

administrative ability, and apparently do not know how to arrange the work of the school-room, so that while the necessary recitations are being conducted the pupils remaining at their seats may be profitably employed. If the sessions were lengthened and these schools organized on a basis so as to more fully illustrate the best methods of conducting an ordinary country school, they would become more valuable as training institutions and greatly advance the interests of education in our rural sections.

Teachers' Associations, strictly speaking, cannot be considered as training institutions, though they are nevertheless valuable auxiliaries. They are now recognized as a part of our educational system and as such receive pecuniary aid. The interchange of thought and the discussions that arise on various topics from time to time in a well-conducted association, have a tendency to enlarge the views of teachers in regard

to their work and awaken greater interest in the cause of education. Practical subjects while receiving due prominence should not entirely monopolize the time of the convention. Theory as well as practice is required, for all practice is founded on theory, and if theoretical subjects are not discussed, teachers are liable to become imitators instead of active, zealous and independent workers. Let the executive committees of these associations secure the services of a competent man to discuss the principles of education, the growth and development of the mind, the disciplinary value of different branches of study, and other topics relating to the dignity and usefulness of the teacher's calling. These things are necessary to arouse in the minds of teachers a spirit of enthusiasm and a love for their work, without which the best laws and the most effective machinery will prove of little avail in elevating the tone and standing of our schools.

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## THE AIMS OF OUR PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM.

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GOLDSMITH'S Citizen of the World, amongst the many shrewd observations he makes on western civilization says, "Ask an Englishman what nation in the world enjoys most freedom, and he will immediately answer his own. Ask him in what that freedom consists, and he is instantly silent." Lien Chi's Englishman is but a type of the majority of men, who, having neither the time nor the inclination to investigate the soundness of their theoretical opinions, are content to be guided by authority or custom in holding them.

Our public school system has been long enough established to secure settled opinions as to its merits, and these are neither silent nor equivocal. Its excellencies have been proclaimed from the house-top; they were shown forth with somewhat of meretricious splendour, it is true, at the Centennial Exhibition, in Philadelphia; and at the late Paris Exhibition, its glories seem to have dazzled the eyes of even sober beholders, if we may judge by the following extract from the *London Globe* upon the Canadian Exhibits: "A high qualification is re-