

alone by them. If they ceased to be attended they would die, and so would our associations.

The only difference between these corporations and our own is constituted by certain privileges which have been gained from the government, and there is no reason why our corporations should not also, in time obtain such privileges as may be deemed necessary. Corresponding to each of these associations there is, in the Executive Government, a Cabinet officer. The bar finds in the Executive its Minister of Justice, the Agricultural Society its Minister of Agriculture, the Boards of Trade their Ministers of Finance and Public Works, the Teachers' Association its Minister of Education.

Let us now look into the connection between these boards and these ministers. Are their relations close? They are so close that were these boards, especially those of trade, to cease to exist, it would be impossible to carry on the work of the government of the country as it is now carried on.

To illustrate this I may refer to the late meeting of the Board of Trade at Ottawa. There were discussed there many projects, most of which were such as could only be carried out by the Government. These projects were not only first broached there, but their advisability discussed, the best means of perfecting them argued, and with what result? Where must we look for the result? Why, at the bills submitted to Parliament.

There will, in all probability, be a bill to provide for the deepening of the St. Lawrence, another concerning various duties, another concerning the fisheries, and many others. These bills are framed by these associations and carried through Parliament by their influence, aided by the recognition, by the representatives of the people, of the wisdom and energy displayed by such associations.

Could any government do all this work? Work in commerce? work in law? work in agriculture? Could any government do all this alone? Impossible! Much must be prepared for them, or they must remain in ignorance of some of the most crying wants of the public. And much is done for them in all branches, except in that of education. We have associations, we have representatives at Parliament, we have a Minister of Public Instruction, and I have yet to hear of the first instance of action among teachers such as is daily taking place among those classes of the community.

It is then, I consider, a fair question—Why this difference? Is it because we have no hope of gaining from Government what we desire? That is no reason, because we have never tried. It is because it is difficult to approach the Government? We have representatives and a minister; the road to them way well be difficult and rough for us who do not care to keep it open and travel it frequently. Is it because we have no demands—no suggestions to make? Certainly not. We have plenty, and if only once we can begin to draw a little closer this bond between ourselves and a branch of the Government created expressly to listen to such suggestions as our representatives may submit to it from us, if we can once begin to do this, the benefit to the Government, to our class, and to the community, will be difficult to estimate.

At the last meeting of this Association we unanimously agreed that it would be very beneficial to the cause of education if our Government would concede to us a privilege enjoyed by teachers in Ontario, that of spending five days in each year in visiting one another's schools. Now, how are we to gain this privilege? There is a chance that the Government may think of it. If it did think of it it would be almost certain to grant it. Why then should we not in a constitutional manner, through our representatives or by memorializing the department, ask for something which the Government would almost certainly

grant immediately, with feelings of respect for teachers who shewed themselves no less interested than the Government itself in the general improvement of education? The road being thus once opened, the bond drawn closer, some arrangement concerning the present humiliating conditions of engagement might be made; and the department once acting in concert, we teachers in free Canada might expect to occupy a higher position than teachers in Prussia, by so much as we, a sovereign people, are higher than they—the subjects of an empire swaying powerful rule. This last bond between us drawn closer, the others would also be drawn closer too. We should respect ourselves and one another more highly, and the people, whose dearest interests are entrusted to us, would respect us and have confidence in those who shewed confidence in themselves.

Before concluding I must ask you to remember that these relations I have presented for your consideration this evening are only some of the relations which exist between us,—that they are also relations which exist between *ourselves*, and have only indirect connection with the school-room. I am perfectly aware that the grand mission of the teacher lies in the school-room, and that his direct relations with it are paramount, but that is not his only sphere of action. He is also a man—a member of a class or profession, and a member of the community in which he lives and works.

In conclusion I beg to ask your kind indulgence for this paper. Considering the immense importance to us and to the community of the relations I have endeavoured to lay before you, it will at once appear no easy task to treat of them, as might be wished, in a paper of the length suitable to our meeting. But I have long pondered over these subjects and conversed on them with others, and could not refrain from bringing them before your notice at the earliest opportunity.

Many, if not all of us, have doubtless considered these matters, and in thus urging their claims upon us for more than mere consideration I claim to myself no credit further than that of one who embraces an opportunity of uttering and keeping in the ears of his fellowmen what he and they both know to be true,—remembering always that truths to produce effect must be proclaimed and published, not suffered to remain in silence.

Congress of Irish National School Teachers.

The fifth annual congress of the delegates of the Irish National School Teachers was held on the 5th Jan. 1872, at the Mechanic's Institute, Abbey street, Dublin. After the reading and adoption of the report for the past year:

The Chairman (Vere Foster Esq.) then congratulated them on the marked progress in the advancement of their cause which had signalised the past year. He referred to the gratifying reception which had been accorded to the deputation of teachers which had waited first on the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Right Hon. C. P. Fortescue; and secondly, on the Chief Secretary for Ireland; to the kind anxiety shown by Mr. Gladstone and the Marquis of Hartington to acquaint themselves with the circumstances of the case, and to the lively sympathy expressed by the Premier, especially on the subjects of the general absence of local contributions in aid of public schools, the want of residences for teachers adjoining their schools, and the arbitrary power over teachers possessed by managers who contribute nothing to