

and during the convention the greatest aptitude, he recalls to mind all that which has been said and done, and by his works, as well as by his way of acting, makes the others understand the deep impression with which he is penetrated. He tries also the methods which have been discussed, and drawing from the treasure of precepts which he has stored up in his mind, he uses it and divides it amongst the pupils entrusted to his care.

Such is the type of the school teacher whose example all the others should endeavor to imitate. If all were animated with that noble enthusiasm which does not cease to push us towards the better, we would see springing up amongst us and flourishing a generation which, in doing honor to the present educational system, would be the guarantee of our strength and of our future greatness.

Some years ago most of the teachers were obliged to teach in school-houses deprived of the most necessary apparatus; even some were mere shanties. Now, thank God and our wise school laws and regulations, we have good school-houses all over the country. Moreover, one thing that pleases me much is that the profession of teaching is appreciated better than it was. Teachers command more respect and receive better salary.

If so much has been done by our Government and fellow-citizens for education, and if our worthy Minister of Education, Hon. Adam Crooks, has condescended to honor the teachers of Essex with his presence at this convention, cannot we also work so that we will gain their esteem? Let us show them that we understand our noble mission, and that all our ambition is to turn in our schools good citizens and good Christians—to form men who will one day be the honor of our country and their families.

I will not finish without thanking you heartily for the manner with which you have responded to my call in coming to this convention. I will also thank the committee appointed by you last year for having contributed so much in the selection of the fine subjects which are about to be discussed here, and for having so nobly helped to organize this institute.

Errors in Education.

A Paper read before the Teachers' Association for Clinton and Louth, County of Lincoln, by Dr. W. A. Comfort, Camden, Ont.

There is so much being written nowadays on the various subjects connected with education that it seems difficult to get up anything worth reading or worth listening to.

It takes a genius of the present day, you know, to originate new thoughts, and it takes a genius, too, to clothe old thoughts in so neat a dress as to make them anything more than ordinarily interesting.

We are all more or less familiar with the various discussions connected with our school system. There is the free school question and the separate school question, there is the compulsory education and the question whether Government has the right or not to spend money for High Schools and Universities. On these and many other subjects people are inclined to differ widely, and they have been so often presented to the public through various journals that I feel somewhat at a loss how best to meet the call of this Association. While casting about in my mind what I should pitch upon for a theme, an expression of an old friend came to

my mind. He was acting as Superintendent of Common Schools at the time in a neighboring municipality; and speaking of the state of the schools which had come under his immediate supervision, he said, "I find but two school teachers in all this township—the remainder are merely school-keepers." He was evidently not paying a very high compliment to their professional abilities; for being personally acquainted with some of those to whom he referred, I could imagine what were his ideas of the comparative ability and teaching qualities of those by him designated school keepers. That expression was not used in derision, but rather denoted his lament at the low state of the school intellectually, and at their teachers' unfitness for their calling; but he pitied the children, for their time was worse than wasted; they were forming bad habits of study.

Having been a teacher himself, and one of more than ordinary ability, he could not help but feel that the schools placed under his care and inspection were very unfortunate. He, however, set himself vigorously to reform them by his example and his counsel.

I am referring now to what took place more than twelve years ago. Since that there has been much progress in the art of teaching, not only in that particular municipality, but in the county generally. Schools now are much better conducted, but that there is still a great want of efficiency on the part of some who hold the office of teacher there is abundant reason to fear, though the Inspector has perhaps too much prudence and politeness to make a charge of that kind against anyone personally, at least against any who are entrusted to his oversight, and is looking up to him for counsel, direction and sympathy.

By these and similar reflections, I was led to choose the subject that I have for to-day's reading; and if by the development of it I can add ever so little to the interest of this Association, I shall be content.

It was the word "school keeper" that particularly struck me as being appropriate, but especially expressive, for in my friend's use of it it seemed to stand for all the errors or deficiencies that prominently occur in teaching or in any teacher's system of management.

They may arise from two sources—either from a want of natural ability to accommodate one's self to that particular calling, or from a want of efficient preparation. Some persons, I have reason to believe, are naturally averse to the company of children; they have no patience with the busy bustle of childhood, no sympathy with the sorrows and trials and temptations of young persons. They too often assume by their treatment of young children that they would have them think and act as young people think and act, and if they do differently, are judged worthy of reproof.

They do not seem to understand child nature; are not able to adapt themselves to the capacities of children, and are in no sense fit for teachers. I do not say that such persons could not cultivate their tastes and dispositions, but they are not intended for youth training, and should they be so unfortunate as to get a school, would be inclined too cruelly in chastisement and relentless in governing. It would not be desirable to be either their horse or their dog, for probably greater demands would be made on their brute nature than it could either understand or accomplish.

In the majority of cases errors in teaching arise