

How many are acquainted with the common operations in the growth of plants? How many are taught to notice the succeeding changes of our landscapes, as months follow each other in their yearly round? How many are acquainted with the structure of their own bodies?"

An eloquent but just tribute to the memory of the late Rev. Dr. Forrester was here introduced by Mr. Patterson.

"Since we last gathered here, our venerable leader has been taken from us, translated from the earthly vineyard to the Heavenly Paradise.

No more will his venerable form grace our platform, nor his deep round voice be heard in our assembly, but the memory of Dr. Forrester will ever be cherished by us, and that memory is sweet and inspiring.

Though absent from us in the body, yet I trust his example will ever be living with us. His was a whole-soul offering to the cause of education. Every minor consideration bent to the broad principles of philanthropy and patriotism, while a warm Christian heart endeared him to all who knew him.

He entered upon the educational work many years ago, when we were without system; the whole was a chaotic mass, with here and there a protruding diamond, showing there was hidden treasure in the lumps. The doctor labored to surmount the many barriers to improvement, such as political ignorance, general prejudice, and much indifference, with a zeal almost indescribable; and throughout the length and breadth of our Province ever held up an improved system of education as the great requirement of the times, ever pointing to the youths of Nova Scotia as its wealth—a property of far more value than its forests, its mines, or its fisheries. And to what extent the labors and influence of this one man went towards bringing about the great change in our school system, no human tongue can tell.—He lived to see the fond ideal, for which he so unceasingly labored, a living, moving reality, viz: Common Schools supported by general taxation and free to all. To use his own words,—“This is a priceless boon to any country.”

Fellow teachers: while we mourn the departure of this great and good man, let us emulate his zeal, and glorying in our profession, consider our lives well spent, our talents well employed if like him death finds us clad in our educational harness.”

The encouraging aspect of Education throughout the Province was shown in the increased number of scholars and registered attendance in school houses built in every section, and of commodious and ornamental type, and in the long and almost numberless petitions showered upon the table of the House of Assembly, in defence of our common school system. The School Law however defensible and meritorious in its leading provisions, Mr. Patterson considered as defective in its details, and invited the Association to regard the perfectory process, as largely placed in their hands.

“I am fully aware that our decisions have no legal force, that our enactments can be nothing more than advisory, (for we are a voluntary organization)—but let no one despise our proceedings on this account. We are a re-organized body and wield a power which is not delegated to us by law, but by reason, by profession, and by experience. And this kind of power wisely handled is more effective and successful in accomplishing a desired change, than power given by law, and foolishly used. I fear there are some teachers who do not appreciate the influence of this Association, who do not understand what is to be accomplished by it, and who do not perceive the relation it sustains to the present system of education. I affirm if ever the profession is to rise and take its position among the learned professions, we, the teachers, must be the leaders, and not the led, because we are in a proper position for observation. We behold daily the friction of the machinery. From our position in the work we should know more than any other class of individuals respecting the cause, in which we are engaged.

In the spirit of these remarks the Association was invited to consider the question of the Inspectorships of the Province. The special right of teachers to fill these offices and their peculiar qualifications for them were advocated:

“First, then, the teachers claim by law. The law particularly specifies that the Inspector is to be recommended by the Superintendent of Education. But why by the Superintendent of Education? I know it has been properly said, that this arrangement was made to prevent the office becoming political property; but it was also made, because the Superintendent is in a position to make the proper selection, for if the selection were to be made from the clergy, the recommendation should come from a synod or an association, but the recommendation is to come from the Superintendent of Education, because he is supposed to be acquainted with the teachers of the Province, and from them to make his selection.

Secondly, what are the duties, and consequently what are the needed qualification, for an inspection?

An Inspector is required to visit every school and report upon its condition, both as to the efficiency of the teacher, and the progress of the school. He is to see that the law is complied with, and the public funds properly distributed.

Now, I ask what training can be better adapted to qualify for such a position than a teacher's? Who can visit a school and more critically observe its excellences or its defects, than a man

who has spent years in school work? Who can better understand, during his visits, how to give a cheering word, a cordial greeting, a sympathising word of counsel, than a man who has passed through the ordeal himself, and knows its trials, its labors and its responsibilities, by experience.”

The late dismissal of F. W. George, A.M., from the Inspectorship of Cumberland County was referred to, and the sympathy and influence of the Association invoked in his behalf.

Mr. Patterson ended his address in the following terms:

“We have much to stimulate us in our work. Already our system of Common School Education is attracting the admiration of the world. England herself is about to take a lesson from us. Her teeming millions yet thirst for the streams of knowledge, which now course every Nova Scotian valley and lave its shores. Let us not relax our united efforts until we see the system in perfect working, and let a true spirit of patriotism nerve us for the work.

I like the sentiment so tersely expressed by Kossuth,—“It is not I that have inspired the Hungarian people, it is the Hungarian people who have inspired me.” I ask no one to inspire the cause of education, but I ask, let the cause of education inspire you.”

The address was received with the warmest applause. On motion of Messrs. Parsons and McLaughlin the thanks of the Association were tendered to the President for his very eloquent, appropriate, and instructive inaugural.

REPORTS.

Several gentlemen were then called upon to give some account of the state of Educational matters in their respective spheres.

S. McNaughton, B.A., Principal of Guysborough Academy reported from the Eastern Section of the Province, and represented educational matters in that quarter as being in a very favorable state. He advocated strongly the new system of examination and spoke very favorably of the means taken to secure a better class of men in the teaching profession.

H. Bayne, B.A., of Pictou Academy, reported from Pictou. He gave an account particularly of the working of the New School Law, and of the graded system in the town of Pictou. He spoke in complimentary terms of the Trustees and people of the town Section, and of his fellow labourers in the work.

E. D. Millar reported from the Western Section of the Province. He expressed a very favorable opinion of education advancement in Chester, Bridgewater, and Lunenburg. He was engaged at Bridgewater and represented the progress there being made as very encouraging.

The meeting adjourned at ten o'clock.

SECOND SESSION—TUESDAY MORNING.

The Convention met this morning at 10 o'clock, the President in the chair. Rev. Dr. Robertson engaged in prayer. The Minutes of the last Meeting and also of the last Annual Convention, were read by the Secy., F. W. George, A.M., and approved by the members present.

COMMUNICATION.

J. Parsons, A.B., Secy. of Education Committee read a Communication from the Superintendent relative to the erection of a Monument to the late Rev. Dr. Forrester. The letter was favorably received and a committee, consisting of the President, Messrs. Bayne, McNaughton, Hollies, Condon and Sterns, were appointed to consider the subject of the communication and ordered to report before the close of the Convention.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The report of the Executive Committee was then read by Mr. Parsons, and after some discussion adopted. The question of members' fees having been referred to, it appeared that there had been some misunderstanding in one part of the province in respect to the collection of these fees. Mr. Parsons then made explanation of the arrangement for the prepayment to the Inspectors, or others, to whom Railway certificates had been forwarded. Members who had received passes without prepayment were requested to hand in their annual fee of membership to the Secretary of this Association.

S. McNaughton suggested the propriety of a certificate on return from the Secy. in preference to the plan adopted by the Committee this year. Mr. Parsons explained that the Committee had been guided by the instruction of Railway authorities in the plan they had followed. It was agreed to continue the arrangement.

PRIZE ESSAY.

Mr. Parsons reported from the Committee on the Prize Essay. Only three had been written upon the subjects announced in the *Journal of Education*. To one of these upon “Five days a week, or the importance of regular attendance at School,” the prize was awarded. The essay was a production highly creditable to the author and was well received by the Convention. The name having been called for, the Secy. broke the seal of the accompanying envelope and announced Miss H. Maria Norris of Cape Canso as the name of the successful essayist.