

both unwise and injurious on our part to have continued any rivalry, still more so any opposition to this more fully organized establishment; and you have paid a just tribute to the merits of Mr. Hicks, our late Head Master, by placing him over this Institution.—Henceforth, sir, it will be only by acting together in good faith that we can hope to see it prosper; and there will be need of much mutual forbearance and discretion in those who have the conduct of it, and also of the great grace of Christian charity, which thinketh no evil, and which is never ready to impute wrong motives and designs to others. And there will be especial need, when we are thus united together, that there shall be no attempts, through any opportunities offered by means of this institution, at making proselytes of any of the students to a different communion from the one to which he originally belonged. I would wish to take this opportunity of recording my own judgment of the very great injury that is so constantly done by the injudicious and rash attempts which are often made to unsettle the faith of others. It may be a most laudable wish to make converts of all around us to our own faith, which we, each of us, I presume, think the true one; but it is far easier to shake our neighbor's faith, in what he has been brought up from a child, than to make a convert of him to our own creed. It requires not only much zeal, but also much self-denial, and discretion, and humility to attempt such a work with good hope of success, lest in seeking to give our brother a purer faith, we leave him with none at all. And while I hope that those engaged in this Institution will act in good faith, one towards another, I trust the Church of England and other religious communions, who have an especial interest in the McGill Normal School, and the Protestant schools throughout the Province, will continue to receive fair and liberal treatment, as compared with the Church of Rome. We are even, when thus associated together, but a small minority in this Lower Province; but we are, nevertheless, not an unimportant part of the community. Still, when it was decided to place the education of this portion of the Province under the direction of a single Superintendent, we could not have expected that he should have been selected from that minority. On this account, we have no right to be dissatisfied; but I cannot but remember that while we are certainly at some possible risk and some disadvantage—some necessary compromise—thus associated together, the schools provided for your own Church are left under the undivided charge of her own body. And more than this, besides the funds derived from the annual Parliamentary grants, the Church of Rome has had secured to her, by an act of the Government, very large endowments—one special object of which, by the very tenor of the grant, is the education of the people. We have, therefore, some right to expect that in the distribution of the annual Parliamentary grant, as some compensation, and to allay any possible discontent, especially as coming through a Superintendent who is of the faith of the majority, that if there be any favor shown, the balance should rather be thrown on the side of the minority. I am quite aware that you will have no easy task to fulfil in the administration of your office. Hitherto, as far as I can learn and my own observation has gone, you have given very general satisfaction to all reasonable minds. And, certainly, all must acknowledge the attention and energy and talents with which you have applied yourself to the work before you. At present, to the great credit of this portion of the Province with which your office is connected, there is, I think, very generally, an exceeding kind and good feeling between all classes of the population, consisting of such different races and different creeds—a state of things which, I hope, may long continue; and while I will leave others to note the progress that is making in commercial greatness, in arts and manufactures, I would wish to be able, if life be spared to us, to chronicle, as years pass by, the increasing success of these institutions whose commencement you are now inaugurating, and the good effects of all our efforts in the cause of education; and above all, that while our people advance in intelligence and in worldly greatness, that intelligence may ever be sanctified by heavenly grace, and their earthly treasures far surpassed by those enduring riches which are being laid up in Heaven, not for the worldly wise nor worldly mighty, but for the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus.

After the applause incident to His Lordship's remarks had subsided the Chairman called upon His Excellency General Eyre, who spoke as follows:—

This was the second time that day he had been called upon to speak upon the same subject, but he really knew not what to say. He had taken the shilling too early in life to nibble much from the Pierian spring, but he had tasted sufficient to be fully alive to the immense advantages to be derived from it. He must congratulate them upon the advantages such an institution would communicate. He did not intend to expatiate on the benefits the acquisition of knowledge would confer, but he would say that before they could

expect to teach, they must themselves be taught. There was no more honorable occupation than that of educating the young mind, and thus they could not do without proper training, any more than the physician or the lawyer could expect to become acquainted with his profession without application; he trusted that the profession, would now be placed on its proper footing. What benefit the enlightened man derived from the acquisition of knowledge! Those whose minds are stored with knowledge are always found *au fait* at their business, and even for old age it had quite a charm. Every credit was due to the liberal government of this Province, who had every consciousness of their duty to the people, and whose greatest aims were the promotion, not only of the temporal, but also the moral and intellectual prosperity of the Province. He congratulated the Government upon the result, and he did not hesitate to say that he was sure the support of the community would be extended to that government for its wise and liberal action. He again congratulated the community upon the important change which had taken place, and wished the institution every success.

C. Dunkin, Esq., one of the Governors of McGill College, made some brief observations, in the course of which he paid a graceful tribute to the memory of the late Hew Ramsay, Esq., whose zeal on behalf of education in general, and of the McGill College, he truly described as having been most warm and devoted. He also expatiated in fitting terms on the dignity and high calling of the preceptors of youth, claiming for them an equality at least with the members of the other learned professions.

The Chairman then called upon Professor Robbins, of the Normal School. He said that he would have much preferred to make his first appearance in Montreal under circumstances less embarrassing than the present, not the least obvious of the difficulties under which he labored being the necessity of confronting such an assembly as the present. He trusted that, though much had been eloquently said on the subject of education generally, he might be pardoned for alluding a little farther to the necessity of education for the people, especially in this age and land. The period of modern and future history divided itself into three periods,—the periods of physical, intellectual and moral predominance. The first is passing away; in it the mailed knight was of first importance; but though, still, when duty summons, we have the stout heart to dare, and the strong arm to do, mere prowess is no longer honored with the first place in the esteem of mankind; knowledge now assumes the right to govern—knowledge is the great want of the day. The masses demand, in tones that by no government can safely be disregarded, a share in the blessings of mental culture. Nor must the education imparted be merely secular and intellectual; for already dawns upon us the promise of a yet more glorious day than this—the day, swiftly approaching, when mere intellectuality shall abdicate the place of pride and power, and moral excellency shall be enthroned in the esteem of all; and if the education now imparted is to have an intelligent regard to the necessities of the future, we must connect with all our teachings that religious element, without which we vainly strive for moral greatness. There is much, too, in the peculiar position of this country that makes a complete educational system an imperative necessity. We stand now at the origin of a nation. We are to be the founders of a new race—a race that promises to take a high position even amongst the older nations of the earth. Hence, should we be peculiarly careful to hand down to posterity good institutions and high principles: such institutions as can be established, such principles as will obtain only amongst an enlightened people. The acorn that to-day a child's hand may plant, that to-morrow may be by a child uprooted, when with years it shall have increased, will wrestle defiantly with the fiercest winter storm. And so, if we plant in this day the seeds of evil, coming generations may put forth in vain the most strenuous efforts to uproot them; but if to-day we give to the keeping of this generous soil, and to the blessing of the Almighty, the germs of good, they will spring up to shelter with broad branches those who shall in the future succeed us. There are many educating agencies at work. Of great importance is the education of the fireside—the home fireside, around which tender sympathies cluster. The education of the people through the agency of the press—powerful for good, powerful for evil—must not be forgotten. Nor is the pulpit to be overlooked, presenting before us the realities of a higher existence, and summoning us to the recognition of our noblest destinies. Among all these, the primary school must occupy no inferior position. It holds no mean place, even when contrasted with the greatest of these. If it is important that the guilty should be reclaimed from evil, it is also important that the child that has not yet wandered far from virtue in the devious ways of vice—that has not yet mingled in the corruptions and follies of this world of sin—should be preserved from its pollution. It must be obvious that the