

literary dignitaries have labored for superior education ; multi-millionaires have vied with each other in founding names for themselves by building faculties for the children of the classes ; but we yet await the advent of the man, the prophet, who, with the cause of elementary education woven into the fibre of his being, will, with clarion voice, wake this province from west to east, and convince those who have charge of our affairs, educational or otherwise, that the question of common education has sprung to life and must be faced. O, for the eloquence of a Demosthenes or a Cicero, the power to fire men's hearts and stir their blood, then would I make this Province, from the farthest recesses of the Laurentides to the dark waters of the Gulf, reverberate with the grand truth that the common education of its children is the primary duty of every people, that we have no right to expend lavishly of public moneys on higher education, at the expense of the common schools.

It is commonly said that on such occasions as this we ask for the unattainable. I do not do so ; I ask you to face the question as to who is responsible for the indifference to education which obtains in this Province. I say to you that you are responsible, that those who are with me on this platform to-night are responsible, that we, as individual and corporate members of this Association, are responsible. We all know that rural elementary education is not represented on that body which is supposed to rule its destinies ; we know that the legislative grant for elementary education is \$14,000 a year less than at Confederation ; we know that our teachers are underpaid ; we have seen the candidate for legislative honors, with smile and bow and hand shake, seek the public sufferage ; we have, perchance,

worked for him ; we have heard him pledge himself to secure that road, this bridge, the other railway for his county ; but when have we heard the matter of education brought forward ; when have we, who call ourselves educationists, asked what was to be done for education ?

I am, however, thankful to say that I see the dawn of better things. Though the words of those of us who dared, in the past, to raise our voices on behalf of common schools, seemed to have fallen on deaf ears ; though those for whom we spoke listened and seemed to slumber again ; those to whom we spoke forgot or did not hear ; those to whom we, in our inexperience, had looked, as our natural leaders, were found wedded to other interests ; our words have, in the silence of public intelligence, our words have had their effect. A sign of the times was indeed visible when the first minister of this Province, but a few nights ago, spoke from a platform which bore the legends, "Elementary Education," "Better pay for our teachers." It is our duty to do all in our power to assist in carrying such objects to a happy issue. Here, from this platform, feeling the full responsibility for my words, I wish to repeat and emphasize what I said last year at Sherbrooke, when I declared that there was rank, fame and honor for the man who made education a living issue. To-night I say this and more ; I say, judging from my knowledge of a considerable extent of country, that the party which takes up education and gives it the support it deserves will rule this Province for many years to come ; that the man who leads such a party will be like him who found in the mud of a dark valley a jewel of inestimable value, and raised it high on a beacon, where, catching the heaven-strayed beams of light, it illuminated the dark and devious ways of the valley, and guided