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"This is the message that must find its way into the minds and hearts of all Ontario children. This is the key to open all doors. It is the instrument which will break the shackles of ignorance, of doubt, and frustration; that will take all who respond to its call out of their poverty, their slums, and their despair; that will spur the talented to find heights of achievement and provide every child with the experience of success; that will give mobility to the cripples; that will illuminate the dark world of the blind and bring the deaf into communion with the hearing; that will carry solace to the disordered of mind, imagery to the slow of wit, and peace to the emotionally disturbed; that will make all men brothers, equal in dignity if not in ability; that will not tolerate disparity of race, colour, or creed." (end quote)

Wow! It must have been written either by a bible-punching evangelist preacher in the back country of the State of Mississippi or by one of those old patent medicine pitch men who used to travel from town to town in my youth. They sold an elixir which was a universal cure-all, and they doubled on the banjo, beneath the flare of carbide light in front of the Town Hall.

I can hear them adding, Education is also recommended for the reduction of bunions, the removal of warts, inflammation of the stomach and bowels, a sure specific against tapeworm, restores hair and can be used as an effective mouth wash if dissolved in alcohol.

Under ordinary circumstances, I would have read no more of the Report because people who are capable of putting their names to that statement are not worth considering further. However, since the Report may have some bearing on education, one is forced against one's inclination to read on.

I have already stated that I do not propose to go over the recommendations one by one. You will be doing that this afternoon. Nor do I intend in the brief time at my disposal to try to give anything like a complete criticism of it. However, at this point I must draw your attention to a book of some 75 pages recently published by the Cromlech Press, Box 120, Ancaster, Ontario. It is called "Education or Molasses" and is written by Professor James Daly of the History Department at McMaster University. I believe that every teacher in Ontario who has read the Hall-Dennis Report has an obligation to read this book. I cannot recommend it too highly. When writing such a speech as this, one is tempted to paraphrase it. Again I shall not do this because it would be unfair to Professor Daly and to you.

Since the protagonists of the Report claim that it should

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be studied and judged as a whole rather than in part, I will merely set down a few basic reasons for my disagreement with Hall-Dennis and attempt to expand a little on them.

1. The Report is, in my opinion, a gross libel of our teachers in Ontario. I resent this because I believe such a libel is completely unjustified.
2. The Report misrepresents, and I feel consciously, the situation in our schools today in order to sell its own point of view. The committee apparently is not prepared to have its own judgements viewed on their merits, but has misrepresented the present situation in our schools in order to make us believe that what it proposes must be better.
3. It holds that the child can learn only when he is motivated by interest, and therefore there is no place for the teaching of fact, and no place for the organization of a body of knowledge to be imparted to the child.
4. It calls for an attitude of permissiveness in our schools, which, if followed, would undoubtedly lead to unstructured chaos and the very impossibility of each student pursuing his own interests, let alone learning from a structured situation.
5. It believes that the student must never experience a sense of failure because then he will feel disgraced; therefore, there must be nothing like formal examinations or any weighing of real student achievement. I shall confine myself to these five points of difference. I could find many others.

Of course my basic reasons for differing with the beliefs of the Hall-Dennis Report come from a basically different view of human nature. It is quite clear that those who have written the Report believe that all children are good; all children are curious; all children are capable of deep involvement and real interest in something or other. All children should find school a completely happy experience, and therefore force or demanded performance toward definite goals of achievement in order to attain success should be used. I must say that I would dearly love to see the world such a magnificent Utopia and particularly in the schools. If children were like the creatures that the Hall-Dennis Report believes, school-teaching would be paradise; in fact one might come to the conclusion that there would be no need for teachers, merely a good librarian who could tell the children where to pursue knowledge having to do with

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