

## RESOLUTIONS OF THE INSPECTORS' SECTION.

—The attendance of Public School Inspectors at the late Teachers' Convention in Toronto was more numerous and more representative of the whole of Ontario than at any convention for some years. Several important questions were brought before the Section, and the discussions were animated and thorough. In order to complete its work the Section continued in session on the day following the adjournment of the general association.

The most important question which engaged its attention was the training of teachers. There is no question of more vital importance than this, in connection with an educational system. Everything else may be of the most perfect character, but unless the individual teachers are well trained, earnest, and enthusiastic, comparatively feeble, if not positively evil results will be produced. Enlightened School Boards, wise legislation, fine school buildings and expensive apparatus, will fail to produce intelligent and well educated pupils, if the teachers are listless, indifferent and ignorant regarding the principles that underlie the correct methods of teaching. Even the inspectors feel themselves to be nearly powerless for good, when they are so unfortunate as to have a large number of these dead-weight teachers in their districts. They neutralize the best efforts of the inspectors in their schools, and at the Conventions and other gatherings of teachers held for professional instruction and inspiration.

Several resolutions relating to the training and certifying of teachers were passed by the Section. One of them recommended that the Second Class non-professional examination should be separated from the High School Intermediate. Three reasons were urged for this course. (1). That teachers should be examined in reading and penmanship, (2). That teachers should have no "language option" for the Natural Science group, (3). That a different standard should be adopted in reading the papers of school children, and candidates for teachers' certificates. We can see considerable force in the last two reasons, but we think that the best place to test both reading and writing is at the professional examination. The plan at present adopted of giving special instruction at the Normal Schools in writing, drawing, music, drill and calisthenics, and reading, is an excellent one. If the work is properly done the best results must follow. Proficiency in these branches and familiarity with the best methods of teaching them, have a good deal to do with deciding a teacher's fitness for his profession. We are glad to know that the Central Committee in conducting the professional examinations pay particular attention to these subjects, and also regard the ability to write and spell the English Language correctly, as an essential qualification in the make up of a good teacher. With regard to the second suggestion, the same paper now prepared for the Intermediate might still be used for the Second Class examination, if all Second Class Candidates were required to take the Natural Philosophy group. It is urged against this, that natural science is not so well taught in the High Schools as the foreign languages. If this be true, and we fear the charge

is correct, then means should be taken to improve the character of the science teaching. One of the first steps to be taken to bring about this desirable change would be to make it essential for teachers to take the science group. Classes would then have to be formed in High Schools and conducted in the best possible manner.

Another resolution directed the attention of the Minister of Education to the question of professional training in the Provincial Normal and Model Schools. The opinion was freely expressed by nearly all the inspectors present, that the Second Class teachers of the last few years are generally inferior to those who were trained at the Normal School in former years. The deficiencies specially complained of were, lack of, and frequently contempt for, what is known as "professional spirit;" and general haziness concerning the best methods, or any definite method, of teaching the elementary school subjects. If we accept the testimony of the inspectors, we must conclude that the young men and women of our country are sadly deficient in those qualities which a teacher should possess, or that some part of our training system needs strengthening, or sharpening. Without making any charges, we have no hesitation in stating that a Normal School which does not inspire teachers with higher motives and deeper enthusiasm, fails to accomplish its best purpose. We hold also that every teacher who leaves a Normal School should be definitely impressed with the idea, that there is one way of teaching each subject which is better than others, and that he understands the "more excellent way" sufficiently well to put it in practice. Considerable surprise was expressed at the fact that those First Class students in attendance at the Normal Schools were not compelled to practice in the Model Schools. To us it seems to be a pity that any one can obtain a First Class Certificate without being compelled to undergo special professional training in addition to that received before securing a Second Class certificate, but there is no reason why those First Class Candidates who attend the Normal Schools should be compelled to teach in the Model Schools, while those who study at other places are allowed to get just as high a standing without such practice. We would like to see all those who attend the Normal Schools to study for First Class Certificates compelled to practise extensively in the Model Schools, and we hold further that they should receive a thorough course of instruction in Psychology, the History of Education, &c. but we claim that all First Class Candidates should be compelled to take this course, or that those who do so should receive a special certificate.

The other resolutions concerning the training of teachers referred to the extension of certificates and the supply of teachers in those counties in which the number is too small. It was recommended that the County Boards of examiners be allowed to deal with the extension of third class certificates, and that they be permitted to require those applying for such extensions to write at some of the departmental examinations. This would be a relief to the Minister of Education, and would also be in harmony with his general practice of allowing the local authorities to deal with those questions which cannot injuriously affect the educational system of the country. If there was