

The annual Convocation of Acadia College for the conferring of degrees, took place at Wolfville, on the 3rd inst. (June.) President Sawyer occupied the chair, and was surrounded on the platform by a brilliant array of educationists and gentlemen of other professions. The Provincial Government was represented by Hon. W. S. Fielding, Provincial Secretary, and the Hon. Messrs. Longley and Johnson. After the opening prayer by Rev. Mr. Goodspeed, the following orations were delivered by members of the graduating class, and interspersed with music by Wolfville village choir:—"The English Cabinet System," Mr. Walker; "Tennyson's in Memoriam," Miss Fitch; "Inductive Sciences, Illustrated by Geology," Mr. Lingley; "The Public Life of Milton," Mr. Freeman; "Imperial Federation," Mr. Cummings; "The Ancient Classics—their Educational Value," Mr. Ford; "A Completely Fashioned Will, the End of Education," Mr. Ross. Degrees were conferred as follows:—D.C.L., Professor Foster, M.P.; D.D., Rev. George Day, Yarmouth; D.D., Rev. T. A. Higgins, Wolfville; M.A., John March, St. John. The degree of M.A. in course was conferred upon Revs. G. F. Currie, W. B. Bradshaw, S. M. Black, C. R. B. Dodge. Graduates Walker and Ford received honors in history, and Freeman and Ross, education diplomas. The associated alumni held an interesting meeting at 4.30 a.m., on Wednesday, and an adjourned meeting at 9 a.m. to-day. A resolution was passed expressing some dissatisfaction with the act regarding academic institutions passed by the House of Assembly last winter, and the Executive Committee were authorized to co-operate with the Board of Governors to seek some amendments to this Act. The following officers were elected:—President, R. H. Eaton, M.A.; Vice-President, R. A. Coheon, M.A.; Secretary-Treasurer, F. Andrews, B.A.; Directors—Prof. R. B. Jones, M.A., Hon. J. W. Johnston, Rev. C. Goodspeed, M.A., Rev. W. H. Warren, M.A., E. D. King, M.A., W. F. Parker, B.A., A. J. Denton, B.A. The following were nominated to represent the society in the Senate:—H. C. Creed, M.A., Prof. J. F. Tufts, M.A., Rev. G. O. Gates, M.A., L. S. Morse, M.A., Wallace Graham, B.A., Q.C., J. F. Parsons, B.A. The alumni of Acadia College held their annual dinner this afternoon. The room was comfortably filled with ladies and gentlemen, though doubtless the falling rain kept many from attending. Judge Johnstone acted as chairman. At the right sat B. C. Fraser. The Provincial Secretary, Hon. Mr. Longley and Dr. Saunders. On the left Prof. Forrest and Dr. Allison. Around the tables were the well-known faces of many of Acadia's friends, whose names have already been mentioned. The following toasts were responded to:—"Acadia," by Wallace Graham and Mr. Cummings, of Truro; "The Ladies Seminary," by J. F. L. Parsons; "Sister Colleges," by Prof. Forrest; "Our Guests," by Hon. Mr. Fielding; "McMaster Hall," by Rev. C. H. Cline; "Associations," by Mr. Fraser; "Graduating Class," by H. T. Ross, A.B.

Literary Chit-Chat.

A volume of letters written by Lord Beaconsfield to his family, will shortly be published in England.

Frank R. Stockton's "Discourager of Hesitancy," a continuation of "The Lady or the Tiger," will appear in the July Century.

Dr. Newman Smyth's "Sermons for Working Men," have been reprinted from the *Aurifer Review*, in pamphlet form, at a low price.

Henry Holt & Co., New York, have published an ambitious and scholarly book, by Frederick May Holland, entitled "The Rise of Intellectual Liberty, from Thales to Copernicus."

A series of autobiographical papers and letters of Thackeray, which have been in the possession of an intimate friend of the novelist, will shortly be published by Charles Scribner's sons.

An English capitalist proposes a new and original scheme for the gratification and education of artistic taste amongst the middle classes. The suggestion is to establish a Circulating Picture Loan Society. In consideration of an annual payment, subscribers will be entitled to the loan of one or more pictures by living artists of every grade of talent, according to the amount of the subscription. The pictures would be changed every three or six months. The proposal is well worth considering in the interests of both artists and the public.

In the July number of the *North American Review*, President Bartlett, of Dartmouth, makes a contribution to the discussion of the subterranean history of man, David Dudley Field and Henry George converse on land and taxation, President Angell of Michigan University, George Ticknor Curtis, and Justice T. M. Cooley, debate on the extradition of dynamite criminals and Dorman B. Eaton, Chief of the United States Civil Service Commission, gives his views of the results of that reform. Other contributors are William Clarke, on Imperial Federation; Thomas W. Knox, on the Progress of European Influence in Asia; Gail Hamilton, on Prohibition in Practice; and Rev. Dr. C. H. Parkhurst, on the decline of Christianity.

Question Drawer.

QUESTIONS.

Would you kindly inform me if the law regarding the payment of teachers for vacation in proportion to the number of days taught during the year, is in force? A SUBSCRIBER.

Please inform me through your valuable paper of the names of the gentlemen who form the Central Committee. SUBSCRIBER.

ANSWERS.

A SUBSCRIBER.—Yes. This is a provision of the Amended Act of last session, which is now in force.

SUBSCRIBER. The members of the Central Committee are:—Prof. Young, University College; Dr. McLellan, Director of Teachers' Institutes; J. E. Hodgson, High School Inspector; J. C. Glashan, School Inspector for Ottawa; J. F. White, Separate School Inspector, J. Deane, Inspector for East Middlesex.

Miscellaneous.

ROBERT BURNS.

On January 25th, 1759, on the banks of the Doon, near the town of Ayr, the "Ayrshire ploughman" was born. His father was then following the profession of gardener. He was a well informed, silent, austere man, who endured no idle gaiety and while somewhat relaxing the stern creed of the covenanting times enforced all work day as well as Sabbath day observances.

Burns' mother, we are told, was of a different disposition. She was one who loved "while busied in her household concerns to sweeten the bitterer moments of life by chanting the songs and ballads of her own country."

In the seventh year of Robert's life his father took Mount Oliphant Farm. The lease extended from 1766—1777. Here the land proved sterile, the seasons rainy and rough and the united efforts of that small family availed but little. Then came the death of the landlord, who had always been generous with them. The strict terms of the lease, as well as the rent, were exacted by a harsh factor and with wife and children he was obliged to relinquish the farm and seek shelter on the grounds of Lochlea, about ten miles distant.

In later years, when his son Robert was dealing with men's characters, the factor sat for that lasting portrait of insolence and wrong in the "Twa Dogs." Lochlea farm also proved a failure. Though their poverty was great and work almost incessant, yet those days were not without their bright spots. Education was not neglected but rather pursued as one of life's most sacred duties.

When Robert was five years old he had been sent to school to Alloway Mills and when the family removed to Mount Oliphant, his father with several neighbors engaged a young man named