

lessly throwing out of their hands in petitioning against their contributing to the fund, as provided by law. For it should not be forgotten that, if the clause of the new law on the subject is repealed, the entire law on the subject will, no doubt, be swept away, and teachers will be left to provide for their old age as they best can, or rather they will be left with no provision whatever for their retirement from the profession.

THE OLD TEACHERS KEEP DOWN THE GENERAL SCALE OF REMUNERATION.

There is another cause illustrative of the reason why, in the interests of the profession, the Superannuated Teachers' Fund should be sustained. Among the more than 5,000 teachers in Ontario, some hundreds are getting advanced in life, and many of them are even old and infirm. Because of their age and infirmity they find it difficult to get employment, and yet, for want of means of support, they cannot retire and make way for younger men. The consequence is, that they offer their services at a very low rate, and thus find employment, to the exclusion of better teachers at a higher salary. Thus, in their need they help to keep down the rate of remuneration, which would otherwise be paid to more active teachers, while they keep up a competition from which the other teachers are made to suffer. Would it not, therefore, be better for all parties concerned, that the younger teachers should provide for the honourable retirement of a section of their own profession grown grey in the service, and enfeebled by their sedentary life? This feature of the question has been pressed upon the attention of the Department, and we present it in the following extract from the letter of a highly respected inspector, who has felt the embarrassment arising from the existence of old teachers in his county. He says:—

"There are a few old teachers in this county who, perhaps, answered an important purpose in the teacher's calling twenty-five or thirty years ago, but whose stereotyped methods of procedure in the school-room are opposed to every kind of modern improvement in the art of teaching. It has become a serious matter with our Board of Examiners to know what is to be done with such teachers. They are poor, and have not yet made the necessary payments into the Superannuation Fund." He then asks if they can be placed on the Superannuation list, and desires other information on the subject, etc."

Now teachers will see that if (as they have done for many years, when the matter was left a voluntary matter with them), they refuse to sustain the fund in the manner provided by law, they can neither expect to superannuate their older, worn-out brethren, nor can they, with any show of justice or propriety, ask the Legislature even to do what it has done for the past few years, which, it is well known, is quite inadequate for the maintenance of the fund. The agitation has raised the question of the very existence of the fund itself; and, if the younger teachers refuse to make the small sacrifice, in the interests of their profession, of paying two dollars every half year into the fund (from which they themselves will derive a substantial benefit), and in the maintenance of which they are interested, how can they expect the Legislature—which has recently so greatly raised the standard of their qualification, and incidentally of their emoluments—to provide for their retirement from the profession and support when they are worn out? In this view of the case, we think teachers have not sufficiently weighed the matter in this agitation, but we trust that they will be induced to do so, when they consider the foregoing facts.

WHO SHOULD SUSTAIN THE FUND?

We think we have already anticipated the answer to the question "Who should sustain this fund?" and, therefore, need not dwell upon it. In fact, the teachers have themselves answered it, but in a form which, in practice, would be felt by them to be onerous, if not oppressive.

At a meeting of the Public School Teachers' Association of the Province of Ontario, held in 1869, a series of resolutions was passed, embodying certain amendments to the School Bill then before the Legislature. Amongst those agreed to by the Teachers' Association was the following one, which involved the very principle of *compulsion*, against which teachers now declaim:—"Each candidate, at his or her first examination for a certificate of qualification, shall deposit with the County Superintendent the sum of ten dollars, to be paid into the Superannuated Teachers' Fund, of which five dollars shall be refunded in case of failure." In other words that, before a teacher is in a position to earn one penny in his profession, he shall be compelled to pay ten dollars into the fund. How much easier to the teacher, more equitable in principle and better in every respect is the provision of the law (against which the agitation has been raised) that no one but members actually in the profession, who have derived their means of support from it, should be called upon to contribute to a fund intended for their own support

on their retirement from it? That this is felt by teachers to be the case, we learn from the following resolution, which was recently agreed to at a Convention of Teachers for the West Riding of the County of Durham:—

"Resolved that we hear with sorrow that an effort is being made to repeal the clause in reference to the superannuated fund, and that we feel a debt of gratitude to Dr. Ryerson for the introduction of said clause, believing it to be one of the most beneficial amendments in the New School Act."

We will add one more opinion on this subject, expressed in a paper read before the Teachers' Association at Elora, in 1869, by the late Mr. George Elmslie. He sent it for insertion in this *Journal*, but was suddenly called away before it was published. Of his merits in this matter, A. Dingwall Fordyce, Esq., Inspector of the County, thus writes:—"Mr. Elmslie's advocacy of this matter was certainly most unselfish, since about six months ago he was struck with paralysis, and although able subsequently, with his daughter's aid, to carry on the school till the day before his death, the evident effects of the first seizure must have made it apparent to himself that his hold of life was exceedingly precarious." After a few general remarks he says:—"The Board of Education, with a forethought at once wise, generous and just, established a Superannuated Fund, which chiefly through the poverty, and I may add in part by the inattention of teachers, is now almost swamped.

By what means are these serious evils to be remedied? The first step undoubtedly must be the raising of teachers' salaries to an equality with the wages of mechanics, artisans, clerks and clergymen—no unreasonable demand. This difficulty overcome, how is the Superannuated Fund to be reestablished, or re-created with a provision for widows and orphans? Chiefly, I think, in the way heretofore pursued by the churches named (*cujus rei pars magna fuit*):—

1. By a unanimous agreement of the whole body of teachers to pay annually from the time of their appointment the sum of dollars into the Superannuated Fund. This also to be a condition of their obtaining a certificate.

2. That the whole body of teachers respectfully request the Board of Education to recommend and enjoin upon Superintendents and School Trustees to pay over and above the teachers' salary into this Superannuated Fund, a sum equal to the teachers' subscription.

3. By a unanimous appeal of the whole body of teachers to the public, setting forth the justice and necessity of our case, and entreating their aid in the way of subscriptions, donations and bequests.

4. That the teachers petition Government for the extraordinary grant of \$, or such sum as may be a sufficient nucleus or foundation for the Teachers' Superannuated and Widows and Orphans' Fund.

5. That the moneys arising from these or any other resources be vested in the hands of responsible Trustees—of the members of the Board of Education, to be by them invested in Government, Municipal, or other satisfactory securities. Principal and interest to be kept unbroken and allowed to accumulate for the space of — years.

Cases of necessity occurring within this period of accumulation must be met in part by the school section in which they occur, in part by a small contribution, say — from each teacher, and a like contribution from each School Section or Board of Trustees.

ON WHAT PRINCIPLE SHOULD THIS FUND BE SUPPORTED.

Our last question is, "On what principle should this fund be supported?" We answer, on the principle already laid down in its establishment, that of the mutual co-operation of the Teachers and the Government. This principle is one which commends itself to the judgment of teachers, and yet how have they carried it out? While the Government have faithfully and honourably contributed to the fund \$4,000 per annum, and have even increased it of late years to \$6,000 per annum, the teachers, as a body, have done nothing. An isolated case here and there of an expectant claimant on the fund who sends in his \$4 a year, but the teachers, as a body, have failed to do their duty in the matter. Low salaries, selfishness, and a temporary interest in a profession which they do not mean to follow, have operated to produce this state of things. Now, however, the country is prosperous, and salaries have been increased. The profession itself has been placed on a recognised footing, and it is right and proper for the Legislature, which has thus afforded facilities to elevate the teaching profession, to see that the old worn out members of the profession shall be provided for, and not remain as a hindrance to progress.

VIEWS OF THE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT ON THIS SUBJECT.

In conclusion we will add the following remarks on the subject from a recent *Circular to the Public Press* by the Chief Superintendent of Education. In them he clearly points out who are the true authors of this unwise and selfish agitation. He says:—