

Up to this time no Training School for the preparation of teachers of Protestant schools had ever been established in Lower Canada, and from the friends of education on all sides assurances were received that such an institution was much needed, and would meet with support. In order to contribute as much as possible to the success of the undertaking, the Committee of the Parent Society furnished me, after my appointment, with a large quantity of the best materials at that time to be found in England, and every support was promised, should we succeed in our exertions. The deep interest, however, which the Rev. Wm. Bond, the Society's Superintendent, manifested in the work was that which chiefly added to the growth of our schools, and led to that measure of success, which was, indeed, more than anticipated. It must also be stated that the countenance which his Lordship the Bishop of Montreal gave to the undertaking contributed greatly to secure that public confidence which such an undertaking undoubtedly required. At the first annual meeting of the Society, at Montreal, in January, 1854, just after the opening of the schools, His Lordship said :—

“ One thing, in particular, the Society had already done of a most important character. He alluded to the opening of a Normal and Model School in this city. Nothing had given him so much anxiety as the providing of good schools for the young. The state of the country, with respect to this most important subject, was low in the extreme; and he felt satisfied that, unless the position of the teacher was raised, few men well qualified could be expected to enter it as a profession.”

At the same meeting, Dr. Leach, Vice-Principal of the McGill College, whose attainments as a scholar, and long acquaintance with the educational condition of the Province, gave him every claim to attention, said :

“ The institution of a Normal School, such as the Society had commenced in this city, was one of the best things any Society could do. He need hardly say that the intention of a Normal School was not simply to teach the different branches of education, but also to teach others in what manner they may best teach them—to teach those who were to become teachers, the best way of communicating knowledge, and forming the pupils to love of moral order and religious duties. The first question then, that arose was—Was there any necessity for the institution of a Normal School by the Society? ”

The speaker, after noticing the several unsuccessful attempts on the part of those in authority to establish such an institution, said in continuation :—“ As yet, the Government has established no Normal School. But another question might arise :—Was it necessary for the business of education that there should be Normal Schools at all? Were the class of teachers, at present occupied in the Common Schools, not sufficiently qualified for their duty, without the training which a Normal School supposed to be necessary? He answered, no. Their qualifications generally were not such as to dispense with the necessity of this training. There was hardly a teacher in any of those schools whose mode of teaching and acquirements would not be bettered by training in a Normal School,—very few, who did not actually stand in need of such training, to render their instructions at all valuable. As one of the Board of Examiners, he had had ample opportunity of knowing the qualifications of those who were sent forth as teachers. Few were found acquainted with the rules of spelling; and, as to the English grammar, he hardly knew