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A TWELVE-HOUR WORKING DAY FOR SCHOOL BUILDINGS

3 0 0 Days in the Year

STORY No. 2.

What is actually Being Done in Toronto
in Making Wider Use of the School Plant.

*Increased wear is no argument against increased use of
school buildings.*

*The value of the use determines the justification of the wear.
Wear in itself is not an evil; it is an evidence of use.*

**THE POSSIBILITIES OF USE OF THE SCHOOL PLANT FOR
OTHER THAN REGULAR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.**

If the number of regular school days in the school year is placed at 200, and the number of hours per day spent in regular school work be placed at six hours, the number of hours spent in regular school work per year would be 1,200.

It has been estimated that the school buildings and grounds could be made available for other forms of educational use in the evenings, on Saturdays, during vacation, etc., for between 1,600 and 2,000 hours per year.

The use of this time to serve the community in ways in which it needs to be served is one of the economic and social problems which every city will have to face and solve within the next ten or fifteen years. The increase in the number of leisure hours for large numbers of citizens, the existence of under-privileged sections in the city and under-privileged families in most sections, the decrease in the amount and variety of work actually carried on in the home, with the resulting weakening of family influences, the growth of all forms of public amusement, the huge increases in foreign population, all indicate the need. The ownership of the public schools and high schools by the people points to the natural method of meeting these needs.

PERMITS FOR THE USE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY IN 1919.

The study on which this series of papers is based was begun early in 1919. The delay in getting information from other cities and provinces was so great that publication was delayed beyond expectations. This report, therefore, is necessarily on figures for 1919, although some of the facts for Toronto are now available for 1920.

The Toronto Board of Education issues permits to those making application for the use of school grounds and buildings for various educational, recreational and social purposes, on the advice and approval of the Superintendent of Buildings, now the Business Administrator, and the Property Committee. A record of these permits is kept, but there is no record of the actual use made of the privileges granted.

The tables which follow give a fair measure of the spontaneous demand for the use of the school plant, and some indication of one phase of the actual use of school buildings and grounds during out-of-school hours.

TABLE I.

Permits for Use of Buildings in 1919.

USES	No. of Meetings for which Permits were Issued	No. of Permit Hours Involved
Social Centre Work.....	4,403	10,060
Professional Meetings.....	306	667½
Cadet, Target and Band Practice.....	3,196	6,392
Parents' Meetings.....	340	690
Ratepayers' Meetings.....	201	480½
Other Organizations.....	774	2,583
Miscellaneous.....	195	668
Totals.....	9,415 Permits	21,541 Hours

Of course, some of the permits may not have been used to the full extent and some of the meetings may have exceeded the time mentioned in the permits. It must be remembered that the permits are usually for the use of but a small part of each building, and represent but a fraction of the potential capacity of each plant for community service.

TABLE II.

Total Permit Hours For Various Athletic and Other
Activities on School Playgrounds During 1919.

Tennis.....	15,479
Baseball.....	3,794
Indoor Baseball.....	1,626
Football.....	2,564
Basketball.....	348
Handball.....	144
Criquet.....	312
Athletic Games.....	819
Social.....	49
Unclassified.....	146
Total.....	25,281

Allowance was made in compiling the above figures for considerable overlapping, due to cancellations and adjustments not shown on the records. The resulting figures may be regarded as a fairly accurate measure of the out-of-school demand for and use of school playground accommodation during the summer of 1919. The prominence of tennis, which caters to a comparatively small number of people, and which is played in small groups, is noteworthy.

**SUPERVISED PLAYGROUNDS UNDER THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

The work of the Playgrounds is briefly described in the following extracts from the Supervisor's Report for 1919:

"Supervised Playgrounds under the Board of Education for 1919 were nineteen in number. Stratheona and Roden were taken over by the Parks Department, and Earl Grey and Lee Schools were used by the Board of Education as playgrounds; an additional playground was conducted at the East End Day Nursery during the mornings of July. Full equipment for play was placed on all of these grounds and a generous supply of balls, shovels, sand, etc., was furnished for the use of the children. Supervision was exercised from 9 to 12 and from 2 to 5 every day except Saturday, when the session was from 9 to 12.

"The playgrounds were 'havens' in the true sense of the word, for here the children were safe from automobiles, street cars, waggons, etc.

"The attendance showed that they were appreciated by the children and also by the parents. A visit to one of the grounds showed a contented, happy throng of children on swings, in sand boxes, playing ball, or engaging in one of the many other games that are played.

"They were holding contests in sand building, in recitations, in singing.

"Folk dancing for the girls as part of our summer work was introduced in all of our playgrounds. Classes were held two mornings each week on each playground. Classes were organized for all girls between the ages of 6 and 14 years. Dances suitable for each class of girls were selected and taught. As a result splendid work was obtained and great progress made in the eight weeks of this most interesting, attractive and beneficial form of playground activity. The attendance at these classes was very high indeed. At the end of the season exhibitions of Folk Dancing were held at the following centres: Manning, King Edward, Queen Alexandra, Leslie, Earl Grey, Essex, Western, Fern. The parents came out in great numbers and seemed to be very much impressed with our work. It is to be hoped that this activity will be carried on in 1920.

"The aggregate attendance for 1919 was as follows: July, 95,292; August, 70,280. Average daily attendance, 4,139. Largest attendance on any one day was at Manning, when over 600 children were using the playground at one time.

"Two more centres for Industrial Work were opened this year, making a total of eight. These centres were situated on the following playgrounds: Essex, Ogdén, Sackville, Pyne, Manning, Jesse Ketchum, Queen Alexandra (Rivendale).

"As in past years, this part of playground work is most attractive for our girls. They appreciate the work so much that it is indeed a pleasure to supervise it. Each teacher of the Industrial Work has had many experiences where parents have come or have written regarding the progress, the importance, the interest, the helpfulness of the course. The children have so benefitted by the work that they were able to use their knowledge of sewing, knitting, or crocheting to turn the product of their hands into money. One girl was prevailed upon by the neighbors to go from house to house to teach the adults some one particular point of work which attracted them.

"There was a decided improvement in the work. The result of the eight weeks' work was shown at Ogdén School to the Trustees, Inspectors and friends. On all sides admiration for the work and approval of the plan were given. Trustees and officials who had seen such exhibitions in cities of the United States were loud in their praise, and stated that the work done by our girls (all under 14 years of age) was as good, if not better, than any they had seen. The work was then taken to the Canadian National Exhibition and placed on view in the east end of the Woman's Building. It attracted very much attention and admiration."

**WORK OF THE PLAYGROUNDS SECTION OF THE CITY PARKS
DEPARTMENT IN CONNECTION WITH THE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS (1919).**

The Playgrounds Section of the City Parks Department carries on winter playground work in sixteen schools on two evenings each week, from the middle of October to the end of April. The hours are from 7 to 9.20 each evening. Kindergarten and basement rooms only are used. Basements are furnished (where suitable) with gymnasium equipment—volley ball, push ball, basket-ball, clubs, dumb-bells, wands, medicine balls, etc.

Girls' Activities: Girls are divided into four classes—midget, junior, intermediate and senior. The first two groups meet from 7 to 8.15 p.m., and the last two from 8.15 to 9.20 p.m. The work consists of athletic activities, such as physical drill, gymnasium games, and other active games, quiet games, folk dancing, singing. The age limits are from 8 to 13 years.

Boys' Activities: These are similar to the above except that singing and folk dancing are omitted.

Adolescent and Adult Activities: These are carried on in the College Institutes, and consist mostly of gymnasium classes, lectures and motion pictures.

Lectures and Motion Pictures: One lecture of a general educational character and one moving picture show is given in each of the sixteen schools once a month. To these parents and friends are invited.

Mothers' Classes: Three Mothers' Classes are held once a week. They take up physical drill, games, folk and square dancing, and dancing games.

Summer Playgrounds: In addition to the other summer work of the Playgrounds Section, eight supervised school playgrounds are conducted each year from mid-May to mid-September. These are open every evening till dusk, and all day on Saturdays.

Summer Industrial and Folk Dancing Classes: These classes are held in the schools where there are supervised playgrounds, and also in eight others. Both Industrial and Folk Dancing Classes are held in each of the 16 schools on two afternoons each week.

The Playgrounds Section co-operates closely with the Home and School Clubs.

It would seem that the playground work of the Board of Education and of the Playgrounds Section of the Parks Department are so nearly allied in character that they should be under unified control. As the educational nature of the work is obvious, the Board would seem to be the logical administrative authority. The administration of ALL playground work by the Board, wherever carried on in Toronto^{City} would tend to bring the work of the schools more closely in contact with the adult community and to break down the conception of the school as an institution for little boys and girls only.

NIGHT SCHOOLS.

In addition to the night classes conducted by the Technical Schools, the High School of Commerce, and the Collegiates, the Board of Education has conducted night classes in the public schools since 1880.

The table below gives some idea of the amount of work carried on by the night schools since their foundation:

Population of City	Year	No. of Teachers	Registered Number (Ave. Monthly)	Average Attendance	Expenditure
77,034	1880	10	1292	600	\$2,096.00
126,169	1887	26	1492	779	3,111.00
174,309	1894	29	1084	692	4,989.75
205,857	1901	15	683	295	2,556.75
287,201	1908	23	1415	486	3,696.70
460,526	1915-16	30	1034	370	7,667.00
499,295	1918-19	15	430	291	4,717.07

That is, in 1918-19 the night schools in connection with the Public Schools had only five more teachers than in 1880, only a third as many in average monthly registration, and only half as many in average attendance. The city actually spends less on these schools than in 1891, and has nearly 600 fewer pupils in average attendance.

Of course, the tremendous growth of the night classes in the Technical School and the High School of Commerce in recent years must be borne in mind. This, no doubt, has been a factor in cutting down the attendance at the night classes in public school buildings.

The tables below give some statistical facts with regard to night classes in the Secondary Schools:

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.

Registration in Evening Classes, 1891 to 1921.

In Old Wycliffe College Bldg.:	In old building, College St.:		
1891-1892	292	1904-1905	922
1892-1893	305	1905-1906	995
1893-1894	631	1906-1907	1092
1894-1895	685	1907-1908	1301
1895-1896	739	1908-1909	1471
1896-1897	1511	1909-1910	1487
1897-1898	1077	1910-1911	1624
1898-1899	1134	1911-1912	1967
1899-1900	1056	1912-1913	2298
		1913-1914	*2711
		In present building:	
In old building, College St.:		1914-1915	2744
1900-1901	1194	1915-1916	4683
1901-1902	1710	1916-1917	5223
1902-1903	1840	1917-1918	6130
1903-1904	1760	1918-1919	6426
		1919-1920	7890

*First year of Branch Schools.

HIGH SCHOOL OF COMMERCE.

Registration in Evening Classes, 1912-13 to 1920-21.

1912-13	665	1916-17	1945
1913-14	780	1917-18	2198
1914-15	1120	1918-19	2458
1915-16	1258	1919-20	2445
	1920-21	2389 to date.	

COLLEGIATES.

Average Monthly Registration in Evening Classes.

1916-17	248
1917-18 (3 mos. only).....	391
1918-19	457
1919-20	607

It appears, from the records available to the Bureau, that the average nightly attendance at Collegiate night classes varied from 108 in the first three months in 1918 to 215 in the early part of the fall term of 1920.

The character of the work properly done in the Technical, Commercial and Collegiate Schools is fundamentally different from that which should be carried on in public school classes. The public schools should cater to the needs of those who require general elementary education, and should make a feature of the Canadianization of new Canadians.

Not long ago a citizen was quoted as saying that the night schools should be closed, as the only ones getting any good out of them were foreigners who paid no taxes. Such an attitude is hard to understand. The work is carried on, not for the benefit of the foreigners, but of the community in which they live.

The going into force of the Adolescent School Attendance Act will, as the Chief Inspector states, put a stop to elementary night schools on the present basis, but will open up an opportunity to develop them as Canadianization centres for foreigners over 18 years of age. The safety of the community and the nation demands that such educational work among foreigners be carried on by the public schools.

While no actual count has been or indeed can be made, it is quite within the possibilities that more adult aliens are being taught the elements of an English education and Canadian citizenship by private agencies than by the public schools in night classes. If the Board had a highly organized department for the conduct of night schools and work among foreigners, the work of the day schools would be more effective, and, although there would be some additional expense for janitorial service and special seating and equipment, ultimately tens of thousands of dollars would be saved to the Board directly and hundreds of thousands to the community indirectly.

The agencies which are perhaps now doing the most for the promotion of the wider use of the school plant, the co-operation of the home and the school, and the development of school buildings as real community centres, are the various Home and School Associations of Toronto, 28 of which are affiliated in a city-wide organization known as the Toronto Home and School Council. The importance of the Home and School movement warrants a separate paper, which will be the next in the series.