

out feeling that the teaching power of several hundred school sections would be materially improved by a week of such practical normal work. It was a meeting well fitted to awaken teachers and inspire them to do better teaching.

Here a word generally about institutes and speakers: If one has anything to say to teachers, let him say it in a manner that is worthy of his best effort, not in a careless or slipshod way, or plainly indicating that he is merely speaking to put in the time. If the latter, the audience recognizes the fact at once, generally follow his lead, become careless or inattentive, and perhaps get up and leave the room. This may explain why there is much whispering at some institute gatherings, why teachers get up and leave the room during the proceedings, or act in a manner they would not tolerate on the part of their pupils. Why is it? Let speakers and hearers examine themselves on this point and decide the matter.

Dr. A. H. MacKay, Superintendent of Education, Nova Scotia.

We present to the readers of the REVIEW in this number the portrait of Dr. A. H. MacKay, Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia. Not only will the teachers of that province be glad to have this portrait for their schoolrooms, but hundreds of others—former schoolmates, college friends and the host of boys and girls whom, as a teacher, he sent forth with noble aims—will be glad to see the face of a friend whom they love, and whose generous and kindly nature will always serve to awaken a thrill of pleasant recollections. The face is rather sedate, the repose of a man of many activities, now verging on toward three-score. Those who know him best will miss the smile of genial good-humour which lightens up his features during his waking hours—which are many.

It is not necessary here to enter into a detailed account of Dr. MacKay's busy life. That has been done in past numbers of the REVIEW and in current periodicals. He has explored many branches of knowledge—mathematics, science, literature, philosophy. In mathematics he had in his student days few superiors; he has a good working knowledge of several branches of natural science which he keeps up, especially botany and zoology, being lecturer in these subjects in Dalhousie University; he is widely read in history and literature; and philosophy has been to him a subject of ardent enquiry, especially suited to his reflective mind. He is a profound observer and diligent student of current

topics. Very few have taken a wider grasp of educational questions, not only those of his native province, but of conditions prevailing in almost every civilized country. Before and during his recent visit to the great educational conference in London, his papers and addresses on education in Nova Scotia attracted much attention. While in Europe he visited many educational institutions, chiefly technical, gaining some practical insight into their workings which he may be expected to utilize as occasion requires in the progressive steps that Nova Scotia is making in technical education.

To every man there comes a time in his life when it becomes necessary to slacken toil and take life less arduously. To a man of Dr. MacKay's varied and incessant activities it is difficult to follow the paths of ease and to prosecute less vigorously cherished plans. But he should yield to the wishes of his friends and enjoy a little of that leisure that he has deservedly won.

Dr. MacKay's connection with the REVIEW has been referred to before in these columns. On an afternoon twenty-one years ago a conference was held in Pictou Academy, of which Dr. MacKay was then principal, and the result was the foundation of an educational journal for these provinces, with an editor for each—Alexander Anderson for Prince Edward Island, A. H. MacKay for Nova Scotia, and the present editor for New Brunswick. Mr. MacKay threw himself into the work with his accustomed energy and enthusiasm, which he kept up until his appointment of superintendent of education for Nova Scotia compelled him to resign. His "Ferndale School Series" and other articles on nature study created great interest among teachers and led to a systematic study of nature in the schools of these provinces. Dr. MacKay has never ceased, with voice and pen, to urge the importance of this work. As a result nature study has had a prominent place in Nova Scotia schools. Among other practical results, observations are regularly made on the flowering plants and similar phenomena, and these observations are tabulated and published yearly in the proceedings of the Royal Society. School gardens, manual training, and every means that could make education more useful to the masses have felt the effects of his fostering influence.

In future numbers will be given other portraits of well known educational people of these provinces. These will appear alternately with the reproductions of art pictures.