

Teachers' Meetings.

ONTARIO TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

THE twenty-ninth annual convention of this Association was held at Niagara-on-the-Lake, according to announcement, on the 13th, 14th, and 15th ult. The convention was called to order at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, the President, Mr. Robert McQueen, of Kirkwall, Wentworth County, in the chair.

The Chairman opened the convention by reading a portion of Scripture and offering prayer. Mr. R. W. Doan was appointed Secretary, and Mr. G. W. Campbell Assistant Secretary.

A communication was read from Mr. J. Houston, M.A., Brighton, stating that he could not attend to read his paper on "Industrial Training in Schools," and the Executive Committee were asked to request Mr. Wm. Houston, M.A., Toronto, to read it.

W. J. Hendry, Treasurer, read the financial statement for the year, showing receipts: Balance, \$499.03; fees, \$58; Government grant, \$200; interest, \$11.60; sale of minutes, \$75.20; advertisements, \$17; total, \$860.83. Expenditure: expenses of last convention, \$44.50; publishing minutes, \$141.65; printing circulars, \$7; stationery and postage, \$12.52; Executive Committee's railway fares, \$66.20; Ryerson Memorial Fund, \$100; salary of secretary, \$50; treasurer, \$10; balance on hand, \$428.96. The statement was submitted to a committee.

The meeting adjourned till the afternoon.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The afternoon session was opened at 2 o'clock, when Mr. McQueen returned thanks in suitable terms for having again been elected President. The next business on the programme was a discussion "On the Advisability of Holding but one High School Entrance Examination Each Year," by Mr. D. H. Hunter, M.A., Woodstock.

An interesting discussion followed, in the course of which many strong opinions and arguments were advanced on both sides of the question. At length Mr. Fotheringham moved:

"That whilst two entrance examinations a year may interfere to some extent with the efficient working of some High schools, yet in the interests of the Public schools, to which these fill the double place of a promotion test and also a graduating standard, it is not desirable to discontinue the two opportunities of passing this valuable test of attainment."

Mr. J. Tom seconded.

Mr. Wood moved, seconded by Mr. Ayerst, as an amendment,

"That in the opinion of this Association it is advisable that only one examination for entrance into our High schools and Collegiates should be held annually."

The amendment was carried by 23 to 22.

Mr. J. H. Smith gave the following notice of motion:

"That in the event of the entrance examinations being held only once a year becoming law, it is very desirable that such examination be held at or near the Easter vacation.

Mr. William Houston, M.A., Toronto, then gave a short lecture on the subject of "Teaching History," in the course of which he condemned memorizing and advocated rational methods. He thought history should not be prescribed for entrance examinations, though teaching it should be commenced at an early age.

The meeting adjourned until 7.30.

EVENING SESSION.

At the opening of the evening session the President delivered his annual address. In this address Mr. McQueen treated of the teacher's calling, first as to its bearing on the pupils; second, as to some of its characteristics viewed from the standpoint of teachers; third, as to what should be the proper nature of the education; and fourth, as to the motives which should actuate the teachers. As we hope in future issues to be able to present at least some of the papers and addresses *in extenso*, we shall not attempt to give any *résumé* in these minutes.

Prof. S. H. Clarke, M.A., late of Queen's University, gave an admirable analytical reading of

"Edinboro' after Flodden," after which the Convention adjourned until ten o'clock on Wednesday.

During the subsequent sessions the usual mode of procedure was followed, the various sections meeting separately each morning at ten o'clock, and the General Association assembling at 2 p.m.

WEDNESDAY'S SESSION.

The convention met at 2 p.m., the President in the chair.

The first paper was read by Mr. J. H. Smith, Ancaster, on "Advanced English Schools in Rural Districts."

Mr. Wm. Scott, B.A., of Ottawa, next read a paper on the "Proper Functions of a Normal School."

Both were highly interesting, from the importance of the subjects and the ability with which they were treated. Some of the questions raised are worthy of the fullest consideration, and we hope to have an opportunity of returning to them.

After the reading of Mr. Scott's paper the President announced that there were two gentlemen present to speak on behalf of the "Young Memorial Fund." Mr. J. A. Patterson, as a graduate of 23 years' standing of Toronto University, advocated the claims of the Fund on the meeting. Mr. T. C. Des Barres, B.A., secretary of the Memorial Committee, also spoke. Messrs. Fotheringham, McIntosh and Woods paid high tributes to the many excellent qualities and the splendid abilities of the departed Professor. His connection with the teachers as High School Inspector and Chairman of the Central Committee of Examiners was noticed. A motion was proposed by Mr. Fotheringham to the effect that the Association contribute \$100 to the Memorial Fund and carried.

Miss E. Bolton, of Ottawa, then addressed the Convention on "Kindergarten Schools in Ontario." Miss Bolton made a very interesting address, taking the role of a mother teaching her child. Her remarks were well illustrated by practical examples.

A motion was proposed by Mr. Cowley, seconded by Mr. McIntosh and carried, to the effect that each local association be entitled to send one delegate for every fifty members or fraction thereof of this Association, and that any five members may demand a strictly delegate vote upon any question submitted by the executive to the general Association.

At the evening session Professor Freeman read a paper on the "Yellowstone Valley," in which the natural beauties of that region were interestingly described.

THE CLOSING SESSION.

The general Association met at 2 p.m., when Mr. Brebner opened the convention with the usual devotional exercises.

The report of the Executive Committee was read. It contained resolutions of condolence with Messrs. A. MacMurchy, of Toronto, and J. Miller, of St. Thomas, on their recent domestic bereavements, and recommended the following office-bearers for the ensuing year:

President—D. C. McHenry, Cobourg.

Recording Secretary—R. W. Doan, Toronto.

Corresponding Secretary—J. H. Smith, Ancaster.

Treasurer—W. J. Hendry, Toronto.

The report was adopted with the substitution of the name of Mr. S. Woods, London, for that of Mr. McHenry for President.

Mr. Birchard proposed a resolution, which was carried unanimously, thanking the Canadian Chautauqua Assembly for their kindness in granting the use of the grounds and for the excellent hotel accommodation. A discussion then followed in regard to the place of meeting for next year. Many members spoke in favor of Niagara, recommending the delightful situation and pleasant surroundings of the amphitheatre. A motion was carried referring the question to the Executive Committee, with a strong recommendation in favor of Niagara.

The Minister of Education then addressed the meeting. We quote from the *Empire's* report: He said he had not much to say to the Convention. He came rather to renew old associations among old friends. Referring to the open-air meeting place, he said he believed in ventilation—in fact he was subjected to a good deal of ventilation himself. He was not going to speak about any educational questions in dispute. He thought there were no

educational questions in dispute. He maintained that the French and Separate School questions were political questions. Changes were always characteristic of a growing community. He had always endeavored to set himself against capricious changes in school laws. He thought it was better to go very slowly in these matters rather than run the risk of dislocating the whole machine. Before he entered upon his office the only constancy in the affairs of his department was the constancy of changefulness. He then proceeded to enumerate the changes which had taken place during his ministry. These were: Simplifying the instruction of the Public schools, and rendering them more elementary; the reduction of examinations, and reduction in the number of the text-books. In regard to the memorial of the Public school teachers, asking for only one entrance examination, he said that the change might come, but he was not going to cause it now. There would be a December examination in 1889, and one in 1890. He intended to go very slowly.

The Minister then spoke in favor of examinations, and said there was an appalling amount of nonsense talked about cramming. He was not going to discuss the text-book controversy. He would be in favor of having no text-books in Public schools, except in reading. In conclusion, he said that the policy of the Department had been to Canadianize our educational system.

Mr. W. A. Douglas, B.A., of Toronto, addressed the convention on "Economics."

Rev. Principal Grant, of Queen's University, being present in the audience, was invited to a seat on the platform, and called upon to address the audience. He eloquently referred to his life-long connection with the teaching profession, and the pleasure it gave him to address the Association. Speaking of examinations, he said that one of the greatest advantages to be gained was to convince the student of his own ignorance.

Mr. Fotheringham moved that the report of the Committee on the Professional Training of Teachers be laid over until next meeting. The motion was carried.

Mr. Woods said that the report of the committee on Additional Normal Schools was in the clouds, owing to the absence of the members of the committee. The committee was discharged. After cordial votes of thanks to the representatives of the Toronto press, and the President of the Association, the Convention adjourned with "God Save the Queen."

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SECTION.

At the Wednesday's meeting of the Public School Section, Mr. Powell moved that a committee be appointed to consider the advisability of asking the Minister of Education to place the reading of the High school entrance examination papers in the hands of Public school teachers and report to-morrow. The motion was carried, and Messrs. Powell, R. Alexander, Falconer, Johnston and Lent were appointed as the committee. Messrs. Chapman, Doig, Barber, McMaster, and Burgess were appointed a committee to consider the *personnel* of sub-examiners in Ontario Departmental examinations.

Mr. R. K. Row, of Kingston, then read a paper on "The Development of Character by Ordinary School Exercises." Taking as the basis of his remarks the proposition of Comenius, "The end of all education is the development of character," he strongly advocated teachers taking a part in the training of character as well as parents and the Church. The address was followed by considerable discussion, and a motion was passed asking the directors of the Association to publish the address in the annual Report.

At the Thursday's meeting the committee appointed to consider the question of entrance examiners reported, that in the opinion of the committee there should be for entrance examinations a board of examiners for each county or group of counties, said boards to consist of inspectors, High and Public school teachers, there being at least as many High as Public school teachers on the examining boards, and that no person should be appointed as presiding examiner who is not actually engaged in the profession as teacher or inspector.

The committee on the *personnel* of the sub-examiners reported as follows:—"That, whereas, the examination of candidates for Second and Third