

preceded them (Applause,) and I certainly think that the friends of the system of Education which has prevailed in this Province must feel proud upon the present occasion, for this event is a great triumph to their principles. There has been a great deal of opposition to anything like a system of education, from persons who have not given so much attention to the subject as those who have matured this measure. There has been much alarm expressed by many people that there was too great a system of centralization aimed at, and a great deal of opposition has been manifested in consequence. I have never been an advocate of a system of centralization; but I believe our system has been managed in such a way that no offence can be taken at it. It has been worked in such a way as to give advice rather than to coerce the people. A great deal of power has been left with the people, and the Chief Superintendent has rather endeavoured by moral influence to induce the people to adopt a uniform system of education, and a uniform series of school books, &c., that there might be as uniform a system as possible throughout the country. (Applause.) It is impossible without a central organization of this kind, that the necessary statistics can be obtained, or a correct view given of an educational system, and I believe a great deal of good must result from the obtaining of these statistics. With regard to this institution so far, it has been most successfully conducted, and I feel bound to say that we must attribute all the merit of that success to the Rev. gentleman who has been at the head of our Common School system. (Great applause.) It is only due to that Rev. gentleman that I should take this public opportunity of saying that since I have been a member of the Government, I have never met an individual who has displayed more zeal, or more devotion to the duties he has been called upon to discharge, than that Rev. gentleman. (Great applause.) A good deal of opposition has been manifested, both in and out of Parliament, to this institution, and a good deal of jealousy exists with regard to its having been established in the City of Toronto. I can speak from my own experience as to the difficulties experienced in obtaining the co-operation of Parliament, to have the necessary funds provided for the purpose of erecting this building. I will say, however, that there never was an institution in which the people have more confidence that the funds were well applied than in this institution. There is but one feeling that pervades the minds of all those who have seen the manner in which this scheme has been worked out. In regard to the school itself, the site has been well chosen, the buildings have been erected in a most permanent manner, and without anything like extravagance, and I have no doubt, there will be no difficulty in obtaining additional Parliamentary aid necessary to finish them. I feel, Ladies and Gentlemen, that I must again apologize for the total want of preparation. The hon. gentleman sat down amidst applause.

The Rev. Dr. McCaul, President of the University of Toronto, who, upon being announced by the Chairman, was greeted with much warmth, said, that in addressing a few observations on this interesting occasion, he would follow the example set by the hon. gent., who had just sat down, as far as brevity is concerned, not merely because no intimation had been given him until a short time since that it was expected he should appear before them, and he was not as familiar as he could desire, with the details of the institution, but also because he considered it unnecessary to dilate on topics which had been so ably handled in the addresses which had already been delivered by the speakers who had preceded him. He would commence by congratulating the Chief Superintendent of Education, and the members of the Council of Public Instruction, on the success which has attended their exertions. The building itself is an ornament to the city, and a credit to the architect, and as we look around upon this beautiful theatre,—and bear in mind the admirable arrangements which have been made throughout every part of the edifice, we cannot but feel satisfied that the remark has been justly made by the Inspector General,—that the appropriated funds have been most judiciously expended in the erection of this pile of buildings, whose inauguration we are now celebrating. But what, he would ask, is the chief thing which gives interest to this meeting? It is not the pile of building; however tasteful the design and substantial the execution,—not the rooms, however capacious and convenient; no, it is something which commands a higher and a deeper interest than the graces of architecture or the commodiousness of arrangement—it is the work that is to be carried on within these

walls,—a work second in importance to none in the province, for it is destined to perpetuate its benign influences throughout successive generations. Yes, the stamp which education impresses, however faint at first, or difficult of recognition, remains permanent and enduring, and continues indelible from age to age,—so that whatever be the national characteristics of the population of Canada, the influence of that system of instruction brought forward, as has been stated, in 1841, and spread throughout the country by the agency of the Normal School will be perceptible in its distinctive features. The diffusion of Education by properly qualified instructors is the grand and ultimate end of the work to be pursued within these walls, but the immediate object is the preparation of the teachers, through whose agency this end is to be attained. Now the work of preparing competent instructors comprehends not merely the necessary literary and scientific qualifications, but also the teaching them how to teach—a most important distinction; because, in the experience of those best acquainted with this subject, it is not the most finished scholar, nor the man of the greatest information that is best qualified to communicate it; for it frequently happens that those who have the highest attainments are not the most effective teachers. Hence the necessity of the Normal School, with its drill and its discipline. Even though it be true that the aptitude to teach is the gift of nature, yet who does not know that the gifts of nature are susceptible of improvement by art—that endowments which might have lain inactive, or been but imperfectly developed, are thus matured and called into effective operation?—that the most favourable direction and the most advantageous exercise of the faculties are communicated by rules, the result of experience? And how important is it that teachers should be properly qualified for the duties of their responsible office! of what immense consequence to the community at large, whose interests are so deeply involved! Of what vast importance too to the body of teachers themselves, as forming a profession! Time was, when but little attention was paid to the dignity of this most honourable occupation—when neither the community nor the teachers themselves seemed to have adequate ideas of the importance of the office of instructor. But these things have happily been in a great measure remedied. [Applause.] Teaching is now pursued, not as an occupation, hastily taken up for want of a better, to be as hastily thrown off when something more advantageous presents itself, but as a permanent pursuit, requiring much previous study and training, and calling into exercise the highest and best of man's intellectual and moral endowments. The community too, while they have become sensible of the danger of trusting their children, whose happiness both here and hereafter may depend on the character of the instruction received, to persons incompetent for the task, have also learned that they cannot expect that task to be properly discharged if they treat those who devote themselves to it, with little liberality and less respect, and force the best qualified among them, from the want of the remuneration which they have a right to expect or of the consideration which is their due, to apply their abilities to other pursuits. But I have said the diffusion of the blessings of education throughout the land is the ultimate end of the work which is to be pursued within these walls. What mind can justly estimate—what tongue can adequately express—the benefits which must flow from such a diffusion? What influence will it have in elevating the tastes and in repressing low and debasing habits? And oh! how many are there who if they had but the avenues of enjoyment thrown open to them which education presents, would never have fallen into the grovelling habits which have ruined both themselves and their families. But in another respect too, the diffusion of education must exercise a most important influence throughout the country. We live in times when the tendency is to a diffusion throughout the masses, of a greater amount of political privilege than has hitherto been usual. The times exist when the majority of the people must exercise political privileges [applause], and if so, of what immense importance is it that the masses should be educated—that they should be placed in such a position that they should know their independence and understand their rights—that they should possess that power, which education gives, of protecting themselves against religious or political impostors.

The learned Chief Justice has referred to the advantages which we enjoy under our form of government. Of what consequence it is that the people should be able to understand and be prepared to show, that they maintain their allegiance to the British Crown