

obtain as they desired or as they needed. He desired to give a brief review of the subjects considered that morning, and his own views thereon. The subjects treated were home lessons, object lessons, and composition. These were three very interesting and important subjects. The first was one which had given rise to a great deal of controversy; in fact, he thought, home lessons had lately been a little too much abused. The time in school, however long, was in a great measure occupied with instruction received direct from the teacher. Certain branches of study required the direct aid of the teacher, whilst others required reflection and concentration of the powers of the mind on the part of the pupils. Now, the latter kind of work could not be done in the schools. And that, as a matter of philosophy and principle, should alone be sufficient to sustain the practice which has been followed for ages, that is, giving scholars lessons to study and prepare at home. Another subject of study which had been carried to excess, and which had been much spoken against, was learning by rote. But to do away with it altogether would be unwise, because it was an exercise which was indispensable not only to the development but also to the maintenance of one of the great faculties of the mind, that of memory. Object lessons formed one of the great improvements introduced into the schools of this country, and had been attended with much success both in the normal and infant schools of this city. The third subject, that of composition, was also an important one, but one which was much neglected in our schools, owing to prejudice. Persons would insist that arithmetic and penmanship were all the subjects necessary to be taught in the schools. It was with great difficulty that geography was taught, and as for composition, it was viewed as a luxury which country schools could not be expected to supply. But composition was as necessary as anything taught in the schools. Those three subjects had been treated very ably by the different speakers during the session. Without referring to algebra and arithmetic, about which every one was agreed, there were three other subjects, held in the same popular favor, which should be taught, namely,—Geography, the History of Canada, and the French language in English schools. Geography was an interesting branch of study, and was in itself sufficient to lead the children to like the school. In all model schools the history of Canada should be taught. What was it that fostered a national spirit in a country? It was a knowledge of the history of the country. There was no reason why the two races should not feel equally proud of the history of Canada. The third subject was that of teaching French in English schools. The teaching of English in French schools had made wonderful progress. They would be surprised to know that in every county in the province English was taught in the French schools, and in the higher institutions English was placed exactly on the same footing as French. To be master of both languages gives a teacher double power, and doubtless, chances of being constantly employed and well remunerated. The fault with English people was that they would not talk French, and so soon as they were corrected in a mistake they gave up trying to speak the language. A special work for the teachers to do was to inspire the people of the Province of Quebec with a Canadian spirit, a love and affection for the Dominion of Canada, and at the same time preserve in their hearts a patriotic affection for their province, (loud applause). Of course they should entertain a national spirit for the whole Dominion which in the future would undoubtedly be one of the first nations on the earth. It was already the third maritime power, though far behind in population. Still it nearly equalled that of one of the most interesting and prosperous countries of the globe, Belgium. The Dominion had a larger population than that country [Scotland] which had given so many able men to the world. It had a population much in excess of that possessed by the United States, when they declared their independence and took their position among nations. There was no reason therefore why the Dominion of Canada, with British Columbia and the North West Territory annexed, and with the prospect of the approaching incoming of Prince Edward's Island and Newfoundland, should not constitute, at the northwest part of the American continent, one of the great powers of the world. And although they had all to do their share of the work, and although those who were far advanced in years had done their part and were disposed to work still further, he was convinced that a great deal which would be done to complete that work, would be through the instrumentality of the teachers of the Province of Quebec; for they would imbue the minds of the rising generation with those patriotic feelings and sentiments, without the existence of which the country would be blotted out.

Mr. Alexander, one of the delegates from the Province of Ontario, spoke in approving terms of the position of the School Law in Ontario, which now provides for the compulsory education of children during certain months of the year.

Mr. McLoughlin, of Bedford, also spoke briefly.

During the evening songs were sung in excellent style by Mrs. Leach and Miss Hoerner, and a reading was well given by Miss Henderson.

SECOND DAY.

The Convention of School Teachers held in this city, under the auspices of the Provincial Association of Protestant teachers, concluded its sittings on Saturday. Principal Dawson, President of the Association, occupied the chair, and among those present during the proceedings were the Hon. Mr. Chauveau, Minister of Public Instruction; Professor Graham, of Richmond; Mr. Lynch, M. P.; Very Rev. Dean Bond, Rev. Dr. Jenkins, and Mr. Lunn, of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners; several Professors connected with McGill University, Professor Howe, of the High School, Principal Hicks, of the Normal School, &c., &c.

The first business of importance transacted was the selection of a place for the holding of the next annual meeting, when, on the motion of Principal Hicks, seconded by Mr. Duval, the district of Bedford was chosen.

The discussion on the subject of teaching composition, introduced by Professor Robins on the previous day, was resumed.

Inspector McLoughlin, of Cowansville, and Mr. Jordan, of the Royal Western School, spoke briefly on the question; the latter gentleman quoting the advice of Henry Ward Beecher respecting making coffee, "Ascertain how it is made at the principal restaurants and then don't make it their way," and remarking that so teachers might ascertain how composition was taught in some of our principal schools, and then teach it as they don't. He also gave his experience of training children in this branch, and impressed upon the teachers that above all things they must teach the children kindly.

Mr. J. R. Miller, of Toronto, stated that he had found that composition was not taught in many schools, and the word "composition" was unknown to some teachers. One plan adopted with good results was to recite to the pupils thrilling incidents, and call upon them afterwards to place the same in writing.

Mr. Dey contended that the only real difficulty in the way of teaching composition was not the method of doing it, but what to do. The children must know something about a subject before they could write anything upon it. If a boy went home with his head full of facts, he would be able to write something of them.

Principal Hicks condemned the system followed in schools of writing on slates, and believed that they must make most of the children write with pen on paper before they could make much progress.

Professor Howe mentioned that in the High school the only kind of composition found at all beneficial was reading some story to the boys and afterwards requiring them to reproduce it in writing.

Professor Darcy, Mr. Butler and Mr. Marsden followed and gave the teachers the benefit of their personal experiences.

Professor Graham, of Richmond, pointed out that one of the greatest errors committed in teaching composition had been that of requiring pupils of the lower grades particularly to attempt what might be called essay writing. These essays in common schools, middle schools and even higher schools were required from the pupils without their having undergone any special preparation or possessing much knowledge of the subjects upon which they were to write.

Professor Howe remarked that when Dr. Leach was examining the boys of the High school, ranging from 16 to 18 years, he peremptorily refused to set them some subject for composition, as he did not believe in boys of that age being able to write essays. This led him (Professor Howe) to entertain the idea that boys were not able to write such composition.

Hon. Mr. Chauveau expressed his opinion that to teach young children composition was nothing more than to instruct them in syntax. In the schools generally that mode should not be insisted upon too much. If they wanted the children to be self dependent to a certain extent, they must give it as a home lesson. It was why they certainly wanted some lessons; and the simple mode, if the teacher wanted a letter written by a scholar, was to read them two or three letters by masters of the language. If they found in the pupil's composition anything like pedantry, enforce the importance of writing a simple, common sense style; teach them, above all things, good taste. In many schools which he had visited particularly the convent school, much progress had been made in this branch of instruction. In country schools he had seen compositions written by young girls, which would do honor to persons in higher stations in life. In conclusion the honourable gentleman recommended that good works should be read to scholars and they should be advised to read books, which would give them the habit of writing well, and then the object they sought would be more easily attained.

The President dwelt upon two points which he conceived to be of importance. The first was that this power of expression in their own language was stated to be one of the main objects for which children were sent to school, and yet, as he happened to know practically from young men who came to college, young men man-