

His attention was also directed to a large class of teachers who came into the profession twenty-five or thirty years ago, after complying with the legal requirements as to qualification then in force, but who are now left behind in the race by the better qualified teachers at present in demand. These, it was urged, should on account of long and faithful service have the benefits of a fund whose very existence is only justified by rewarding lengthened service in the education of the people. The Minister expressed his regret that these views and wishes of the teachers had not been brought under his notice in 1877, when so many changes were made in the school law; then he would have been quite prepared to consider them with a view to legislation. The accusation had been so often made against him of "tinkering" the school law, that if any attempt were made merely in the direction the teachers, as represented by the committee, now indicated, it would be pointed to as a justification of the charge. He said the country at present makes a very liberal allowance out of the public money to supplement the contributions of the teachers. Two years ago it was two and one-half times, and last year three times, what the teachers annually contribute to the fund.

That the whole system is a very artificial one, and presents a number of incongruities; that it is worth while considering whether it could not be remodelled so that by means of greater self-denial on the teacher's part, in making a larger annual contribution, a greater amount of pension might be secured,—such an amount, in fact, as would enable the retired teacher to live in comfort. He indicated that he would only be prepared to take action in case it were thought wise and expedient to deal with this larger question. To do this effectively would require a great deal of thought, and the manipulation of a great many facts. He could not, therefore, hold out any prospect of dealing with the matter during the coming session, but stated that in the course of next summer he would give the matter his earnest consideration, and would then be able to indicate what direction legislation should take to

make the fund as effective as it should be made, in carrying out the purposes for which it was established. The members of the committee expressed their concurrence with him in the desirability of increasing the yearly contribution of each teacher, provided a proportionate increase in the allowance from the fund could be secured. After thanking the Minister for his courtesy in giving to them so much of his time and attention, they withdrew.

From this account of what took place our readers will observe that while Mr. Crooks shewed a warm sympathy with the public school teachers of the Province, he was very non-committal in regard to any legislative action he might take with reference to the Superannuation Fund in the future. The chief benefit of the interview was in securing the expression of his desire to see the fund on a more satisfactory basis than it is at present. We can assure him that any efforts he may make to render it more of a sustentation fund for worn-out, or retired teachers, than it is at present, will be warmly supported by the teachers of the Province, provided their claims to a voice in any legislation, tending to the improvement of the fund, be recognized and considered. They will be ready to exercise the self-denial the Minister speaks of, if they have a reasonable prospect of an annual allowance that may make some approach to self-support, and also of enjoying that before they are utterly worn out, and perhaps, have but a year or two longer to live. We have seen it sarcastically remarked in the public press that if Mr. Crooks' words were deeds, he would make an admirable Minister of Education. It remains for him to show the teachers of the Province that, in dealing with the Superannuation Fund, he can act judiciously, as well as speak wisely and sympathetically. He has an excellent opportunity in dealing with the fund in the direction he indicates, of leaving it as a lasting memorial of his tenure of office as Minister of Education. We can assure him that teachers are far from being the worst chroniclers of his deeds he might have, and they are not apt ungratefully to forget any efforts that are made on their behalf.