

Educational Gatherings.—No. II.

Every portion of Nova Scotia from Yarmouth to Sydney was represented in the Educational Association which was held in Truro from the 26th to 28th of August. This town is becoming more and more an educational centre. The Normal school, with its spacious and beautiful grounds, the fine new academy building adjoining, and the foundations of the new agricultural college which are now being laid, with ample space for future educational needs, show a generous outlay by the province, seconded by a desire on the part of the people of Truro to do their full share in the development.

The fine programme of subjects which was discussed for three days was so skilfully arranged as to present nearly every phase of educational thought and activity, and was fittingly opened by Superintendent MacKay, who pointed to the fact that there were gathered to discuss live issues representatives of all classes of educational workers—more than three hundred in all—members of the council of public instruction, inspectors of schools, trustees and school commissioners, representatives of colleges, urban and rural teachers, and specialists in manual training and related subjects, to which so much attention is now being given throughout the province. No better evidence could be had of a quickening educational pulse than this noteworthy assemblage, which for three days discussed with spirit and intelligence the plan of work so ably outlined by Dr. MacKay in his opening address on Educational Tendencies. The volume containing the papers and discussions will be looked forward to with more than usual interest.

Only a brief reference can be made here to the papers and discussions. The paper by Dr. J. B. Hall, on School Life as a Training for Citizenship, was an admirable plea to teachers to exert a broader influence in school life. The paper by Archbishop O'Brien, and the discussion which followed, are referred to on another page. The tenderness with which the subject of religion in schools is usually treated—or rather avoided—on the public platform, led to the greatest eagerness to hear what the distinguished prelate, who opened the debate, would have to say, and what phase the discussion would assume. The courtesy with which each speaker accepted the views of an opponent, and the tenacity with which he upheld his own, were features of the debate that called for frequent applause.

Mr. G. W. T. Irving, of Halifax, read a paper on Reformatories for Truants and Incorrigibles, followed by a kindred paper on The Feeble Minded by Dr. G. L. Sinclair. Both gentlemen have made the subject one of special study, and their arguments, for a more considerate treatment of these unfortunates, were presented in a clear and convincing manner.

The papers on the Nature Study Movement by Percy J. Shaw, and School Gardens by Principal McGill, were especially interesting, as these teachers have had exceptional opportunities as leaders in the MacDonald rural school plans to study the latest phases of these questions.

Dr. Forrest, of Dalhousie College, Attorney-General Longley, Inspector MacIntosh, of Lunenburg, and others, discussed the question of rural schools and the low salaries of teachers; Principal Stewart, of Sydney, urged the consideration of teachers' pensions in a suggestive paper, and Principal Kennedy referred to the good work done by the N. S. Teachers' Union. Principal Creelman, of North Sydney, read a practical paper on Examinations, and the Consolidation of School Sections was treated in a very able way by Inspector Macdonald; Commercial Education in High Schools, by Chairman MacIlreith, of the Halifax School Board; Mechanic and Domestic Science, by Mr. T. B. Kidner and Miss McColl; Summer Schools by Professor Harlow, and the Home and School by J. A. Brathwaite, were papers that called forth much interesting discussion.

A series of resolutions was adopted, embodying suggestions made in the papers and discussions, approving of consolidation of rural schools; payment of more adequate salaries to teachers, condemning the practice of "underbidding" on the part of some teachers, and the practice of some trustees in requiring their teachers to make annual applications for their positions; favoring summer schools, and urging teachers to take advantage of them; approving of measures for the introduction of the decimal system of weights and measures; and urging a more generous and scientific education for incorrigibles and feeble minded children.

Accurate adding of small numbers is absolutely necessary in every school. Never mind large numbers, but be sure that you secure accuracy with small numbers. The same is true with regard to multiplying and dividing.