

of great importance that the school-house should be well ventilated and lighted, and that the seats should be comfortable. He thought also that attention should be given to the physical training of pupils, and that the master should endeavour to be on the playground during the hours of recreation to direct the amusement of his scholars. He thought that one of the causes of failure in teaching was the changing of rules too frequently. Mr. J. C. GLASHAN held that a teacher should make his pupils feel that he was taking part in their work, and that instead of conducting himself in a domineering manner toward them, he should request them to do what he might require of them. Mr. FRASER, of Woodstock, thought that a cause of failure among teachers was their not coming together with sufficient frequency to confer on matters affecting their profession. Hitherto the teachers had been examined for certificates by medical men, lawyers and clergymen, but now he was happy to say they were examined by members of their own profession. He held that the success or failure of teachers depended greatly on the circumstances under which they taught; let the trustees and others surrounding the teacher manifest an interest in him and he would work with all the more enthusiasm. Professor MACOUN, of Belleville, remarked that inefficient teachers had hitherto been permitted to take charge of schools, and the result of their teaching had been that their successors had been employed for months in undoing their work. This evil he thought, would now be remedied under the operation of the new Act.

THE WORK OF THE ASSOCIATION.

Mr. ANDERSON said:—This Association having reached the tenth year of its existence, we may very properly take a retrospect of its history. In the month of December, 1861, the teachers and friends of Education in Toronto and the county of York assembled at the Court House in this city for the purpose of organizing a Teachers' Association for Upper Canada. The undertaking was not unattended with considerable difficulty. After the Upper Canada Teachers' Association had been established, and the attraction of novelty had worn off, a variety of obstacles presented themselves which it was very difficult to remove. Among teachers, as among other classes, there are many who look almost exclusively at the direct personal benefits to be derived from any movement in which they take part. The Provincial Association was neither in the nature of a trades union to keep up prices or a benefit society to provide against sickness or old age. Teachers generally receive very scanty remuneration. A man obliged to support a family on four hundred dollars a year could scarcely be expected to travel from one to two hundred miles at the cost of nearly half a month's salary to attend meetings resulting apparently in so little profit. There existed another serious obstacle which by the recent Act of Parliament has happily been almost entirely removed. Two classes of teachers existed throughout the country, one holding provincial and the other county board certificates of qualification. No teacher, however well qualified, was permitted to compete for a provincial certificate without previous attendance at the Normal School. County board teachers considered this provision of the law a great injustice. Hence arose a feeling of jealousy, which began to appear in a very marked manner, immediately after the Association was formed. But as teachers met in convention, and became better acquainted with one another, they discovered that no class held control,—that the members were willing to throw aside local prejudices and forget the petty distinctions arising from the difference of locality in which their knowledge or experience had been acquired. But, perhaps the most formidable difficulty in the way of securing combined action among us was, and is still, the want of permanence in the profession. Teaching has long been used as a means of reaching other professions. A young man proposes to study divinity, law, or medicine, but his finances being insufficient to enable him to complete his course, he becomes a teacher for a year or two, for the purpose of earning money. His leisure is entirely taken up in pursuing a special course of study entirely unconnected with teaching. Having put in his time and drawn his salary, he troubles himself no further about either teaching or teachers, and of course gives himself no concern whatever about teachers' associations. It is difficult to ascertain the entire number of teachers that enter other employments, every year. Turning to the annual report of the Chief Superintendent for 1867, we find that up to that year 2,544 provincial certificates had been granted to students of the Normal School. Of these 964 had expired or been superseded by others, leaving 1,580 valid at that date; but only 601 persons holding such certificates were then engaged in teaching. These among the difficulties to be met by those who ten years ago started this movement. They had but slight inducements to fellow labourers to come forward and take part in the classes were numerous, the attractions but few. But they had a duty to perform, that they must make some

sacrifice, and that ultimately success was certain; and they have not been disappointed. The fact that this Association has been in successful operation for nearly ten years, has been attended by hundreds of leading teachers from all parts of the Province, affords ample proof that we are capable at least of working together for a common object. But more than this has been accomplished. Until recently the opinions of teachers on educational matters have been practically disregarded. Not so when legislation was invoked on matter affecting other classes. When a new Insolvency Bill was introduced into Parliament, leading merchants were consulted in regard to its provisions. If a Medical Bill were brought before the House, representatives from the different medical schools were examined before a special committee. If a measure affecting the legal profession was under consideration the members of the Bar and the Bench were respectfully requested to express their opinions. When bank charters required amendment, cashiers and presidents were forthwith summoned to the capital. But when school legislation occupied the attention of the people's representatives, nobody thought of asking teachers what they thought about matters which they above all others were most likely to understand. How are we to account for this strange inconsistency? It will not suffice to say that educational questions are of less importance than those relating to trade, law, or medicine. Ask the people, with the services of which of the classes just named they could most easily dispense; and the answer will certainly not be, "With those of the teachers." It is unnecessary to stop to enquire where the fault lies,—probably with teachers themselves,—but we may congratulate ourselves on the fact that this state of things is rapidly passing away. Important changes have just been made in the school law by the Act of the present year; and it is highly creditable to the judgment of the respected head of the Education Department that the new features introduced are not the result of mere theory, but are based on the matured experience of practical teachers and superintendents, as expressed by the deliberate decisions of this body. At the meeting held in Hamilton in 1862, a motion was introduced affirming the desirability of establishing a central board of examiners to issue provincial certificates of qualification in lieu of the recently-abolished system of issuing county board certificates. The mover of the resolution recommended the plan adopted in the examinations of the London University, that is, that the questions should be prepared by this central board, transmitted under seal to the county boards, opened in presence of the candidates, and the answers returned to the central board for adjudication. This motion was lost by a small majority; but at several subsequent meetings was carried unanimously. At the Convention of 1865 an additional clause was proposed, and strongly urged by several speakers, to the effect that all candidates for certificates of qualification, wherever educated or trained, should be examined by this board, which should include no individual whose pupils were required to undergo its examination. By the late School Act and the regulations of the Council of Public Instruction precisely this plan of licensing teachers has been adopted, and is now in operation throughout the Province. With regard to certain matters of detail there will no doubt be much difference of opinion; but as a whole this may be regarded as one of the most important features of the new law. It removes one of the main causes of ill-feeling among teachers, establishes merit as the sole standard of graduation, and, judging from the experience of past years, will have the effect of retaining in our ranks many of our best teachers who, under the old law, would be induced to enter other employments. Had we done nothing more than to bring this matter prominently before the proper authorities and help to effect the change that has just been made, our organization would not have existed in vain. A thorough system of school inspection is of vital importance to the efficiency of our schools. Until the present year two serious evils existed. Incompetent persons were frequently appointed to the office of superintendent, and many who were competent, not being sufficiently remunerated to spend their whole time in the work, made the duties of the office subordinate to their other avocations. In addition to the injury sustained by the schools themselves, how humiliating and vexatious to the competent teacher to be compelled to listen to criticisms on his system of imparting instruction from officials entirely ignorant of school organization or the best method of teaching. How galling to the man of education to be examined by a superintendent far inferior to himself in attainments and whose stock of knowledge would be considerably increased by attending one of said teacher's junior classes. In the case of that class usually termed professional men who held this office the fault was not so much a lack of education as a want of interest—although the knowledge of a profession does not necessarily include a knowledge of teaching, and not always a thorough acquaintance with the subjects taught. As might naturally be expected, so much time, only, as could be spared from professional duties would be