

## Civil and Social Department

## OPENING OF THE PROVINCIAL NORMAL SCHOOL FOR THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

This event, which marks a new era in our Common School system, took place on the afternoon of Monday last, at the Old Government House, in this city. There was a tolerably fair attendance, though it did not appear that many had come from a distance to be present on this interesting occasion. Lectures were read by Dr. Ryerson, Superintendent of Education; by Mr. Robertson, Head Master; and by Mr. Hinds, who, we believe, holds the situation of Lecturer on Natural Philosophy and Agricultural Chemistry. Mr. Ryerson referred to the establishment of Normal Schools in Prussia, Switzerland, France, Britain, and the United States, and to the good effects which flow from such institutions. He anticipates that the number of students in one year from the commencement of the institution, in January next, will be 100.

Taking the Doctor's estimate for the basis of a calculation—though the number is nearly five times as great as attended the Normal School either of Glasgow or Dublin, during the first few years of their establishment—with a view of arriving at a conclusion as to how long a period will elapse before the effects of this institution are felt upon our schools generally, it follows that the number in attendance at the Normal School at one time, will give five teachers, regularly trained, for each of the twenty Districts of Upper Canada. If each student attend only six months, two hundred teachers, having the requisite qualification, will leave the Normal School in a year; being ten for each District in Upper Canada. The present number of teachers in Upper Canada is given in the Official Report at 2,700; but making allowance for some not reported, we will set down the number at 3,000. No teacher will be allowed to conduct a school receiving Government money, unless he has a certificate of qualification from the Head Master of the Normal School. It would be impossible to estimate precisely what proportion of the 3,000 teachers at present employed, will be allowed, or entitled, to a higher without undergoing a course of regular training. But it is evident that it will be impracticable to fix the standard of qualification much above the average attainments of the mass of teachers now employed; otherwise the machinery of education would be brought to a stand. Elevating the standard of the teachers' qualification will therefore be a work of time. If half the teachers now employed, require no further training to entitle them to certificates of qualification—when the standard of qualification has been definitely fixed—there would still be 1,500 who would have to pass through the Normal School. Without making any deduction for deaths or those who quit the profession of teaching, something more than seven years must elapse before the requisite number could be trained, and the effects of the Normal School be generally felt upon our Common Schools.

The students will be furnished with gratuitous instruction and books, and in some cases, as where a student is unable to pay his own expenses, a dollar a week each will be given toward paying the expenses of board.

The Head Master will deliver practical lectures combined with actual instruction, on all such subjects as school teachers will be required to be conversant with. Among these will be Algebra, Geometry, Drawing, Mechanics, Surveying, Logic, Singing, Political Economy, &c.

We anticipate much good to the agricultural community from the lectures which Mr. Hinds will deliver on Natural Philosophy and Agricultural Chemistry. The principles of vegetation, the constituents of soils, the mode of repairing the waste occasioned by different crops, and all matters connected with the principles of Agricultural science will be treated on. If the rudiments of this know-

ledge, so necessary to every farmer, be acquired by 100 students in the Normal School every year, incalculable benefits will arise from the scientific knowledge that will be thus disseminated—though it may be in isolated portions like globules of quicksilver—over the country to its opposite extremities. Thus will our country keep pace with the advancing intelligence of the age. We cannot overlook the fact that in more than one respect Canada is peculiarly fortunate.—Chemistry, on the principles of Liebig, as applicable to the operations of Agriculture, is a comparatively new science. Its application is, in most countries, as yet extremely limited. It comes to our aid at the precise time when we are ready to receive it. We have, through our Normal School, the means of a "fair start" with other countries, and a proper use of our means, will speedily elevate us to the position of one of the first Agricultural countries in the world.

## SETTLEMENT OF UNOCCUPIED WILD LAND.

Under this head we find the following article in a late number of the *Quebec Gazette*. Perhaps no circumstance has a greater effect upon the permanent prosperity of a country than the tenure by which the land is held. Unfortunately much of our wild land has been subjected to a system of jobbing, seriously detrimental to the best interests of the country. But when large portions of the public domain have been permanently disposed of to companies the act is irrevocable, and regret unavailing. It appears that the Feudal system in Lower Canada has, in some instances, had the effect of reducing the industrious settlers to the condition of day labourers. The Seigneurs have, in some cases, subjected the settlers to harsh and illegal oppression. They should be compelled to act justly & adhere to the letter of the law, fulfilling every obligation they owe to the settlers, or the whole system should be subjected to a thorough revision, and be placed upon a basis more favourable to the development of the country's resources. Obligations and rights are inseparably united, and when the first are disregarded, the second are in common justice forfeited:—

Le *Canadien* of the 22nd instant, contains an interesting letter from the Rev. B. O'Reilly, on the condition of the descendants of the first settlers in Canada, dispersed throughout the townships on the southern side of the St. Lawrence. Mr. O'Reilly is the only Roman Catholic missionary in charge of these people, and the Irish Roman Catholics dispersed over a circle of about ninety miles in diameter. He speaks favourably of the condition of the Irish settlers, who are generally occupied in the clearing or cultivating of their lands; but the numerous descendants of the French settlers he represents as being chiefly engaged as servants or labourers to the settlers originally from the United States, without religious instruction and schools for their children in the French language, and exposed to all the degradation and vice which are consequent on such a state of things. Numbers of them it appears also go for employment into the adjacent state, where they are equally exposed. Their numbers are said to be great.

Mr. O'Reilly asked why the Canadians do not settle on and cultivate the abundance of fertile land to be found in their neighbourhood? and why, when they do settle on land in the Townships, they leave them for a great part of the time to work for American settlers?

Mr. O'Reilly recommends an association to promote their settlement in the rear of the present settlements on the banks of the St. Lawrence in the Districts of Quebec and Three Rivers, by uniting them in contiguous settlements and offering every facility and encouragement.

We are afraid that the causes of the unfortunate condition of the descendants of the French colonists, who emigrated to the Townships, he deeper than has been perceived by Mr. O'Reilly. These causes were pointed out by the late lamented Andrew Stuart, while he was a member of the Lower Canada House of Assembly. They were endeavoured to be removed by the Bill for securing to actual settlers on unoccupied lands the original facilities afforded them by the conditions of the grants from the Crown and the acts and ordinances of the Colonial Government. These ensured to every applicant, for

actual settlement, a sufficient extent of unoccupied land, on condition of continued occupation, for a small and fixed annual rent and legally established dues, in no wise burthenous to the settler, and barely a compensation to the grantee of the Crown for his trouble and disbursements, and for superintending and promoting the settlement.—Every farmer's son could have land, on these terms, in his own neighbourhood, without any capital more than was sufficient for his subsistence till his labour could procure him a first crop.

All the burthens and expenses of the local administration, of justice, building and keeping up mills for the settlers at a lower rate for grinding than is taken in any other country, with every inducement to promote the progress of the settlement; in fact to superintend the whole for the common prosperity, were imposed on the grantees of the Crown, who were bound to do for the good of the settlement nearly all that is now attempted to be done, at so much cost and loss of time to the settlers and the Province.

The Seigneur or original grantee of the Crown on the change of Government, after the cession of the Province, was virtually discharged from a great part of his onerous obligations, and was suffered to set at defiance the old laws in favour of the actual settlers, who were left without any legal remedy against the abuses which were introduced.

A new system of land granting was introduced about fifty years ago. Vast quantities of waste land fell into the hands of speculators who "did what they pleased with their own." Some of them left the country without even appointing an agent in the vicinity for the disposal of the land to actual settlers. Others held them in a state of wilderness till they were rendered valuable by the capital and labour of others, and then they took all the ready money of the settlers that they could get, and besides, frequently, subjected them to a debt, the interest of which fell far more heavily on the settler than all the dues that could be legally exacted by the Seigneur, and frequently ended in their being dispossessed of their land after years of labour bestowed for its improvement. Some Seigneurs, and other holders of large seigneurial grants from the Crown, soon came to understand that they enjoyed a species of monopoly of the wild lands, the nearest to actual settlements, and began to exact their own terms from the settler, who, as has been stated, had no remedy. Is it wonderful that large families with little capital, prefer becoming servants and day labourers, abandoning every thing that is dear to them, rather than subject themselves to obligations which they may be unable to fulfil and be expelled from their neighbourhood and the earnings of their hard labour, to begin the world anew, under more unfavourable circumstances?

Mr. O'Reilly appeals to the "patriotism" of our legislators and others.

No "patriotism" will be sufficient till unoccupied land can legally be had by settlers subject to actual residence, by themselves or others, and till the original conditions and laws regulating the seigneurial grants can be legally enforced.

That the descendants of the original French colonists are disposed to settle on and cultivate the waste lands, the multitude of them settled on such lands as *equalites* is sufficient evidence; the new and populous parishes they have formed, where they could get lands nearly on the old terms, shows that they are steady and successful settlers.

## SKETCHES OF THE COUNTRY.

Woolwich and Nichol—Some good Farms in the "Back Townships"—Fall Wheat—A Small Village—Elora and Fergus—Beautiful Cascade, &c. &c. &c.

St. George, Oct. 23, 1847.

DEAR SIRS.—In my letter of the 4th inst. you had a sketch of Waterloo, its villages, &c. If you are not averse to going farther north come a long with me and take a trip through Woolwich and Nichol; let us view the farms, notice the improvements in agriculture and agricultural implements. You know these townships are generally denominated "back townships" but be very careful or you will entertain a wrong idea of them, and, in consequence, will be much surprised when you behold many beautiful farms, orchards, gardens, &c. with good barns and houses, I do not say that you will find the greater part of them answering this description, but I say that many farms in those townships are not inferior to many of the first class of farms in parts of the country which were settled 25 or 30 years sooner. In fact many of them exhibit signs of quite as much good taste, persevering industry, sound judgement, and as thorough knowledge of farming to the best advantage, as any of the farms around Toronto, Hamilton, &c.

The soil is good, nay excellent, and produces excellent crops of wheat, oats, barley, peas, beans, turnips, and many others too numerous to mention. Spring Wheat has heretofore been the principal kind grown, but many are now sowing large quantities of Fall Wheat which does well, and pays the farmer well for his trouble and expense in getting it in. Many in the first settled section of the country have an idea that, in these back townships, (for so they are called) the inhabitants are obliged to almost skin a flint in order to get a living, but how are they mistaken! People in these townships live as luxuriously as any people ought to live.

Before visiting Woolwich I looked over Smith's Map of Canada, and observed in this township, a village of the same name. In travelling through this section of the township, when I came near to the spot I pushed on with the expectation of beholding a pleasant little Village. Well, I continued travelling—travelling—without finding the village, and at last I stopped and inquired for it. "You are in it" said the person of whom I made the inquiry—"you are in it now." I looked around and at last saw one house, the Post Office. And this, sirs, is the village of Woolwich. It is true that a about one quarter of a mile to the South, is a chapel, and not very far from that is a tailor's shop, but the idea of calling this place a village would scarcely have entered into the head of Punch himself.

There is a road leading from this place, into Nichol, but it is enough to make one weep to travel it.

Before leaving Woolwich let me tell you that, upon the whole, it is a good township, possessing an excellent soil which is very productive, and almost every kind of grain, such as wheat, oats, barley, rye, peas, &c., and fruits, such as apples, cherries, pears, plums, and currants, can be cultivated to very good advantage.

Nichol is a fine township, well watered, and has a good soil, very similar to that of Woolwich. It contains two beautiful and thriving Villages—Elora, and Fergus, both on the banks of a branch of the Grand River which, at both these places is obliged to work machinery. At Elora is a beautiful cascade formed by a ledge of rocks across the channel. Over these rocks, which do not rise perpendicularly, but gradually about two feet in five, the water rushes with great fury. On each side of the river below the fall, the rocks rise to the height of about 25 feet and present a very bold aspect. Fergus lies 6 or 7 miles north of Elora, and contains some very good buildings, and some machinery. The place is not very large but still there is a great deal of enterprise exhibited. The country around is settled by active, intelligent, and industrious Farmers, who are paying very laudable attention to the improvement of their farms, and many have excellent buildings, an abundance of the necessaries, as well as the luxuries of life, and will make you feel at home if ever you travel through that section of the country. Wishing them success and prosperity in all laudable undertakings, and yourselves pleasant dreams about our beautiful and delightful country, its resources, institutions, &c. subscribe myself, Gentlemen,

Yours, &c.

THE FARMER'S SON.

RAILROAD TRAVELLING.—RATES OF FARE.—The following table shows the number of passengers carried on the principal roads of New York and New England in 1846, with rates of fare, &c. It will be seen that the rates on the line between this city and Albany are higher than those of any other road. It will also be seen that the cheaper the fares, the greater the travel, which would indicate to our road the policy of foregoing their present high charges. And when it is remembered that the packets between this city and Rochester which have twice a day, are crowded to their utmost capacity—carrying as we see often announced, 200 passengers—a reduction of fare would seem to be a measure about the wisdom of which there could be no question:—

| Name of Road        | Length of Road, miles | Number of passengers carried. | Rate of fare, per cent. |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Boston and Lowell   | 96                    | 400,596                       | 3 1/2 cts.              |
| Boston and Maine    | 73                    | 460,426                       | 2 1/2-10                |
| Boston & Providence | 42                    | 476,515                       | 2                       |
| Boston & Worcester  | 45                    | 370,316                       | 2 1/2-10                |
| Eastern             | 51                    | 796,756                       | 2 1/2-10                |
| Fitchburg           | 49                    | 327,034                       | 2 1/2                   |
| Old Colony          | 37                    | 213,114                       | 2 1/2-10                |
| Western             | 156                   | 265,664                       | 2 1/2-10                |
| Long Island         | 98                    | 167,471                       | 2                       |
| Free                | 62                    | 103,283                       | 2                       |
| Albany & Schen'y    | 17                    | 174,653                       | 3                       |
| Utica & Schen'y     | 78                    | 221,818                       | 4                       |
| Syracuse & Utica    | 53                    | 135,279                       | 3                       |
| Auburn & Syracuse   | 26                    | 105,899                       | 4                       |
| Aub'n & Rochester   | 78                    | 142,355                       | 4                       |
| Tonawanda           | 43 1/2                | 92,387                        | 4                       |
| Albany & Buffalo    | 31                    | 87,643                        | 4                       |
| Harlem              | 52                    | 1,508,466                     | 2                       |

Buffalo Commercial.

Mr. Van Norman, Proprietor of the Iron Works at Long Point, on Lake Erie, has purchased the Marmora Iron Works, in the Victoria District.