

production and the diffusion of literature. Its interests were not more selfish than those of any other trade, and they should be careful how they carried on an institution like the Depository without periodical enquiry. He had no doubt that it served an excellent purpose in the pioneer state of our institutions, but now the book trade had developed and circumstances had changed. He looked with respect on the Depository and every part of the great educational policy which had been established in this Province, and would not lay rash hands upon it. (Cheers.) During his visit to the local associations several questions had come up. One was whether certain scientific and philosophical subjects had not better be removed from the programme. The real question was, could these subjects be effectively taught or not? He should say that some of them could not be taught in the rural schools. He was of opinion that the staple should be reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, and geography. Let these be thoroughly taught, especially arithmetic, which, independent of its obvious uses, was the best mental training that our children received. He had no doubt that the Scotch owed a great portion of their remarkable success in life to the very thorough training they underwent in arithmetic in Scotch schools. A great deal had been said about the economical value of education in the increased value it gave to labour but they must remember that, after all, the root of industry was hard work, and while they made labour more skilled and intelligent, there might be a danger of making manual labour distasteful. This result had already been seen in the United States. The superiority of British workmen arose not from anything learned in the school, but from the long-trained habit of conscientious labour. Referring to the subject of rewards and punishments, he said he was inclined to sympathize with many people who were opposed to the prize system. He thought that to excite ambition and envy in the minds of children was not conducive to their happiness, and after all, the great thing they desired to form was not intellect, but character. With regard to punishments, some thought that corporal punishment in schools could be done away with altogether. But if the statements which had been published as to cases in which it had been successfully abolished were true, they only showed the persons that had succeeded to have possessed wonderful powers of moral command, such as were not given to one teacher in a hundred. Among ordinary children and ordinary teachers, cases must arise when corporal punishment should be used. But, of course, the greatest economy of punishment was the greatest proof of the teacher's powers of moral command. The punishment should always be administered in cool blood, and if possible not at the time; it should never be inflicted for stupidity or nervousness, but only for wilful disobedience, including obstinate idleness. He had sometimes thought that the political evils of which we complained on this continent had resulted from the loss of parental authority, amounting in some cases to positive domestic anarchy. The irregularity of attendance of which complaint had been made was due in some measure to our climate, the shortness of the summer often making it necessary for the children to stay at home to assist in getting in the harvest, and the severity of the winter rendering it at times impossible to send them long distances. The frequent change of teachers would, he was afraid, only be rectified by higher pay being given. A question had been raised whether the Council of Public Instruction had not better be improved out of existence, and a Minister of Education substituted for it. He should say yes, at once, on two conditions. The first was that they could find a Minister of Education. He had asked one or two persons of some eminence whether they did not think the change had better be made. The answer was, "Where will you find the man?" It was rather a melancholy subject of contemplation, and seemed to show that the United States was not the only country where the best men did not go into Parliament. Another reason against the change was that they wished to keep education out of party politics. In England, the Vice-President of the Council was practically the Minister of Education as Chairman of the Committee of Council on Education, but though he was a party man, and went in and out like the other Ministers, they had somehow the art in the old country of keeping education tolerably clear of politics. He was not so sanguine of doing it here, but if he were sure of these two conditions being satisfied, he did say the right thing certainly was to have a Minister of Education. The President concluded his speech by thanking them for the honour they had done him by electing him, and then called on the Chief Superintendent of Education to address them.

Rev. Dr. Ryerson said that for more than twenty-five years nothing had been tolerated or allowed in any public school in Upper Canada which would prevent a Roman Catholic child from entering it, so that no voice of warning or admonition in regard to it was required now. The fact that only 15,000 out of the 70,000 Roman Catholic children were educated in Separate Schools showed that the greatest liberality had been shown in the public schools. The greatest care had been taken in the framing of the text-books, and they did not want to go to any one from any other country to show them what to do now. He claimed that he had watched the interests of the teachers of this country, and had been the means of framing a system which had not been equalled in any other country. He held that the meetings of the Council of Public Instruction should be public. (Cheers.) He had objected to the introduction of the elective system, believing the members should be accountable to the Government, but when it was introduced he gave notice of a motion, and held now that the elective members of the Council should have their words and their acts known to their constituents, and that the Council meetings should be public. (Loud Cheers.) He had made no less than three motions to that effect, and he believed that if the proceedings during the last year had been public instead of private, great good would have resulted to the public. The Council should be either purely administrative or it should be responsible to the people. There should be the most

thorough public investigation, and no secrecy in any part of it. He should not think that the pluck characteristic of Englishmen would be shaken by the fear of being reported. He was in favour now of having a Minister of Education a member of the Executive Government and the Legislative Assembly. He held that either the Government should not interfere at all with the school system, or should take charge of it and be responsible for it. He should do all he could to obtain public enquiry on the part of the representatives of the people into the whole system of the working of the Council as well as our school system generally. With regard to prize books he held that the people should have the choice in the matter, and that there should be as little dictation as possible. He believed they could find a Minister of Public Instruction as well as a Minister of Crown Lands. He did not think the country was so intellectually poor that it could not find such a Minister. The Depository had worked in harmony with the development of the book trade to an extent unequalled in any State of the Union of the same population as Upper Canada. It may be easy to find defects in every human system, and to unsettle everything, but it was not so easy to build up everything. He hoped he should always have a kindly place in the recollection of the teachers of Ontario. (Cheers.)

#### COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

After the following teachers had taken part in the discussion:—Messrs. A. McCallum, Hamilton; R. Johnson, Cobourg; Scarlett, Northumberland; Irwin, Belleville; R. McQueen, Belleville; A. McMurchy, and W. McIntosh, Mr. McTavish, moved, in amendment to the amendment, seconded by Mr. D. B. Smith, That as enough time has not yet elapsed for testing with any degree of thoroughness the practical value of the compulsory clauses of the School Law, this Association deems it unwise to ask for any changes in the law, but they would press upon all parties concerned the primary importance of enforcing the law as it at present exists." This was carried.

#### THE PRESIDENT AND THE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT.

After prayer and reading the Minutes, the President said he desired to refer to a question which had arisen the preceding night. He had then addressed them on various topics of interest in connection with education which occurred to him and which he thought were proper subjects for discussion there. He had not done so in a spirit of harshness or discourtesy towards anybody. In speaking of changes which the Council had made, or might be led to make, in the text-books, he had cast no reflection upon any one, and had used words which were scrupulously measured and courteous, especially as he saw the Chief Superintendent was present at his invitation. The Chief Superintendent had made a speech which was evidently directed against the re-organized Council, and the elective element in it. It would have been in very bad taste for him to have entered into an acrimonious discussion with their guest. Dr. Ryerson, for whom he had the greatest respect. In the Council he had invariably deferred to Dr. Ryerson's opinion on points of administration, but there were questions, such as the revision of text-books, in which he thought the opinions of other members of the Council were as much entitled to respect as those of the Superintendent. He did not believe that the elected members of the Council had been sent there to do nothing. He said on the previous night that they could not allow text-books to go out which were not on a level with the age. He might have used stronger terms, for some of them swarmed with disgraceful blunders. He hoped he should always be courteous to all his colleagues, but while the teachers supported him, he should do what he thought was right. Mr. McMurchy moved a vote of thanks to the President for his address of the previous night. Mr. Hughes seconded the motion, which was carried. Dr. Wilson, who had taken the chair in the meantime, in presenting the vote of thanks to the President, expressed his regret at having been absent when the address was delivered, and bore testimony to the courtesy invariably displayed by Mr. Smith on the Council of Public Instruction.

#### GRANTING OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS' CERTIFICATES.

Mr. J. Thorburn, M.A., then read a paper on the subject of "Certificates to Public School Teachers—how and by whom granted?" After some introductory matter, Mr. Thorburn said every teacher should have some special acquaintance with the science of education and the principles upon which it was based. The success of any system of education depended upon the character of the teachers, and it therefore became an important question how efficient teachers could be obtained and retained in their profession. This had been a serious difficulty to most Governments. He gave an account of the system of pupil teachers adopted in England, which had so far proved a success. He gave a lengthened account of the Prussian system, which he eulogized as tending to raise the profession and make it a life business instead of a *dernier resort*. He believed the school system of this Province would now compare favourably with that of any other country. Great improvements had taken place of late years. To illustrate this, the lecturer gave several amusing instances of the answers given a few years ago to some questions in examinations for teachers. He quoted an article in the *Globe*, in which over-competition was complained of, and said there was good reason to believe that a large majority of their Public School teachers had only third-class certificates, though he had been unable to obtain any definite information from the Education Office on the subject. He was of the opinion that third-class certificates should be abolished, and that there should be only two classes of teachers, as in Prussia. The second-class should be divided into three grades—grade A, consisting of teachers who had taught successfully for three years, certificates to be valid throughout the Province for five years, grade B, teachers who had taught successfully for one year, certificates to be valid throughout the Province for three years; and grade C, persons of good educational attainments, certificates to be valid throughout the Province for two years. The first-class certificates should be valid for life, or during good behaviour, but should be granted only to teachers who had successfully taught for five years, a course of the Normal School being considered equivalent to five years teaching in a common school, and the teachers to be eligible for a first-class certificate. He