

# The Canada School Journal.

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## THE CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL

An Educational Journal devoted to Literature, Science, Art, and the advancement of the teaching profession in Canada.

—o—T E R M S.—o—

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The Report of the Superintendent of Education for the Protestant Schools of Manitoba for the year ending 31st January, 1886, is carefully prepared and elaborate. Many of the statements and comparisons given are very interesting. Some facts and figures culled from the report will be found in our Educational News columns.

One of the most pleasing signs of the times is the increasing interest shown by the newspapers in educational work. One can now scarcely take up a daily or weekly paper without finding some educational article or item, while many have the educational column as a part of the regular weekly programme. This is as it should be. The newspaper is, or should be, itself a great educational force. This force is multiplied when it takes a genuine and intelligent interest in the teachers of the country and their work, and throws its influence in favor of educational reform and progress.

We hope no teacher will fail to read the summary of Mayor Howland's address on Industrial Schools given in our last issue. We wish we had been able to give a fuller report. The facts and arguments presented in favor of this new departure in edu-

cation are very telling. Mayor Howland's personal efforts in introducing the reform in this city are worthy of all praise. We wish more of our public men were similarly interested in educational and philanthropic projects. The Industrial Schools are coming, we have no doubt, to stay, and will, at an early day, occupy a prominent place in the educational work of progressive communities.

The opening address of the President of the Convention, which we publish in this issue, will be read with interest by those who had not the pleasure of hearing it. It is well to review occasionally the work of such a society or association and ascertain what it has been doing. Mr. McAllister's retrospect will be found encouraging and profitable. The Ontario Teachers' Association has no reason to be ashamed of its record. It may well be thankful for the past and hopeful for the future. All the signs of the times seem to indicate that its members are about to enter on a new and wider stage of progress, and to establish their influence on the basis of a broader organization and a more ambitious outlook.

If the Minister of Education is wise he will profit by the many good suggestions that were made in the papers and debates at the recent convention. On one point Inspectors and Teachers seem well nigh unanimous, that is, that the examinations will never be made what they ought to be till they are put into the hands of practical men. It is often the case that a specialist in some particular branch makes the worst possible examiner for that department. He loses the sense of proportion; becomes intellectually color-blind; fails in point of perspective. No one who is not, or has not been, a teacher of pupils of age and attainments similar to those of the candidates he is about to examine can be trusted to set a fair and reasonable paper.

Another excellent suggestion, which was, we are sure, the outgrowth of a valuable experience, was to the effect that the percentage required to pass in any subject should be regulated by the test of what good average pupils were found able to accomplish, not decided beforehand by any fixed rule or arbitrary standard. Every teacher must have found the wisdom, the necessity of this. One is liable, even after long practice to under-estimate or over-estimate the difficulty of certain questions he may wish to ask, or the length of time required to answer them. As a consequence, if the answers are tried by some pre-determined standard, he may find himself led to results which he knows perfectly well are unjust to the pupils. If, on the other hand, he determines his percentage by actual reference to what he finds the average student, or the best student, able to do, he satisfies both his own sense of justice and that of his pupils, and reaches the true end that should be aimed at in every examination.