

to the frozen heights of the Alps, and firmly held in his hand of ice the banner, with the strange device, *Excelsior!*

His Honor Judge Gowan, one of the most valued friends and promoters of education in the County of Simcoe (the oldest member of the Educational Board in that county), being absent on his judicial duties, sent the following letter to Mr. Boys, explaining his absence:—

ARDBAVEN, BARRIE, 24th April, 1872.

DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst., informing me that the Board of Public School Trustees of Barrie have invited the Rev. Dr. Ryerson to lay the corner-stone of the new school house, on the 1st May next, and that you have been directed to invite me to be present on the occasion.

In reply, I beg to say that I deeply regret that the day named is the day appointed for one of my Courts forty miles from Barrie, and that, consequently, it will not be in my power to be present. Ever since I came to this country, nearly thirty years ago, I have been connected with the school system, having held the office of Trustee of the Grammar School, and the position of Chairman of the Board of Public Instruction from its first institution till superseded by recent enactment, and, with the exception of my friend, Mr. Dallas, I am the only member of the original Board now living.

I have seen the gradual improvement in the school system, and the improvement in the schools in this country from very small beginnings to the present advanced and most prosperous condition, so you will understand my disappointment in not being able to be present on the interesting occasion of laying the corner-stone of the Public School House of Barrie, by the Chief Superintendent of Education.

My position as Secretary and Treasurer of the Grammar School, and Chairman of the Board of Public Instruction, in this the largest county in Ontario, brought me in constant communication with the Education Office in Toronto; and I can say that the able, zealous, and wise administration of the school law by Dr. Ryerson and his assistant, Dr. Hodgins, has, here at least, had a happy effect,—fostering the increase of schools,—securing their better management,—giving them efficient teachers, and providing the means, within easy access to all, of securing a good common education to the youth of this country, and a very superior education in the Grammar Schools.

It would have afforded me much pleasure had I been able to say as much to Dr. Ryerson, when he comes amongst us on the 1st of May; and, although I have not always agreed with the Chief Superintendent in some matters of detail, I feel that the country is very largely indebted to him for earnest, persevering, and well-directed efforts in the cause of education.

May I ask you to lay this letter before the Trustees, and to offer them my congratulations upon the prospect of having at an early day one of the best and most commodious school-houses in the Province.

I am, dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

JAS. R. GOWAN,

Chairman, High School Board
Trustees, Barrie.

Wm. Boys, Esq.,
Chairman of Board of
Public School Trustees, Barrie.

REV. MR. MILNER and REV. MR. MORGAN spoke a few words, after which MR. BOYS said, I would now thank you for your presence, and beg you to join in singing the national anthem—"God save the Queen."

This was done with hearty good will, and the meeting quietly dispersed, well pleased with the ceremonies they had witnessed. Three cheers were given for the Queen, three cheers for Dr. Ryerson, and three cheers for the Chairman. Before closing we cannot help mentioning the admirable manner in which the children sang. For such little ones, the time kept was excellent, and Mr. James Morgan deserves the highest praise for the exertions he made in teaching them the pretty pieces selected.

PROF. GOLDWIN SMITH ON EDUCATIONAL TOPICS.

At the recent convocation of McGill College, Montreal, Mr. Smith addressed the assembly in the following forcible language:—He said that he had once before the honour of being present at the convocation of that University: he was then entirely a stranger, but he was not so now, for the Corporation had been kind enough to invite him to give a course of history lectures in the autumn, an invitation that he had gladly accepted. So that he trusted in a short time to be connected with the staff of the University (applause).—A special interest attached to the operations of that University from its connection with the great and wealthy city of Montreal, which though it could not be said of her as it was of Venice, "that

she held the gorgeous East in fee," yet had a commerce which rivalled the Venetian. From the report that had been placed in his hand he regretted to see that the liberality of the city hardly kept pace with the usefulness of that institution; the subscriptions for the general endowment had not advanced beyond the point indicated in last year's report. That might possibly make that University envy the position of others which were connected with the State, and which received large annual allowances, but he believed that on the whole the position of that University was better than that of the others. In course of time private munificence would be awakened, and it must be recollected that private munificence could hardly find a place in institutions supported by the State, because in that case it did no more, in fact, than displace a certain amount of State appropriations.

The great colleges of the old country, to which they looked back with something of envy as well as love, had grown up by private beneficence. His own college was University College. He was afraid that their connection with King Alfred was legendary, but they might reckon certainly as their founder an ecclesiastic of the thirteenth century, who, connecting his name with an undying corporation, had shared its immortality, and whose name would, in all probability, be gratefully remembered to the end of time.—(Applause.) To his first foundation numerous other benefactors had made additions, and that college had grown up to its present wealth and honour. There could be no reason for despairing of a similar course of things in Montreal. Here was wealth, which in a new country and in early times was perhaps not often dedicated in any large measure to intellectual objects, but which, in course of time, would be. He did not think, therefore, that there was any reason to talk with despondency of the future of that University, for already a great many benefactions had been made. He had seen a contribution of a very valuable addition to the library, made by Mr. Peter Redpath, of works of history of a very valuable kind. (Applause.)

Professor Johnson had adverted to the fact that the subjects of a liberal education were still in a course of transition: the faculty of arts, the faculty of a liberal education, was still agitated by some doubts and perplexities relative to the value of the subjects of instruction; physical science had only lately claimed its share in education, and it had already had its claim adjusted in connection with the old university subjects. No one, he thought, would doubt that the system adopted by the corporation of that University was sufficiently liberal and comprehensive, and that all valuable subjects of instruction were really recognized. There was one gentleman that day had received prizes, and had studied a circle of subjects, almost commensurate with the circle of human knowledge.—(Applause.) That reminded him of the Spanish hidalgo who arrived alone at an inn and asked for a bed, giving such a bead roll of titles, that he was told there was not room for half so many people in the inn. (Laughter). It seemed to him also that there was sufficient liberality of choice of subjects given to the students, but it was possible to have too much liberality of choice, and the student might be perplexed and his time wasted if the University afforded him no guidance in the earlier period of his career. They had, practically, adopted the same course which had been adopted by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, that of guiding the student at the earlier period of his course, and leaving him to take his choice during the later period.

He rejoiced to see amongst the subjects mentioned in the report, as being in a hopeful condition, that of the higher education of women. It was to take part in that movement, for which he felt the most hearty sympathy, that he came this time to Montreal. Perhaps he was rather disposed to take a timid view of the general question which was so widely agitated at present; but he believed that woman was not "undeveloped man," but diverse, and if she were converted into undeveloped man, or even into developed man, "female man," as one of the apostles of the movement had said, it would be a great loss instead of a great gain to society. (Applause.) Nor had he any great faith in any sudden instantaneous change in human nature, either male or female. One great ground of complaint by some was that women were so frivolous as to adorn their persons. Now looking over the evidence of history, monumental and documental, from the time of the early Egyptians to our own, they had proof that for at least 5000 years woman had gone on adorning her person, and he was afraid she would not be cured in a day. (Applause.) But all sensible people were agreed that some improvements were now required in the education of women, and that all studies which could elevate them should be free and open to them, and he was very glad that the Montreal University was taking an active part in that work.

There was one point that he confessed he was glad to see that the authorities of the University were conservative in, and that was that they pronounced Latin and Greek in the old way. Now