

tion, remain somewhat capricious and irregular, the changes they suggest would greatly enlarge the area of constant orthography; (3) that spelling is a purely conventional matter, we have a right to make these changes if we choose to do so; (4) that English spelling has in the past undergone changes far greater than those recommended by the philological societies; (5) that orthography has been similarly simplified in other languages; (6) that even this amount of simplification would greatly facilitate the work of teaching children the use of written language; and (7) that there would be no appreciable loss to offset this great gain.

Yours, &c.,  
WM. HOUSTON.

Legislative Library,

Toronto, June 24th, 1886.

## Teachers' Associations.

WEST BRUCE.—The annual meeting of the West Bruce Teachers' Association was held in the head master's room in the Model School, Kincardine, on June 10th. The roll call showed 55 teachers in attendance. The report of the committee on Uniform Promotion Examinations was read, and, on motion of F. C. Powell and A. McNeill, was referred to a committee to be nominated by the president. The report of the committee on the circular from the Waterloo Association read as follows: 1st. Inasmuch as an entrance fee is now charged, we deem it inexpedient to make any change. 2nd. The establishing of an advertising bureau for the benefit of teachers and trustees we believe would be an advantage. 3rd. That though unprincipled persons will sometimes enter the profession, and perhaps take advantage of those already in the profession in securing situations, still your committee deem it inadvisable to establish a court of inquiry, as such would lead to endless trouble and expense. The report was received and adopted on motion of N. D. McKinnon and Alex. McLeod. Miss A. McKenzie read, in her usual good style, a piece entitled "Eliza." R. D. Hall gave an address on "Business Letters and Forms." He illustrated on the blackboard the nature of instructions pupils should be given in all letter writing, respecting the date, address, salutation, body of letter, subscription and superscription. He exhibited several charts showing different business forms, such as notes, due bills, drafts, cheques, receipts, and in each case gave suitable explanations. John Dearness, P. S. Inspector East Middlesex, gave an address upon "Attention and Memory." He pointed out the differences between memory and attention. The various external and internal stimuli that should be used in securing attention were discussed. The noisy teacher and preacher were contrasted with the logical and quiet. The power of concentrating the mind and the methods of doing so were well handled. The different kinds of memory were discussed, and the value of each, and the modes of cultivating each, clearly indicated. The advantages to be derived from an intelligent application of the laws of a sociation, contrast, classification and resemblance were aptly illustrated. The effects of impure air, poor food and bad cooking upon the nervous system, and consequently upon attention and memory, were well shown. F. C. Powell read a paper on "First Lessons in History." He strongly favored making pupils first acquainted with matters in their own locality. He would first teach local history, dealing with pupils, parents, teachers, trustees, councilmen, etc. He would occasionally have a mock election to incite interest; would combine history, geography and literature; and use maps as much as possible. He considered the history required of entrance candidates far too extensive, and the questions usually set too abstract and comprehensive. D. D. Yule quite agreed with the plans explained in Mr. Powell's paper, and was strongly in favor of teaching local history and biography first. Mr. Dearness dealt with "Reading in First Lessons." He explained the different kinds of reading, and showed the difference between a good reader and a great reader. He considered that synthesis should precede analysis in dealing with small words, and that in analysis of words the initial letter should be taken before the final. He was in favor of supplementing the first reading lessons in the books with plenty of board exercises and tablets, prepared by the teacher; and strongly urged phrase reading, and would use two pointers, placing one at each end of the phrase. The Association adjourned at 5 o'clock p.m.

The entertainment given on Thursday evening was only fairly attended. The audience would not exceed 200. The programme was well sustained. Mr. Dearness' address on Hygiene discussed the great importance of looking after the health of children. The advantages of good food, proper clothing, and pure fresh air were clearly shown. The lamentable defects in the ventilation of nearly all school-rooms were forcibly impressed by statistics furnished from various sources. The poisonous effects of exhaled air on children and teachers were fully explained. The Kindergarten songs given by the children in attendance were deservedly well received. The appearance of the little boys

and girls was decidedly good, and reflects credit on the mothers by whom they were so tastefully dressed. The actions and singing, together with the many pretty faces, produced a very pleasing effect. The readings and recitations given by Misses Kate Ross, A. McKenzie and Lily Evans were well-received, showed good elocutionary powers, and gave evidence of the excellent training lately given in town by Miss Churchill. A leading feature of the entertainment was a debate on "The Advisability of Forming a Teachers' Union." The affirmative was well-argued by John Millar and Alex. McLeod. They pointed out the great advantages to be derived from such a course, paying special attention to increase of salary and permanency of tenure. The negative was ably handled by S. D. Bradley and C. J. Cameron. They showed that much of what the supporters for the affirmative contended for could not be accomplished by unions; that such a course would degrade the profession, and destroy the sympathy of the public towards teachers and education. The committee—John Dearness, A. H. Smith, N. D. McKinnon, H. Crawford and F. C. Powell—appointed to weigh the arguments, decided by a vote of four to one in favor of the negative.

On Friday morning, Mr. Dearness discussed methods of teaching oral and written composition. He paid special attention to the methods that should be adopted in junior classes. More time should be devoted to teaching pupils how to speak and write correctly, and less to arithmetic. Exercises in composition should be daily, not weekly. Teachers should talk less and pupils more. Objects of various kinds should be presented by the teacher and described by the pupils. Suitable exercises should be given to teach the proper use of such words as *a* and *an*, *this* and *that*, *these* and *those*, *I* and *me*, *their* and *there*, *is* and *are*, *was* and *were*, &c. The order should be—names, qualities, actions. The pupils should be taught to say things in various ways, and select the best sentences. In describing objects, the parts, color, size, shape, and use, should receive considerable attention. Teachers should keep an experience book, and make good use of it. The plans practised in Indian schools should be utilized. All exercises should be short, and aim at correct expression. Pupils should be taught to talk with the pencil and pen. Parker's Methods should be consulted and tried. Pictures should be shown to the pupils for a few seconds, and then they should be asked to describe on slates points of interest in the picture; this cultivates observation. Short stories should be read by the teacher and reproduced by the pupils. The pupils should be frequently required to ask on their slates four or five questions, and then have their slates changed and the questions answered by other pupils. Debates may occasionally be given as composition exercises, having sides chosen. Those on one side write in favor of the affirmative, and those on the other in favor of the negative. Business forms should also receive some attention even in junior classes. Miss K. M. Ross favored the Association by reading "Henry of Navarre," in good voice and suitable emphasis and gesture. The committee on Uniform Promotion Examinations reported recommending as follows: 1st. That a committee, consisting of A. Campbell, F. C. Powell, James Ferguson, Thomas Rankin, and N. D. McKinnon, be appointed to act with the East Bruce committee in preparing a limit table and arranging all the details of the examinations, and that the chairman of West Bruce committee confer with the East Bruce committee as to time and place of meeting. 2nd. That the examinations be held half-yearly, in March and October. 3rd. That the Inspector prepare all examination papers. 4th. That teachers examine the papers of their own pupils for the first examination. 5th. That the papers be sent to the teachers in sealed parcels, to be opened before the pupils. 6th. That the teachers send the result of the examinations in each subject to the Inspector. 7th. That papers be prepared for all classes to the end of the Junior Fourth. 8th. That all appeals be sent to the Inspector within fifteen days after examination. 9th. That printed certificates of promotion be given to each pupil, signed by the teacher and Inspector. 10th. That the results of the promotion examination be not published. 11th. That all written answers be kept until the next inspectorial visit. There was considerable discussion on the report. John McClung, D. D. Yule, and Alex. Gordon spoke against the system, and would substitute July and December for March and October in clause 2. A. Campbell, John Dearness, M. McLachlan, C. J. Cameron, and N. D. McKinnon were anxious to give the system a trial, and said it worked well in many places where tried. The report was adopted without any changes. The report was adopted without any changes. The report of the committee on officers recommended as follows: President, N. D. McKinnon; Vice-President, B. Freer; Librarian, R. D. Hall; Sec. Treas., F. C. Powell; Executive Committee, A. Campbell, A. H. McDougall, Alex. McLeod, and Misses L. Sturgeon and A. M. Johnston. On motion of B. Freer and A. H. Smith, the report was amended by substituting the name of Thomas Rankin for that of B. Freer as vice-president. The report as amended was adopted. On motion of F. C. Powell and Thos. Rankin, the President and Inspector were appointed delegates to the P. T. Association.

In the afternoon, Mr. Dearness gave a short address on "Seat Occupation for Junior Pupils." Junior pupils should have at least four reading lessons daily, and should be constantly employed at some useful work in their seats. Each pupil should be supplied with a slate, pencil