial interests seemed to auger well for such hopes in Britain.

Liberal Adult Education

These hopes were to be influenced more by the original utilitarian objectives of the mechanics' institutes rather than by an ideal of liberal adult education. The latter gained specific recognition following the establishment of Sheffield Peoples' College by the Rev. R.S. Bayley in 1842 and the London Working Men's College by the Rev. John F.D. Maurice in 1854.²³ Bayley, a promoter of Louth Mechanics' Institute, Scotland, in 1835, was well aware of the transition under way in mechanics' institutes, and encouraged his working class college students to determine both the curriculum and the instructional methods. The resulting program ranged from the three R's of reading, writing and arithmetic to English Literature and Composition, Ethics, History, Geography, Philosophy, Logic, Latin, Greek, Science, and Natural History. Maurice, a Christian socialist influenced by the political reform movement of Chartism, was equally committed to providing liberal adult education for manual workers. Unlike Bayley, he was not prepared to allow them to dictate the program. Nevertheless, the experiment prospered, attracting the support of such personalities as Charles Kingsley, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and John Ruskin, and leading to the foundation of other similar colleges. Indeed, one may speculate what might have ensued when Hugo Reid of Nottingham Peoples' College was appointed dean of Dalhousie College, Nova Scotia, in 1856.

The temporary demise of this college a year later ended any immediate prospects for some comparable work in adult education. Nevertheless, the liberal ideal was now established "for men and women engaged during the daytime in the duties of the workshop, the office, or the home."²⁴ It was an ideal intended "not to enable bright young men from the working class to get on in the world, but rather to provide opportunities for the enrichment of personal life."²⁵ It was clearly in reaction to the utilitarianism of the age. Its promoters sought to avoid "the mistakes of the mechanics' institutes, and tried not merely to inform but to educate their students."²⁶ While this objective was to influence the work of the Young Men's/Women's Christian Association and the university extension movement, it was to prove less persuasive where early government funding of working class adult education was involved.

The Question of Public Funding

Even the middle class administrators of the institutes, who at least had the franchise, were divided on the propriety of seeking

government funding with its likely inspection and direction. Thus Dr. James Hudson of Manchester contended that government involvement "would be universally viewed as a disturbance and encroachment,"²⁷ while James Hole of Leeds argued that government had a responsibility to finance some forms of adult education. Hole distinguished between education "of a personal interest," properly the responsibility of the individual, and "those arts and sciences which have a great industrial and social importance" and merit public funding.²⁸ In effect Hole acknowledged political realities in seeking funding. He did not expect government grants for a truly emancipatory education intended for his unenfranchised students. Hudson was equally realistic in fearing the kind of regimentation and controversy that characterized state supported elementary schooling. Rather quixotically Hudson was a strong protagonist of that "useful knowledge" which voluntarism now had difficulty in sustaining, whereas Hole recognized a more embracing education responding also to the increasing interest in nonvocational studies. The latter view was championed not only by radicals, but by such conservative reformers as Dr. Thomas Arnold and John Henry Newman.²⁹

Early Central Policies

Successive parliaments had displayed little interest in financing the burgeoning adult education movement, whether on liberal or vocational grounds. In 1843, the minority of institutes fortunate enough to own their own premises were excused payment of local property taxes. While this was a piece of central government legislation,³⁰ it was the local governments which were to lose the revenue. By mid-century, however, government interest was increasing, stimulated by the Great Exhibition (1851), by the advocacy of the influential Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, and by a national conference convened in London in 1852 by the Society of Arts. The emphasis now was on a return to the utilitarian goals of the mechanics' institutes. Apart from a system of grants made to evening elementary schools by the Education Department in 1851, it was an offshoot of the Board of Trade, the Science and Art Department which was to exercise formative government influence on the education of adults. This department was to concentrate on supporting specific programs, rather than adult education as such, thereby influencing the direction and nature of the education available to those who depended on its assistance. The department established a Normal School of Design in London, and between 1842 and 1852, sixteen branch schools of design.³¹ Not only did the latter often

compete directly with mechanics' institute drawing classes, but the schools' narrow vocational programs antagonized many prominent art educators and led to student protests because of the exclusion of aesthetics of "high art."³² Official policy had decreed that "the study of the figure was not necessary to the mechanic," leading to criticism that artisans were thereby denied the opportunity "to enjoy a full education."³³ Indeed, Henry Cole, who was to administer the schools after 1852, had already concluded that the government policy rendered this inevitable, saying: "The age is so essentially commercial that it hardly looks to promoting anything ... except for commercial purposes."³⁴ When middle class students later balked at the same policy, the department was to condemn "the capricious wishes of the middle classes who at present resist sound instruction."³⁵ "Sound instruction" here was to be interpreted as the preparation of industrial designers, and the exclusion of instruction suited to intending painters and sculptors.

Even more influential in shaping the development of adult education was a system of incentive grants introduced by the Department in 1953. These were intended to stimulate the growth of a body of qualified instructors, but in the sciences only. Furthermore, the department disclaimed any ongoing policy, saying it intended to offer only a temporary and limited support of a continuing voluntary system.³⁶ The grants depended on examination successes by defined working class students in a defined scientific and technical curriculum. While recognizing a growing differentiation between the theory and practice of trades, the policymakers ignored workers' criticisms that the essential practical training of good apprenticeships was not supported; neither were subjects of great local importance such as textiles in Leeds or boot and show manufacture in Northampton.

Nevertheless, such was the attraction of the grants that the "system" blossomed into a growing and seemingly permanent factor in shaping adult education. By the 1880s it was apparent that it had produced a jungle of ever increasing ad hoc local bodies enmeshed in often onerous and restrictive central regulations. The grants shaped the nature of programs, determined the eligibility of students, created a bureaucratic nightmare, and allowed little modification for local needs and aspirations.³⁷ While thus meeting some of the program objectives identified by James Hole, they had certainly led to the encroachments on voluntarism feared by James Hudson. Government funding was promoting what many regarded as an inferior education for an inferior class of people. Britain's evident

industrial supremacy was such after the Great Exhibition of 1851 that many remained unconvinced of the need for government funding of even this limited commodity. As noted earlier, Henry Cole had concluded that few indeed contemplated public funding of an enlarged and less utilitarian education determined by democratically elected local authorities.

The Reform Agendas

However, by the 1880s, the establishment of an expanded and locally administered system with its own assigned revenues fitted in with several reform agendas. The economic arguments were becoming more compelling as Britain's industrial supremacy increasingly now was being challenged with invidious comparisons being made with other nations' educational policies. In 1881-84, the (Samuelson) Royal Commission³⁸ reported on the excellent provision of higher technical education in Germany. It also noted Britain's continuing lack of appreciation for such facilities and the British workman's traditional habit of neglecting theoretical instruction. Not only was British culture as a whole regarded as more empirical and pragmatic than some of its European neighbors,³⁹ but many of its newly qualified engineers and, increasingly, its investment capital, were to be attracted to more lucrative prospects abroad. The commissioners responded by recommending an expanded British system of technical education, locally administered and financed. Two years later, a Royal Commission on the Depression⁴⁰ noted increased educational investment in countries then providing much of the commercial competition. It repeated earlier criticism of British deficiencies in education for commerce and technology. Sufficient concern now was felt for the establishment in 1887 of the National Association for the Promotion of Technical Education. It soon launched a public campaign for educational reforms to remedy these deficiencies.

As the economic arguments gathered force, those of administrative reformers came into play. While municipal government had been reformed as early as 1835, ending a long regime of corruption and incompetence, working men -- and women generally -- were still denied the vote. In 1867, town workmen received the suffrage, but rural inhabitants continued to be denied an efficient and representative administration down to the 1880s. Among the multiplicity of county bodies with varying powers, differing electoral bases and overlapping areas, were the popularly elected school boards instituted in 1870. However, their association with radical nonconformity was sufficient to deter many from wishing

to expand their powers beyond elementary schooling. Similarly, while rural laborers obtained the (national) franchise in 1884, county government still remained in the hands of nominated magistrates. It was not until 1888 that reformers finally saw this almost feudal arrangement replaced by popularly elected county councils and county borough councils.⁴¹ The new bodies inherited the defined administrative responsibilities of the magistrates, and lacked any educational powers. However, to the Conservative government then in office they seemed a more suitable agency for the delegation of any new powers, educational and otherwise.

In July 1887, the first of a series of five "technical instruction" bills was introduced into parliament.⁴² Three of these were proposed by the Conservative administration of Lord Salisbury and two by Henry E. Roscoe, a chemistry professor at Owens College, Manchester, and a radical M.P. for that city. That it was August 1889 before success attended the fifth attempt at legislation was not attributable to a lack of political support for educational expansion. Rather it was fundamentally because the first four bills assigned responsibility to the controversial schoolboards. The fortuitous establishment of new local authorities facilitated the drafting and passage of the fifth bill.⁴³ It enabled the county councils and the urban sanitary authorities to levy a penny rate in support of "the principles of science and art applicable to industries." Being only permissive legislation, similar to powers given earlier to municipalities to establish libraries and museums, a corresponding cautious implementation was predicted.

Indeed, by 1890, only thirteen of the 124 new county authorities had decided to use any of these taxing powers, whereas the Science and Art Department's "system" continued to expand substantially.⁴⁴ However the 1889 Technical Instruction Act conveyed broader powers than its title suggested. Beyond the support of defined scientific and technical studies, it permitted:

Any other form of instruction which may for the time being be sanctioned by that (Science and Art) Department, by a minute laid before parliament, and made on the representation of a local authority that such form of instruction is required by the circumstances of its district.⁴⁵

In effect, the legislation excluded aid to applied workshop instruction, religion, the classics, and English, while leaving open to discussion the "technical" nature of such other studies as local authorities cared to propose. With its lower age limit of 13 years,

the legislation served part-time students who had left school to begin work, as well as full-time students continuing their education beyond the elementary school. Unlike earlier Science and Art Department regulations, the new act was not limited to assisting working class students. Amid the tortuous social and religious bigotries then confounding debates on the education of schoolchildren, this circumspect piece of legislation seemed to need only assigned revenues in order to realize its potential for adult learners.

The "Whiskey Money"

A growing public concern with drunkenness in the late 1880s now resulted in temperance reformers playing a crucial role in this interrelated drama. In transferring the public house or tavern licensing powers of the quarter sessions to the new county authorities, the government proposed allowing the latter to compensate anyone whose license they cancelled. Conflict then developed in parliament between brewing interests opposing powers of cancellation and temperance interests opposing powers of compensation. The outcome was that George J. Goschen, Chancellor of the Exchequer, was left with an approved 1890 budget levy on beer and spirits, intended as compensation, but now unappropriated due to a coalition of opposing interests. Accordingly, M.P.s like the industrialists William Mather and A.J. Mundella and the noted chemist Lyon Playfair now combined with Goschen and the temperance advocates to secure passage of legislation assigning the revenues to the new county authorities. The latter were directed to use the funds first to pay police pensions, then either in support of the 1889 Technical Instruction Act or in relief of local rates. Since local pressures were calculated to influence the latter option, again a cautious funding of education was predicted. Nevertheless, the "Whiskey Money" as it was now known soon proved to be a magnet in the field of educational programming.

To administer their windfall revenues, the counties established technical instruction committees or boards. These began by identifying the scope of existing post-elementary education in their areas and by drawing up development plans. Their much publicized wealth soon attracted the attention of a motley of eager and determined citizens all intent on getting the largest possible grant for a variety of projects. Some indeed conjectured that the more inebriated counties would have the funds to develop the more impressive educational programs. In time, this might lead to a moral reformation, thereby depriving these institutions of

operating grants and starting again a cycle of drunkenness. Few misgivings were evident with applications. Some were attended by personal and influential deputations, while others came from patently ineligible institutions; and yet others were so hurriedly compiled that no specific sums were requested. Overall, the embryonic science of "grantology" here displayed qualities of creativity and persistence as the "technical" facets of schemes both substantial and ephemeral were portrayed as national assets.⁴⁶

Before any response could be made to such applications, the counties had to assign all or part of the "whiskey money" to education. Substantial opposition was sometimes encountered, particularly in economically depressed farming areas where campaigns might be mounted to assign the revenues to the relief of local property rates. However, within three years, 110 of the 124 county and county borough councils were devoting all the "whiskey money" to education, and 13 were devoting part of it to education. The exception, London, was instead to begin financing its programs from the accumulated wealth of its city guilds.⁴⁷ By 1901-02, 83% of public funds being expended in "technical instruction" was coming from the "whiskey money".⁴⁸

Local Policies

There was some initial doubt as to how far the new local authorities would adopt the key legislative provision enabling them to initiate programs to suit particular local needs. The Lancashire county committee began with the premise that "the main object of a technical training is not the cultivation of the mind, but the enabling of the student to acquire knowledge and habits which shall be useful to him, in the industry to which he belongs."⁴⁹ This narrow view was clearly not shared by the contiguous city of Manchester, whose committee visited such prestigious European institutions as the Charlottenburg and Zurich polytechnics in the course of formulating its more optimistic goals.⁵⁰ The neighbouring city of Liverpool included in its very substantial list of some fifty proposed additional subjects "singing and musical notation, instrumental music, the science and art of teaching, and various commercial subjects."⁵¹

In time the jostling county committees would expand "technical instruction" to cover subjects as diverse as history and military drill, finding justification eluding them only for English, the classics and scripture. They provided new laboratories and workshops and aided museums and libraries. They awarded

scholarships, enabling students to venture as far as graduate studies at British and overseas universities. They supplemented teacher education programs, facilitated the education of women, sponsored research, and provided an impetus for the expansion of university extension and summer school programs. While developing their own direct provision of lectures, classes, and demonstrations, etc., their grants encouraged a variety of other voluntary and public agencies to range over what was probably the broadest field of education ever deemed "technical". Some of the support afforded to other agencies was clearly for "secondary", "higher", or "adult" education. Much of the direct and indirect provision of instruction supportive of such local industries as agriculture, mining, or engineering, might be labeled "adult vocational education." Such labels need to be viewed, however, in the context of the absence of a public system of "secondary", "higher", or "adult" education, and of a field of elementary education blighted by religious and political acrimony.

Conclusions

A mixture of fortuitous circumstances, sincere convictions, and adroit manipulation had seen the "whiskey money" achieve something of an educational revolution in just over a decade. An admittedly slender ladder of opportunity had enabled some gifted products of the elementary school to reach the highest rungs of the educational ladder, while enabling many others to participate in the broadest program of adult education yet to receive public funding.

Thus, from the small rural southwestern county of Somerset, a scholarship ladder enabled some students to go on to college and university, and to achieve distinction in later life.⁵² This development was sometimes opposed by fee-paying middle class parents who resented any social mixing. The tenuous nature of such opportunities for the gifted student is illustrated in the case of Arthur S. Eddington. Refused a one-year extension of his school scholarship, he nevertheless demonstrated his potential by later contributions to the theory of relativity. Later scholarships enabled him to attend Manchester and Cambridge universities, subsequently becoming the Plumian Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge. He was knighted and became a fellow of the Royal Society. John Read, son of a tavern owner, attended Finsbury Technical College and went on to become a distinguished chemist, a fellow of the Royal Society, and to hold professorships at Sydney, Australia and St. Andrews, Scotland. John C. Withers, son of a builder, went on from Finsbury Technical College to

Marburg University, Germany, where he became an authority in the chemistry of textiles. Many students, male and female alike, seem to have entered the teaching profession by means of such scholarships, but we may note that the most prestigious awards went to males, and to science students. Fuller inquiries would doubtless unearth many other such success stories in Somerset and in other counties.

While the "whiskey money" came too late to salvage much of the once vigorous voluntary movement for adult education, it did sustain the survivors and develop a healthy new growth alongside them. Indeed, as the county authorities took on responsibility for elementary, secondary and teacher education after 1902, the public funding of adult education, whether "technical" or otherwise, lost its impetus. A long standing public policy of "ad hocery" now gave way to a single local educational authority. In this new public policy environment, the "whiskey money" was to be applied increasingly towards making good some of the deficiencies of secondary education and teacher education. In an educational climate still dominated by social class, this meant a shift of emphasis from promoting the "technical instruction" of the working classes to promoting the liberal education of the middle class. It was thus fortuitous that another phase in the voluntary movement was born in 1903, in the shape of the Workers' Educational Association. This was an effort to overcome working class suspicion of the universities and to promote higher education based on the Extension model.

However, in the public sphere, the education of adults was not to be more stringently compartmentalized along the lines we have noted proposed by James Hole in 1853. The Board of Education established a "Further Education" department in 1903 dealing essentially with vocational studies, while the W.E.A. followed the university extension tradition of identifying "adult education" with liberal studies. The more holistic goals to which the mechanics' institutes had aspired by the mid nineteenth century, and which the "whiskey money" had facilitated incrementally in the last decade, were not abandoned or at best fragmented. Today, the heritage of an essentially middle class Victorian compromise still influences British policy considerations in the education of adults. Despite increased fluidity over the ensuing decades, a notion of "appropriate" local authority provision still reflects the social inhibitions of an earlier and less democratic age. On balance, it provides a basic *raison d'être* for continuing to support numerous voluntary agencies. This, while reformers worked to end the comparable social and educational distinctions among children --

the grammar schools and the secondary modern/secondary technical schools -- a comprehensive public system for adults remains elusive.

In Canada, we may speculate as to the extent of our inheritance from these events. We began our educational policy making for adults in similar vein. The keynote was "voluntarism" and "appropriate" education for different social classes. The Durham Report was the product of J.G. Lambton, a 'philosophic radical' who had made substantial contributions toward the foundation of several English mechanics' institutes.⁵³ The later British North America Act recognized provincial responsibility for education and federal responsibility for the economy. Indeed, such provinces as Ontario, that took relatively substantial interest in adult education in the latter half of the nineteenth century, did so more from concern with the economy than with any notions of individual fulfilment.⁵⁴ With the development of Sir John A. Macdonald's National Policy, and later federal legislation on agricultural and industrial training, we have seen the growth of substantial educational programs for adults.⁵⁵ Our divorce in Canada between federal "training" and provincial "education" might suggest to adults in "have not" provinces, or in periods of "retrenchment" that history indeed repeats itself. Has our legislative and administrative structure indeed succeeded in contriving a system of adult education, propounded by Plato and Aristotle, but condemned by blue collar workers over one and a half centuries ago? Do these fundamental priorities resurface after every period of affluence? Our rhetoric of "equal access" perhaps merits a more critical analysis of the often implicit and very long-standing funding priorities in the education of adults. The alternative is to be beguiled by Statistics Canada into believing that more (of the same) is better.

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