

The address was highly practical, and gave rise to an interesting discussion, which indicated that Mr. Sponco spoke the views of his fellow-teachers generally. He cautioned teachers against endeavoring by means of physical exercises to recuperate exhausted mental energy. He would like to have the vacation period fixed at a time when there was no farm-work to be done, for children should have a rest as well as the teachers. With reference to "cramping," he thought the aim should be to shorten the hours, not lessen the intensity of the application to work. Short lessons and long intervals should be the rule in all primary classes. Two hours a day was enough time for pupils in the first book, this increased by half an hour a day for each division would bring the school time to what it is now for the junior fifth-class pupils of say 13 years of age. Outside supervision was one of the most important duties of the teacher. He looked upon schools and teachers as necessary evils, since they were used for doing work which properly devolved upon the parent. He objected to the imposition of work by way of punishment, and advocated the substitution of gymnastic drill for the short recesses.

On the afternoon of the second day a committee, consisting of Messrs. Fotheringham, Johnston (Belleville), Millar, Alexander, and McHenry, was appointed to frame a suitable resolution of condolence on the death of the late Dr. Ryerson, and to forward it to the family of the deceased.

G. W. Ross, M. P., gave an admirable address on the subject, "How to make teachers' associations more useful." He advocated the holding of township institutes, and of longer sessions of the wider associations which should be held once a year. The programme of these meetings should be comprehensive and practical, and subjects outside of the teacher's immediate work should occasionally be selected. Subjects should be allotted only to those who consented to take them up, and then the engagement should be strictly kept. He would introduce the United States institute plan of having the subject introduced amidst a running fire of questions from members by means of which all would be drawn into the discussion. He would like to have the attendance of the teachers made compulsory, and concluded by expressing his high appreciation of the association as a means of self-improvement amongst the teachers.

An address was delivered during the evening by J. A. McCabe, LL. D. principal of the Ottawa normal school, on "The Schoolmaster abroad." After referring to some general principles connected with education, he contrasted the use made of text-books in former days with the use made of them now. A text-book he defined to be an artificial reservoir—often an empty and muddy one—of facts. He advocated the phonetic method in teaching reading. The best teachers should be placed in charge of the lower divisions in a school, as the great work of the teacher was to create a thirst for knowledge, and train the pupils to habits of observation.

The report of the committee appointed to consider the suggestions in the President's address was then submitted and adopted. The most important part is as follows:—"In view of the very great evils which seem to have resulted in the United States and other countries from the introduction of politics into educational matters, your committee trusts that all true friends of our school system will unite in discountenancing every influence tending in that direction. The number of schools opening with religious exercises is happily on the increase, and your Committee is of the opinion that it is desirable that a suitable selection of Scripture lessons should be incorporated in our Readers, and that the sentiments of the President's address are strongly endorsed; that any one who cannot reverently, humbly, and lovingly read the Scriptures is not fit for a teacher."

The afternoon of the third day was taken up with an address of a general character from Dr. Goldwin Smith, and a paper by Professor M. McVicar on "Inductive and deductive methods in education." Dr. Smith after a brief reference to educational matters in England, and to the university and public library questions in Canada, expressed the opinion that perfect liberty of action to the people of each locality was the best solution of the difficulty about the introduction of the Bible into the schools. He did not favor the re-establishment of the Council of Public Instruction as an administrative body, but thought some such body would serve a useful purpose in other ways. Professor McVicar's paper was a thoughtful and suggestive one, but it was at the same time unsuitable for being intelligently summarised.

In the evening Mr. W. H. Howland gave an address on "Temperance in the public schools." He stated that in Toronto an incredible number of youths were learning drinking habits. In England they had school-books on temperance which taught that alcohol was a poison and a producer of disease instead of an article

of food and a producer of strength. This closed the proceedings of the general convention.

PUBLIC SCHOOL SECTION.

In this section the chief topics of discussion were (1) Public examinations, which was introduced by Mr. Richard Lewis, of Toronto, (2) the granting of higher certificates as the result of successful teaching, introduced by Mr. S. McAllister of Toronto, (3) the new public school programme, which came up in connection with the report of a committee appointed to consider it, and (4) the demand made on teachers for information by the Bureau of Industries. The opinion of the section was unfavorable to the conversion of public examinations into mere exhibitions and a motion in that sense was carried. After a good deal of discussion a motion was carried in favor of raising a teacher's certificate one grade by examination after five years of successful teaching and another grade after three years more. A good deal of doubt was expressed as to the expediency of allowing so much control over subjects of study to remain with parents and trustees without an appeal to the inspector and this view was finally adopted by resolution. The work required by the circulars of the Bureau of Industries was regarded in the light of a hardship in view of the already small salaries and hard work of the teacher.

INSPECTORS' SECTION.

In this section after some discussion and the reception of a committee report on the subject a resolution was passed in favor of making promotion examinations general with a caveat against making success at these examinations the great aim of school-work. It was also resolved, after discussion, that it would be better to have reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, grammar, composition, and geography made compulsory in the programme. The committee on teachers' associations reported that in order to a full and regular attendance at the associations they recommend that the programme be made eminently practical and interesting. That inspectors should use every suitable opportunity in meeting with trustees or teachers to impress the usefulness of the meetings on those who attend them, and urge on the teachers the duty to themselves and their profession in respect of their contributing to the work at the meetings. That some means should be adopted to bring the absence of the teachers from the regular meetings of the association to the knowledge of their trustees. That periodicals or books should be supplied to the members in whole or in part from the funds of the association. That in counties where a central point is not easily reached, a general county convention should be held once a year, and a local association in each township in the other half year; that in regard to the programme the non-professional part should be subordinated to the professional. It is desirable that classes of pupils from the schools be brought to the meeting for the purpose of practical illustrations of methods of teaching. Where it is impracticable to bring pupils to the place of the meeting it is a good alternative to form classes of the teachers in attendance. The association should provide means of assisting members in their individual difficulties by opening a question drawer. The interest seems to be best maintained in this feature of the programme, where questions are admitted up to the end of the first day of the convention, and answered at a certain time on the second day.

The following resolution was adopted:—"That in the opinion of this Section it is advisable that the professional examination of third-class teachers be uniform throughout the Province, and that the papers be prepared by a committee of public school inspectors."

HIGH SCHOOL SECTION.

A resolution was carried in this section looking to the holding of the intermediate and University Examinations at different dates so as to enable pupils to try to pass both. A motion by J. Millar M. A. calling the attention of Toronto University Senate to the desirability of admitting male candidates to the local examinations was left over till next year. Steps were taken to ask the University Senate to issue more specific instructions as to the junior and senior matriculation examinations, with regard to the manner in which the papers are to be set and the values assigned. A paper was read by G. H. Robinson M. A., of Whitby on the intermediate examination. He traced its history from its institution in 1875 and its influence on high school education to the present time. He next discussed the effects of the change made by the new regulations which were summed up as follows:—

1. It will probably lessen the pressure of work both upon teachers and pupils.