

Early Normal Graduates.

Each succeeding year, however, witnessed an improvement in the sentiments of the community on matters relating to the Public Schools and by degrees the trials and annoyances of Normal School graduates became proportionately less grievous to bear. Let us then with kindling emotions and with grateful appreciation, remember the pioneers of our brotherhood—the devoted men and women who, with unflagging zeal and with conspicuous intelligence, cleared the way for the better things now within the teacher's reach. In an humble way they each and all left their impress for good on their day and generation. Many of them were sooner or later won to other but not to higher pursuits, and whether they embraced law, medicine or divinity, or entered into mercantile or other departments of business life, or devoted themselves to literature or to art, to agriculture or to politics, I am proud to know that they, almost invariably, climbed high and left the mark of good work and notable achievement on their chosen vocations. Some died in harness, teaching to the end, still alas! living not long enough to see, otherwise than by the eye of faith, the assured dawn of the brighter educational day, in the rosy glow of whose yet early morning hours we are here now assembled. But although the lowly log or frame school houses, sanctified by their hopes and fears, their joys and sorrows, their struggles and their triumphs, their patient labors and their ill-requited toil, may have given place to costly brick or stone temples dedicated to learning; and although the effacing finger of time, the weight of revolving years, may have already flattened the mounds over their unmarked graves, let us not, on this auspicious occasion, forget them or refuse to recognize their claims or neglect to pay tribute to their faithful well-doing in the day of smaller possibilities in which their lots were cast.

Nor may we, even in this cursory glance at the work and influence of the Normal School in its earlier life, omit all reference to the revered father of the Public School system of Ontario, Dr. Ryerson laid and established the shapely and solid foundations on which the present Minister of Education is so wisely and so acceptably continuing to build, modelling and erecting and perfecting his particular story of that noble superstructure which must increasingly become the pride and glory of the people. This institution was not only the first fruits and the most admirable outcome of Dr. Ryerson's enlightened policy, it was ever the cherished object of his solicitude and love. Here, therefore, within these rooms,