

insurance company, if it brought an income of \$116. Mr. Miller proposed that Dr. Hodgins should be sent for, to give some information on the subject of the Superannuation Fund. This was agreed to. Mr. Hunter said it required much argument to make teachers take a part in this beneficial measure. Mr. McMurchy said that \$4 would bring a handsome dividend, but he forgot the word "if"—if the fund would permit it—which made all the difference. He condemned the conduct of a county inspector, Mr. Ball, of Welland, who had actually threatened the teachers in his district if they did not support the superannuation clause, and also had informed some candidates for certificates that it was his will that they should support the clause. He wanted Dr. Hodgins to state what official instructions Mr. Ball was acting under, if any. Injustice was done also in the matter of the petitions. Mr. McGann criticised the provision of the clause as an insult to the teachers. Dr. Hodgins, having been requested to address the Association on the subject, said he sympathised with them in the smallness of the grant, but when they had asked the House for an increased grant, they had been met by the question, "What are the teachers themselves doing?" They had in truth taken little or no interest in it, and until they did so, they could not ask for increased grants. Again, some did not oppose the principle, but it was at first not entertained by the Legislature; and it was only during the past few years they had been able to establish it. He felt that they could not embody the exact principle desired by the teachers. They had been unable to get the amount increased until last year, and it must be remembered that thousands of dollars could not be asked from the Legislature unless it could be shown that teachers were doing their part in the matter. It was important, however, to have obtained a recognition of the principle that the profession was entitled to a retiring allowance. Although all was not done in the matter that was desired, yet the best was done that could be. Dr. Hodgins proceeded to read from a letter written by Dr. Ryerson to the Treasurer on the subject. This letter showed great diversity of opinion among the teachers on the subject. It appeared that it was the fluctuation in the allowance which caused discontent. The rev. doctor made some recommendation with regard to the subject. This letter was laid before the House of Assembly, with other correspondence, and ordered to be printed. It was dated the 27th of February, and was as follows:—

Copy.)

EDUCATION OFFICE,
Toronto, 27th Feb., 1872.

SIR,—I have the honour to state, in reference to the recent conversation which I had with you in regard to the Superannuation Clause of the School Act, that I addressed a circular (hereto appended) on the subject to the various County Inspectors. In reply to that circular, the Inspectors of the Counties of Essex (No. 1), Lambton (No. 1), Oxford, Perth, Brant, Norfolk, Haldimand, Halton, North Simcoe, North York, Prince Edward, Frontenac, Lennox, Addington, Leeds, Carleton, Stormont and Prescott, and Russell, report that, so far as they know, no petitions for or against the Superannuation Clause has received any signatures in those counties.

The Inspectors of the other counties report as follows:—Kent, one petition for and one against the clause; Huron, one against and one for the fund; Bruce, nine out of every ten are in favour of the clause; Wellington (1st and 2nd divisions), one for and one against; Waterloo, no certain information; Lincoln, three against, none for; Welland, eight for and none against; Peel, three against, none for; Ontario, seventy out of seventy-six teachers signed petitions in favour of the clause; Northumberland, one for and one against it; eighty teachers, or nearly all, signed petitions in favour of the clause.

As to the state of feeling on the subject among the teachers, nearly all the Inspectors report a great diversity of opinion on the subject; others report mere passiveness, and the remainder, such as Waterloo, Oxford, Middlesex and Peel, strong objection to the clause. In the case of Lambton, Ontario, Perth and South Hastings, an almost unanimous expression of opinion has been given in favour of the clause as it now stands.

In regard to the *classes* of teachers opposed to or in favour of the clause, the Inspectors almost invariably report the former to be "those who do not intend to continue long in the profession of school teaching." "Young men who intend to teach only until they can secure money sufficient to carry them through college, or into something else"—persons "who intend to make teaching a stepping-stone to something else"—"those who look more at the money than at the principle involved"—"those who have received incorrect or partial information on the subject"—those "who are opposed to compulsion in every form," and those "who oppose the whole scheme on various grounds." The great mass of the teachers, however, are either passive in the matter, or, having been for some time in the

profession, are strongly in favour of it, and hope some day to derive advantage from it.

As to the grounds of objection to the distribution of the fund (as now authorized by law), which have been urged by very many earnest and faithful teachers, I entirely sympathize. I would gladly see the law modified so as to meet their reasonable wishes. These teachers object to the present scheme chiefly on the following grounds:—

1st. That teachers must be "worn out" before they can receive any aid from the fund. As one Inspector remarks: "Many of the best and most devoted teachers look forward to a time when the work and worry of the school-room will be over, and they hope that their withdrawal from the profession may take place, at all events, a few years before they are incapacitated by infirmity, and unable to teach a school any longer. Like the merchant, the mariner, and others, they hope for retirement while health, and the capacity for enjoying retirement, remain. Many of them would rather die in harness than confess themselves incapable of doing a day's work. This feeling is not unknown to many of the best men in other professions, when they begin to grow old."

2nd. The second reasonable ground of objection is the uncertainty of the amount of the pension payable for each year's service. For some years the state of the fund has been such that I have only been able to apportion from one to two dollars for each year's service, but last year the amount was only two dollars a year; but this year (out of the \$12,500 which I took the liberty to recommend being placed in the estimates for this service) I shall be able to apportion at the rate of about four dollars for each year's service. If the teachers who become superannuated could only rely upon the maximum fixed by Law many years ago (*viz.*, six dollars for each year's service), I think they would be satisfied. It is the continual fluctuation in the amount payable to them which has reasonably caused much discontent.

In regard to the first ground of complaint which has been urged, I would recommend a fixed age to be determined, at which any teacher who has subscribed to the fund should have the right to retire and receive a pension. A sliding scale of allowance might also be fixed, definite in amount, and not liable, under any circumstances, to fluctuation. The basis to be adopted might be that fixed in the Superannuation Act of Civil Service, as passed by the Parliament of the Dominion.

In regard to the objection against compulsory payment to the fund, I need only remark that it is a principle invariably incorporated into every pension scheme which has been adopted either in the Civil Service in various countries, or among different religious bodies everywhere.

I hereto append a copy of the circular sent to each Inspector, asking for this information. Should you desire it the replies received will be enclosed for your perusal.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

E. RYERSON.

The Hon. Alex. Mackenzie,
Treasurer of Ontario.

COPY OF POSTAL CARD SENT TO INSPECTORS, 19TH FEBRUARY,
1872.

"Please inform Department, without delay, of the number of petitions for and against the Superannuation Clause; also, what is the present state of feeling among Teachers on the subject."

Dr. Hodgins answered several questions on point of detail connected with the subject.

It was then moved by Mr. Alexander, and seconded by Mr. Watson, "That this Convention approves of the principle of a superannuation fund for public school teachers," but this was subsequently withdrawn, and upon the previous amendment being submitted to a vote by the public school teachers it was lost, and the original motion was declared carried.

Subsequently a vote of thanks to Dr. Hodgins, for his explanation of the superannuation fund, was unanimously passed.

PROFESSOR ROBINS' ADDRESS.—In addressing the members of the Association, Professor Robins, of Montreal, referred to the past difficulties of the profession in Canada, and said he was glad to think and hope they were advancing. With regard to the Province of Quebec, he said he was sorry to say things were not in such a good state as in Ontario, and he hoped those in this Province would do what they could to help forward their cause. He then proceeded to read a paper, upon the difficulties he had met with as an Inspector of Schools in the city of Montreal. He said no teacher could reasonably object to have his school inspected (*hear, hear*); although he related some rather funny objections he had heard of. Two questions he would pay attention to on this