

motion in favor of the adoption of the suggestions contained in the letter from the South Bruce association was then put and lost.

Vagrant Children.—Mr. McAlister said, our vagrant children are of two classes: those without natural guardians, and those whose guardians lack either the power or the will not only to compel their attendance at school, but to take a right course in life. Many recommend attendance at the common schools as an effectual method of dealing with them, but suppose they could be got to attend, what guarantee have we that their attendance will accomplish the result desired; there is none in regard to having influences, and we have no assurance that these children, who are so much neglected, though they may attend school that they will grow upright (as an English writer lately remarked, to read, write and cipher is no guarantee that those who possess them may not be either knaves or fools.) The common school then is not an effectual remedy for the evil of juvenile vagrancy. Neither is Dr. Wilson's plan, that of a voluntary school. The only effectual plan is that of compulsory attendance at an industrial school, where the inmates may not only be educated, but trained to some useful employment, and at the same time kept secluded from all evil influences. The cost of this would not be great, a pupil of the public schools in the city of Toronto for 1867 was \$10 31, this was for daily average attendance, and including expense of building as well as that of teachers, &c. The cost of an inmate of the House of Industry for the same year was \$58 40; these two items together make up \$68 71 per annum, which may be taken as a fair basis to place the cost of each pupil in an industrial school such as is proposed upon. Compare this with the actual cost of each criminal in the city gaol for the same year; by the Chamberlain's report, each criminal cost \$352 22 including exactly the same items of expense as those for a scholar, hence, one criminal costs more than it is reckoned five scholars would cost in such an industrial school. Mr. McCallum stated that in the city of Hamilton almost every child was brought under educational influences. He further urged that the Arabs of our streets should be separated from their old associates. Mr. Chesnut urged similar views on this subject, as Messrs. McAlister and McCallum.

Professor Wilson of University College, whose reception was exceedingly warm and cordial, then delivered a very able and instructive address on the literary forgeries or maskings of the 18th century. A vote of thanks was given to the learned Professor for his able, interesting and useful address.

Examination of Teachers.—Mr. Alexander introduced the third topic for discussion, viz: "What changes are desirable in the examination and admission of teachers?" He suggested that an entrance fee of \$20 be charged each candidate at admission, to make a fund for superannuated teachers; in regard to examinations, his views are similar to those recommended by the Chief Superintendent, as expressed in his supplementary report. A communication was read from the Beamsville Board of Trustees, in favor of the appointment of a central board of examiners for the Province. Mr. Dixon opposed the idea of charging an entrance fee, and urged that the admission should rest entirely on literary merit. A report was subsequently presented by the committee appointed upon the subject, and on motion was laid upon the table.

Attendance of Pupils.—Mr. Archibald introduced the fourth subject for discussion, viz.: "What steps can be taken to improve the attendance at our Common Schools," by remarking that if the attendance be bad, the fault must be either in parent or pupil. In order to secure good attendance he would suggest that the school-house should be made as cheerful as possible, and the study pleasant and useful. If these fail in securing a good attendance the fault must be in the parent, the only remedy for which he could name was a compulsory law. Mr. Leach (Newbury) suggested that the cause of the non-attendance of children might be some fault in the teacher, and therefore urged the necessity incumbent on trustees to select the best teachers. Mr. Vivian advocated the importance of monthly or quarterly reports in securing punctual attendance. Mr. McCauley said that if teachers and trustees would enforce the law in regard to absentees presenting a satisfactory reason for absence, this simple plan would go far to remedy the evil complained of. Mr. McCallum stated that by means of reports to parents or guardians, combined with making each pupil give an excuse for absence, and also by the masters calling on their parents, they succeeded in Hamilton in obtaining an average attendance of 66 per cent. of those on the roll.

Teachers' Institutes.—A discussion took place as to the feasibility of establishing Teachers' Institutes. Mr. Clarke, who introduced the sub-

ject, proposed that the \$100 granted by legal enactment to each county for the establishment and maintenance of Teachers' Institutes, should be put into a common fund and devoted to paying two lecturers, whose duty it would be to devote themselves to the fostering of Common School education throughout the country. Mr. Young concurred in the views of the previous speaker. Moved by Mr. Dixon, seconded by Mr. Hodgson—"That the Chief Superintendent of Education be requested to put the clause and the act referring to Teachers' Institutes into operation as soon as practicable."

The Finance committee reported, that having examined the treasurer's books, they found that the sum of \$99 50 had been paid out, leaving a balance of \$174 64, with interest thereon to the present date. The report was adopted.

School Books.—The following was then taken up: Question—"Is the present regulation respecting the selection and copyright of school books conducive to the best interests of education?" Mr. Chesnut pointed out that the Board of Education were always recommending changes in text books, thereby creating trouble, confusion and expense. He referred to a case of his own in proof of this, and complained of the bad treatment received by him from the Board of Education. Several other members complained of the changes constantly being made by the board of education. Mr. Hodgson said it was time the teachers of Ontario stamped with their most earnest disapproval the conduct of the council of public instruction. As matters were now arranged, a teacher who took the trouble to prepare a book on any subject could receive only the proceeds of one year's sale of the work. There was something wrong when teachers were so treated, and he hoped the convention would take some determined action on the question.

Girls in Grammar Schools.—The next topic was—"The co-education of the sexes and the advisability of the school law being so amended that girls may be recognized as pupils in the grammar schools."

Mr. Dixon spoke strongly in favor of educating boys and girls together, in both primary and higher schools, and held firmly to the opinion that girls should be admitted to grammar schools. He believed it would be better for both sexes. In point of right the girls had the same right to the benefits of grammar schools as the boys. Mr. R. W. Young, of Strathroy, was of opinion that the greater prosperity of the common schools of the province, compared with that of the grammar schools, was owing to a great extent to the more liberal and only liberal policy pursued in regard to the former. In the case of the common school, due regard was paid to the circumstances of the country, the requirements of the present age, the opinion of the public, and the experience of other countries. He (Mr. Y.) was not opposed to classical education, but he thought it should not be compulsory, as the number who required it was very small, and the time of those who were now compelled to study Latin and Greek, could be much better employed in acquiring a thorough English education. Mr. Hodgson stated that he had the best authority for stating that it was the clear intention of the act to open grammar schools to girls as well as boys. Mr. MacLennan stated that he would hazard the assertion that in many of our schools, girls had competed successfully in all their studies with boys; nay, in even the ancient classics, some of the most accurate and satisfactory pupils he had met were girls. He had deemed it his duty in his position, as a trustee of a public school, to urge the daughters of our more influential citizens to take advantage of the entire course of studies in the public schools, as the means of securing a solid and thorough training, and thereafter, if so disposed, to "finish" their studies in one of the larger cities. In many cases, he was aware, this had been done with very satisfactory results. Within a year or two, however, the presence of girls in the higher departments of our public schools has become a very marked and prominent feature. He had witnessed this tendency and regarded it with alarm. He had deemed it his duty to utter a word of caution, lest this feature of our higher school work might lead to the withdrawal of elder boys from such mixed schools. The result, he feared, had, in many cases, taken place. Boys had missed that tone and training in their school-work, in the class-room and play-ground alike, so much prized in Europe, and especially in Britain, which was designed to foster in them a manly spirit and bearing; and, as might have been expected, they found their way in considerable numbers to public schools which had gained a reputation for thorough instruction and careful training—a pecuniary consideration induced local school authorities to do what their judgment rejected, on educational grounds alone. Was it educationally wise, or morally honest, to organize and conduct public schools mainly