

duction into the Province. The means of Education are now within the reach of all—and any child, no matter how humble his origin, or poor his parents, may by patient assiduity fit himself honorably and usefully to fill the highest offices in the gift of a free people. The introduction of the new school act into Nova Scotia, has not been unattended by sacrifices. Old prejudices have had to be laid aside, and the people have had to submit to increased taxation—especially repugnant to Nova Scotians, who have the credit of always guarding their pockets with jealous care, and who have heretofore, and with reason, been wont to pride themselves on the lightness of their tax-roll; and the cheerfulness with which this increased burden has been borne, proves that the country estimates aright the blessings of education.

While the benefits arising from the act for the "better encouragement of education" are freely conceded, the most ardent admirers of the system, must admit that the machinery is capable of improvement, and it will probably be years before an education act is passed against which no valid objection can be urged, and it is the duty of those having the interests of young Nova Scotia at heart, while heartily sustaining the principle to unite in devising such modifications and improvements, as time and experience show to be necessary to the efficient working out of that principle.

In July of last year, the Local Government carried through the Legislature an act in amendment of the educational law, which as regards the raising of the assessment, is a decided improvement on the law as it originally stood, inasmuch as by that the tax was levied only "on the real and personal property within the county of the residents of the section according to the county rate-roll," whereby many who were weekly or monthly tenants, and possessed no visible property, real or personal, escaped the school tax entirely, although they might, and probably did, participate in the schools to a greater extent than many on whose real and personal property the tax was levied.

The amendment remedies this, to some extent at least, by levying on every male person, 21 years of age or upwards, or who has resided in the section for a period of six months previous to the levying of the assessment, a poll-tax of one dollar, the balance of the assessment to be levied on the real and personal property as heretofore. This amendment reaches all, and as there is no one too poor to have his children educated, so there is no one so straightened in circumstances that they cannot pay the sum of one dollar annually for the privilege of a free school for all their family, and though at first sight it might appear somewhat unjust that those assessed on real and personal property should be called upon to pay the poll-tax, yet as the amount raised by the poll-tax decreases by so much the amount required to be raised by assessment, it is evident that as far as they are concerned it matters little whether they pay their whole quota as assessment or with the reduction of a dollar paid as a poll-tax. And it would be interesting if the Superintendent of Education were able to preserve for publication in the *Journal of Education*, the amount of the poll-tax raised throughout the province, and give also the balance from assessment, as by that means the people would understand the amount the education of the province costs. The amendment also exempts "all persons over sixty, and all regularly ordained ministers, occupied in ministerial work, and any unmarried woman or widow from assessment on property to the amount of one thousand dollars, but leaves them liable for any excess of that sum." Possibly this amendment might be advantageously extended so as to free from all taxation the widows of ordained ministers. Ministers as a class are rarely able to make any provision for their families, while their stipends seldom if ever more than meet the requirements of themselves and their families. And adding to this a consideration of all the extra duties performed by ministers of the gospel gratuitously, it would be no more than a graceful acknowledgment were the Legislature in consideration of these services to exempt ministers and their widows from any assessment for school purposes.

There is one portion of the act, not unworthy of further consideration: I refer to the provision to assist those sections of a county, where in consequence of the poverty of the people or the sparseness of the population no school can be opened, or if opened, efficiently maintained, for I understand that in some places public schools have been abandoned from these causes, the few persons able to pay not being willing to carry the whole burden of the school. Some remedy ought to be devised for this evil where it exists. In every county there are sections, where from the wealth and number of the people the rate is comparatively light, and enables a family to be educated at less cost than under the private school system. Ought not those richer sections to have a generous care for their poorer brethren? And might it not be well to consider the advisability of apportioning the whole of the county fund among the poorer sections? Or would it not be better that the trustees of the different sections should meet annually with the Board of Commissioners, and determine what amount of money would be needed to provide each section with a school or schools according to its requirements, and that this sum should be levied upon the whole county and paid into a county fund, and thence distributed among the different sections in the proportion previously agreed upon as requisite by the trustees and commissioners? Thus the education of the whole county

would be thrown upon the whole county, and no section would be without any or have only an indifferent or inadequate school, while a more fortunate section was in the enjoyment of the full blessings intended by the school act.

I merely at present throw this out by way of inviting discussion on an important matter. I may recur to it again, myself, if you will kindly allow me space in the *Journal*.

In the meantime, I am

Vox Populi.

## DALHOUSIE COLLEGE CONVOCATION.

THE proceedings at the Annual Convocation of the Dalhousie College, yesterday, were of a highly interesting character. The benches in the Chamber of the Assembly, where the Convocation was held, presented a somewhat different aspect from that of a fortnight ago when the assembled wisdom of the country, was in session. Fair faces, slender forms and gay dresses, occupied the places usually filled by our burly and bearded legislators. The contrast certainly was not unpleasant from an æsthetic point of view (no offence will be taken by our legislators, we trust, because people prefer to look at pretty women). The President, Dr. Ross, in his opening address, regretted the necessary absence of Sir William Young, President of the Board of Governors. He referred to the condition and prospect of the institution, lamenting the fact that sufficient funds were not placed at the disposal of the Governors of the College, but stating that what had been placed at their disposal would be well accounted for. The number of students attending the College he stated to be 67, most of whom were regular undergraduates, only a few being special students. A report was then read by the President assigning the rank of those students in the various classes who had achieved something beyond a passable standing. The list was of course long, and chiefly interesting to the students and their particular friends.

After the reading of the report the distribution of prizes took place as follows:—by Dr. Ross, in Ethics, to Hugh McD. Scott; in Physics, to Gordon McGregor; by Prof. Johnson, in Classics, to W. P. Archibald (2nd year), G. McGregor (3rd year) and H. Scott (4th year), the second place among 4th year students being held by Walter M. Thorburn; in Mathematics, to Archibald McKie (1st year), and Eph. Scott (2nd year); by Prof. Lyall, in his classes, to Ernest Bayne and—Archibald; Prof. Lawson, to Alex. G. Russell, in 1st class Chemistry, and Ephraim Scott, 2nd class Chemistry; by Prof. DeMill, in History, to W. Thorburn, in Rhetoric, to Arch. McKie; by Prof. Liechte, in French, to H. Scott and G. McGregor. Certificates were then given to students who had not received prizes, according to their respective merit.

Three special prizes had been offered, one by Rev. G. M. Grant, and two by Sir Wm. Young. Prof. Johnson reported frankly that the Committee did not see fit to award Rev. Mr. Grant's prize, as none of the competitors, in their opinion, had fairly earned it. This was owing partly, however, to a misunderstanding on the part of the competitors as to the nature of the work they were expected to do. Sir Wm. Young's first prize for Elocution was awarded to Duncan Fraser, and the second for the best essay on "The Relation of Labor to Capital," to W. M. Thorburn. The President announced that he had received a note during the forenoon from Rev. Mr. Grant, who had seen these prize essays, offering a prize of \$10 to H. Scott, whose essay was but little inferior to the one which had been awarded first prize.

The candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts were then presented to the President by the Secretary, and the degree was formally conferred upon them with a few appropriate remarks by the President in English, instead of the usual unintelligible Latin. The names of these B. A.'s are Hugh Scott, Walter Thorburn, A. W. Lindsay, and John Wallace. The degree of Master of Arts was conferred upon Messrs. McNaughton and McDonald, Bachelors of three years standing.

After the formal work of the convocation had been gone through, addresses, spirited and interesting, and appropriate, were delivered by Messrs. C. Robson and A. M. Uniacke, and the present and late Superintendents of Education.

The President, regretting that want of time prevented him from calling upon other gentlemen whom he should like to hear speak on this occasion, closed the exercises by pronouncing the benediction about 1½ p. m.

## SELECTION OF TEACHERS.

### WHO APPLY FOR POSITIONS AS TEACHERS.

1. *Real Teachers.* Some real teachers apply for schools. It is to be regretted that more do not. You advertise for a teacher, and twenty applicants arrive; you will seldom find five that are or will ever be teachers in the true sense of the term. The reason why so few of this class apply is very evident; they are usually busy with their work, believing they should do well whatever they do; they work the harder the poorer the situation; hence, they have no time to be looking for a better place.