

The N. S. Educational Association.

The Nova Scotia Educational Association met at Halifax this year, August 27, 28, 29. The attendance was large and representative, Halifax City, as might naturally be supposed, furnishing the largest quota of teachers. The president, Dr. A. H. MacKay, welcomed the members of the Association to the Technical College, in the Assembly Hall of which the meetings were held. The institution, he said, was a monument of our changing educational conditions.

In a scholarly address, Dr. MacKay touched on several points of great interest to those present. He pointed out that schools pursuing the same kind of work should have uniformity of name. The advantage of having the same names for the same kinds of schools appeals strongly to educationalists. At present the terms are misleading to many writers in the public press and especially to the general public. Common schools, high schools and public schools mean different things in different countries, and even in different provinces in Canada. Elementary, secondary and university education, for instance, may soon be generally agreed upon as the terms to distinguish the three main sub-divisions of general education. Already there is a general tendency for these to follow each other in courses respectively of eight, four and four years.

Habits of accuracy should be formed in the primary school, for habits of inaccuracy may be ineradicable. It is little short of a miracle for a teacher, except of rare power, to overcome habits of inaccuracy in the high school. The more important side of education is the formation of correct habits. If accuracy is not absolute it may mean disaster. It may mean a bankrupt business, a railway-bridge tragedy. There can be no slips in the great world of business without lives at stake, and yet the thoughtless common school teacher acts as if it was no serious thing for the little boy to make at least one slip in every question he tries. The boy should be made to believe that his arithmetic is worth nothing until his simple operations can be depended upon to be uniformly accurate. The same principle, applied to his writing and his English, would make the habit of accuracy a good form that would be a perpetual possession in life.

A great part of the first day's session and a portion of the second, was taken up in discussing and adopting the Course of Study for Common Schools,

copies of which were printed for the use of members. This Course is the product of a Committee of Sixteen, of whom Dr. Soloan is chairman; and its preparation has extended over a period of several years. The best results in Canadian, British and American schools have been carefully studied by the committee, whose long continued and onerous labours have successfully completed a course which met with much favour and very little criticism at the hands of members of the Association. Indeed, the Superintendent of Education and members of the Committee urged free discussion and criticism from the teachers who would soon be using the course, but it seemed to be the opinion that the Committee had done its work well.

The adjustment and elaboration of the Course was the work of Dr. Soloan, chairman of the Committee. As a pedagogic summary, the introduction is admirable—happy in choice of expression and marked with that intellectual force and clearness so happily combined in Dr. Soloan. There was considerable discussion on the portion of the course relating to reading and English. The criticism was made that there is a great lack of plain enunciation in our schools, and it was recommended that there be frequent vocal drills. The choice of some of the reading texts was not approved. "The Wanderings of Ulysses" was pronounced by one teacher, "rude," and by another, "not fit to be read."

The reception and conversazione given in honour of the teachers on the evening of the 27th was a social and literary success. Dr. MacKay presided. An address was delivered by Dr. Blackadar, chairman of the Halifax School Board; a paper by Alderman R. E. Harris, read by Rev. Dr. Forrest; addresses by Principal Sexton, of the Technical College; Inspector Phalen, Principal Howard Brunt and Principal Soloan. The address of Ald. Harris, which was carefully written out, dealt with the salaries of teachers and the Citizenship of the Boy. It was heard with attention and received frequent applause. He favoured higher salaries for all teachers and liberal privileges which included continuance of salary when ill, and a certain amount of time being given for the opportunity of research, instruction and recuperation. He considered the system which some districts have when advertising to request the applicants for the position of teacher to state salary, as contemptible, and one