

PROFESSOR GOLDWIN SMITH'S LECTURE.

The speaker said the character of Cowper was summed up in these few words, "England, I love thee well." He then gave some examples of the state of affairs in the world at the time of the advent of Cowper. The speaker said poetry was as potent to reform as the laws, and Cowper was one of those who added materially to its reformation. Cowper's father was an indulgent man, and his son was, therefore, denied nothing that could be procured; but his mother died when the poet was only six years of age, and Cowper afterwards wrote one of the most beautiful and affecting poems that he ever composed respecting the death of his maternal parent. After his mother died he was left with a guardian until he was of a responsible age, when he was sent to Westminster School, where he became an adept in the use of Latin phrases among other qualifications. Cowper's religion was not only of good works, but it produced good works. He was active among the poor, both in his religious demonstrations and in works of charity. After the lecture a vote of thanks was tendered to the lecturer, and the meeting dispersed.

REPORT ON PUBLIC SCHOOL LEGISLATION.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL submitted the report of the Committee on this subject:—1. That the thanks of the Association are due to the Chief Superintendent and the Legislature for their efforts in introducing many advantageous clauses and amendments into the Consolidated Public School Act, which are calculated to elevate the position of teachers, and render more effectual the schools of this Province. The Committee desire, however, to submit to the consideration of the Convention certain features of the Bill, which they regard as objectionable, or open to alteration and improvement. They would suggest that general opinion be evoked on this subject, as it is probable that there may be other clauses claiming such consideration. In order to open discussion, therefore, they have selected the following, viz.: Clauses 119 and 107 of the Act.

SUPERANNUATION FUND.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Cobourg) objected very strongly to the Superannuation Fund. If it was good for the Public School teachers, it was equally good for the Grammar School teachers; but the Legislature did not dare to impose it upon that class, but they evidently thought they could do as they pleased with the Public School teachers. He objected to being compelled to contribute to a fund over the management of which he had no control. He also thought the clause illegal, as the Inspector had no legal right to withhold a portion of the Government Grant from the teacher for this purpose. He concluded by moving:—"That while approving of the majority of the changes introduced into our educational system by the School Act of 1871, they entirely disagree with the clause relating to the Superannuated Teachers' Fund; and that the Executive Committee be authorized to have petitions printed and circulated throughout the Province, for the signatures of teachers, asking the Legislature to repeal this obnoxious clause." Mr. MACINTOSH seconded the motion, and characterized the clause as tyrannical. He thought the teachers were quite competent to take care of their own future. If teachers volunteered to contribute a sum yearly to a general fund, they, of course, had a right to do so, but he objected to being compelled to contribute. He would advise teachers not to give the order for the Government Grant, and thus effectually resist the payment of any contribution to this fund. He would be ashamed of the teachers' profession if they put up with this tyrannical clause for any length of time. It was equally objectionable in the interests of the Inspectors, because they were made to perform the service of bailiffs, and collect this money from the teachers. Mr. HARRISON observed, with regard to the question of legality, that the Inspector was authorized by the Act to deduct the amount of the contribution. Mr. FRASER (Woodstock) considered the superannuation clause as most unjust to teachers. He maintained that teachers who spent the best part of their lives in the work should receive pensions, if any at all, from the public treasury, just as men did who served their country in the army. He regarded the clause as an insult to teachers. Mr. BUCHAN (of Hamilton) said that the argument had been advanced that the fund would tend to make secure a better class of teachers, but he was of opinion that it would have a decidedly opposite effect, for he thought it would be a poor inducement to school teachers when they knew that they were to spend the better portion of their days in teaching, and in their old age be thrown upon the mercy of the fund, and receive, perhaps, a hundred dollars a year. Mr. LEWIS was opposed to all pensions. Teachers should be paid well enough to enable themselves to provide for old age. He regarded it as degrading to himself to accept of the miserable pittance which this clause provided for. If the principle of pensions was good, it

should be carried out something after the manner of life insurances. As it was, teachers had no certainty of a fixed sum if they became incapacitated for work. Mr. REESIN thought the clause had been too sharply condemned. Teachers might be glad to receive even a small amount in their old age. Mr. FRASER (York Township) protested against the clause as most unjust. Mr. MCCALLUM moved an amendment that this Association recommend that all male teachers in the Province be included in this superannuated regulation, provided that the management of this fund be entrusted to this Association on its obtaining an Act of Incorporation. Mr. WOOD (of Kingston) said that if there was to be anything of the kind at all, he thought that a voluntary association would be much better. He had been speaking with a minister of the Methodist body, who had informed him of a certain fund that they had among them as a superannuation fund for worn out ministers, and he was much more favourable to such a scheme than to the one they were compelled by the by-law to sustain. After some discussion the amendment was ruled out of order, on the ground that it was a substantive motion. Mr. WATSON (of York) thought that the majority of teachers in the country were in favour of a superannuation fund, properly managed and under their own control. He had known several men who had paid a few dollars to the fund, and now they were receiving large benefits from it. He would have joined the Association long ago, only that the manner of application was objectionable to his views. Mr. MCCALLUM had interviewed the Chief Superintendent as to the manner of application, and had been informed that every obstacle had now been removed. He was, therefore, favourable to the principle of the fund, and he thought some of the members present would be glad some day to join the scheme. Mr. HUNTER asked if this Association should take upon it, in addition to its other duties, the duties of an insurance company? Mr. MCCALLUM believed they could do it. The vote was then taken on the motion, which was carried unanimously.

TEACHERS' CERTIFICATES.

Mr. MCCALLUM moved that this Convention cordially approve of the President's suggestion in his address, that the times of examination of the Normal School teachers and County teachers be the same, that there be one set of papers for said examinations, and that the masters of that school should not form part of the examining committee. Some discussion followed on this motion, in which Mr. YEOMANS, Mr. MACINTOSH, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. STRANG, Mr. CURRIE, Mr. JOHNSTON, Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL, and others, took part, the general opinion being expressed in the motion. Mr. MACINTOSH moved in amendment that the last part of the motion, namely, "that the masters of the Normal School should not form part of the examining committee," be struck out. The vote was taken, and the original motion was carried unanimously.

FINANCE REPORT.

Mr. MCCALLUM, the Treasurer, read the financial report, which was adopted without discussion. It showed the amount of the receipts during the past year to have been \$177.20, and the expenditure \$159.47, leaving a balance on hand of \$17.73.

UNDUE HASTE IN EDUCATION.

Mr. G. D. PLATT, Public School Inspector of the County of Prince Edward, delivered an address on undue haste in education, which he considered a growing evil, and to remedy which he thought teachers should, among other things, endeavour to inculcate into the minds of their pupils a taste for education, and to impart instruction as far as possible without the use of text books. He thought very many teachers were guilty of the charge of proceeding too rapidly in the education of the young. Not that a good education could be obtained any too soon, but that haste in this matter was something calculated to prevent the attainment of the end in view. It almost seemed as if some teachers ought to apply for a patent for the shortest method of giving instruction to children in particular branches. Education had a resemblance to vegetation. The seed required time for growth and development, and would not allow of much hurry without injury. A forced growth almost always resulted injuriously. The process of digestion was another illustration. Undue stuffing of physical food and an overloading of the organs of digestion were prejudicial to physical health and muscular activity. The training of the prize-fighter showed this. Great care was exercised to secure the highest condition of muscular development, and yet many teachers were constantly stuffing the memories of children without reference to its baneful effects. What we wanted was more training and less stuffing—more discipline and less attention to storing the memory. Farmers believe in deep ploughing—in turning up the sub-soil to the influence of the sun and atmosphere. Teachers ought to prac-