

Among the subjects which should occupy the teachers at the meetings of their associations, I take the liberty of indicating this as one of the most important.

I have here to express again my regret that so small a number of teachers attend meetings whose utility is so great, and, in behalf of which, a certain number among them, and especially the Principals and Professors of the Normal Schools, make such commendable efforts.

The whole respectfully submitted,

PIERRE J. O. CHAUVEAU,  
Minister of Public Instruction.

Quebec, 24th March, 1869.

### Report of the Sixth Annual Convention of the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers of the Province of Quebec.

(Concluded from our last.)

#### SESSION OF THURSDAY.

The meeting, this morning, after discussing at some length questions of order, listened to a speech from Hon. Judge Day, Chancellor of the McGill University.

#### JUDGE DAY'S ADDRESS.

Judge Day said: These assemblages of the teachers of the Province, which ought to be extended to similar meetings for the Dominion should bring about important results. They should guide the legislator and the executive officer as well as the teacher. In order to attain practical usefulness, the Association should aim at being a substantial power, which would control Protestant education, and influence all the education of the country. All that it did should look forward to results in the legislature or otherwise, and it would lose the respect of the people, should it waste time in unavailing debates. He spoke with much regret with regard to those who ought to be here. The leaders of public opinion should be here. The universities should be represented here. This should be our educational parliament. This could be done by the honest efforts of intelligent and thoughtful men. This was an age of combinations. Combinations were to-day the power which ruled the world. Combinations, which resulted only in material advancement, might only lead men back to barbarism, without the co-operation of those which worked upon the mind. Material Rome had passed away, but the mind of ancient Rome exercised a wonderful power over the world to-day. Nothing remains of nations passed away but their recorded thoughts; and such was the capital which this Association worked, and its responsibility should be remembered.

The subject of Prof. Robins' paper on arithmetic was then taken up. Inspector Hubbard urged the importance of oral teaching of simple calculations. Prof. Hicks, advised the use of paper in preference to the slate. Mr. McLaughlin of Sutton advocated the use of the slate.

#### TEXT BOOKS.

The next question taken up was; "Is the Character of our Canadian Text-books all that could be desired?" The question was ably discussed by Mr. Williamson, Montreal; Inspector Hubbard, of Saint Francis; Inspector Jones of Brockville; Messrs. McLaughlin and Watson, Rev. Mr. Slack, Prof. Robins of Montreal,—the weight of argument being to the effect that Canadian Text books are not all that could be desired. An essay was then read by Mr. Marsten of St. Johns.

#### SCHOOL HOURS.

The question of the length of daily attendance in schools was next opened by Prof. Hicks, who said that when young he taught many of his scholars seven hours and a half per day. More modern views were in favor of a complete change, and three hours has been urged. He did not favor the change in all cases; the system might suit for the children of educated persons who were in all circumstances learning. In some places, the longer you could keep the children from what they learned at home the better. Many now worked all sorts of new subjects—an arrangement which did not comport with the shortening of hours. Some thought a teacher might give his attention to leading the sports of the children in the afternoon, but this was impossible in towns, at least. Prof. Robins urged the shortening of the hours. School instruction was a very minute part of education—Physical education would be best carried on in the play ground, and even moral culture depended more on that than on the restraint of the school-rooms, even the faculty of application and thought the schools could not form within its walls. In schools the business was following the thoughts of others, not the training of the mind to original thought.

Mr. Lay, of Waterloo, followed with a recommendation to grade the hours of school attendance to the power of the scholars. Mr. Doak

said this was tried in his part of the country but sometimes the boys early dismissed got into scrapes.

Mr. Watson, recommended only five hours' school, and every Saturday for a holiday.

Mr. Jones thought that the shortening of hours might be made the reward of application.

#### AFTERNOON OF SECOND DAY.

The meeting this afternoon commenced by choosing Montreal as the next place of meeting, and electing the following officers for the coming year:—President, Hon. Mr. Justice Tarrance; Secretary, Mr. F. Hicks; Treasurer, Mr. Jas. McGregor—all of Montreal.

Prof. Robins reported from a committee instructed to open communication with the Lower Provinces, with a view to the formation of a Dominion Association. He said that any formal action in the matter appeared to the committee to be premature. The committee was discharged.

Mr. Doak of Compton then read an essay on the best way of promoting attendance at schools. This could be done by parents giving to their children correct ideas of the attractions of school life, and the managers of schools could do much by embellishing the school house and grounds. The teacher could also do much to induce regular attendance. In the discussion of this question Messrs. Williamson, Hubbard, Marsten and Roberts, Mr. Hemming, M. P. P., Hon. L. S. Huntington, Rev. Messrs. Constable and Whitten took part.

Mr. Brown late of Durham Academy introduced a slate used in the Boston schools and pointed out its advantages.

#### ELOCUTION.

An animated discussion took place upon the Question "Should more time and attention be devoted to elocution in our schools?"

Mr. Hubbard opened the discussion and advocated the devotion of more time and attention to elocution. Rev. Mr. Fessenden of Bolton was opposed to the prevailing system declaring that Declamation was the best means of making children unnatural and theatrical. Prof. Duff, the Chairman and Hon. Mr. Huntington, also took part in the discussion.

#### EVENING SESSION.

Mr. Jones of the Richmond *Guardian*, opened the proceedings with an able essay upon "Technical Education."

#### HOW MANY STUDIES?

Prof. Robins opened the discussion on the question. "How many studies could be wisely carried on at once?" He traced in an interesting manner the natural growth of the mind in youth. We should introduce first those studies which require the perceptive faculties then those which require the logical powers, and, lastly, those which educate the taste. Of course there were some subjects, such as reading writing, and arithmetic, which must be taught because needed, but outside of such the above order should be followed.

Prof. Hicks gave a list of what subjects were required now-a-days of a common-school pupil, and asked how it was to be managed. He thought good, easy, correct composition would be a good test of the efficiency of a common school, for those who had attained to this must have a foundation.

Mr. Doak of Compton read a paper on the causes which tend to retard the improvement of education. The first of these being a lack of permanent teachers.

#### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

The next question advanced was,—“Ought religious instruction to be introduced into common schools?”

The Rev. Mr. Lindsay, Rector of Waterloo said that as a minister of the gospel he could not but desire that there should be some degree of religious education in public schools. Government money should not be spent in teaching anything of a sectarian nature, but the instruction should be as catholic as the scripture itself. Scripture history should always be taught. The managers of schools in one district had actually been bullied out of reading the Bible. This was not only required in Upper Canada, but a form of prayer was furnished. Some very simple text-books on religion might be introduced.

Mr. Roberts, of Philipsburgh, thought there was nothing in this question to awake pugnacity. He had not been able to find a tangible or sound argument in favor of religious instruction. If the question meant teaching the doctrines of the Bible, it could be no part of the duty of the teacher. Scripture history, or devotional exercises, did not come into the question at all. A text-book could not be devised that would not tread on somebody's toes.

Rev. Mr. Armstrong, of Waterloo, thought the Word of God was not denominational, and would itself teach religion.

Prof. Robins said the Bible was of all books the most important, either in the light of history or literature, and it was a book of which the people were lamentably ignorant. Neither the Churches nor Sun-