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ROBERT ALEXANDER,  
PRESIDENT, ONTARIO TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

Mr. Robert Alexander, Principal of the Public Schools of Galt, Ontario, and President of the Ontario Association for the Advancement of Education, whose portrait we are able to present to our readers this month, was born in Glasgow on the last day of 1833; and, with his father's family, he settled in this country in 1848. Part of his early education and part, too, of his educational enthusiasm he received from Prof. McVicar, late of Potsdam Normal School, N. Y. Having, by a born instinct, chosen teaching as his profession, he entered the Toronto Normal School in 1854, and again, after six months' teaching, in 1855. He completed his creditable course there by retiring next spring with a First-class Provincial Certificate. To his diligence and success, both as a student and a teacher, T. J. Robertson and A. McCallum, head masters of the Normal and Model Schools respectively, bore unequivocal and unstinted testimony; and, had not Mr Alexander's trustees in the township of York that year found out his value as a teacher and held him to his conscientious engagement, he would have filled an offered place on the Model School staff before its close.

Of his career as a public school teacher we can only speak briefly. When, on his own motion and will, Mr.

Alexander left St. Thomas for the Normal School, York for Milton, and Milton for Newmarket, the respect, attachment and confidence of the entire communities where he had laboured, though for only limited periods, found expression in resolutions and testimonials, which must have proved highly gratifying, as time has proved them to have been justly deserved.

His course at Newmarket, by no means at first an easy one, alone entitles Mr Alexander to the position he holds in Ontario as a teacher of the first class. Carefully studying and quickly grasping the situation, he formed his plan, wisely, as the sequel proved, to make the Central School second to none in a place in circumstances similar to those of Newmarket. With the

patience begotten of the conscious justice, wisdom and benevolence of that plan, he set himself to work; and with the persistence of his race and the skill of training and experience, his hands grew strong and his difficulties grew weak, till his authority became as unquestioned as it was benign. We believe his road to the supremacy he wielded for fifteen years was opened, not through weak-kneed schemes for pleasing, but feeling that obedience was wholesome sweet and to children, he required obedience. Believing that real work brings real enjoyment, he required real work in reasonable and regular measure. Believing that sympathy and co-operation are the compound key to

young hearts and old, he gave and secured both in sincerity and fulness. In sympathy also with all that helped and elevated character and happiness, his position in the place received, at the end of ten years' service, the very tangible recognition of an elegant gold watch and chain. During the sixteenth and seventeenth years of his stay in Newmarket he filled, with equal efficiency, the position of assistant in the High School, and when chosen to fill the more honourable, more responsible, and more lucrative position of Principal in Galt, nearly seven years ago, he left, universally esteemed and regretted.

In Galt Mr. Alexander has laboured assiduously and successfully in all departments of his work. Chiefly, however, will his reputation there be linked with the inaugura-

tion of a system unique, so far as we know, but destined to solve a formidable and difficult educational problem in Canada.—The Galt Half-time System. Under this, children under nine are confined to the school-room and to close work for only half of each half-day, and during the other half are under the care of a skilful teacher who, in the school-yard, play-hall or singing-gallery, leads them in developing the physical and mental powers in a natural and attractive manner by teaching calisthenics, object lessons, music, games, &c., after the kindergarten methods. We must, however, reserve further information on this subject for some future occasion.

Whilst his honourable career as a public school teacher en-

