

perfection at first. It requires the practical experience of the people themselves in the working out these systems before we can reach anything like perfection. All the various measures introduced upon the subject of Common School Education, have been improvements upon the means as that have preceded them (Applause.) and I certainly think that the friends of the system of Education which has prevailed in this Province must feel proud upon the present occasion, for this is a great triumph to their principles this evening. There has been a great deal of opposition to anything like a system of education, from persons who have not given so much attention to the subject as those who have matured this measure. There has been much alarm expressed by many people that there was too great a system of centralization aimed at, and a great deal of opposition has been manifested in consequence. I have never been an advocate for the system of centralization, but I believe our system has been managed in such a way that no offence can be taken at it. It has been worked in such a way as to give advice rather than to coerce the people. A great deal of power has been left with the people, and the Chief Superintendent has rather endeavored by moral influence to induce the people to adopt the same system of education, and the same school books, &c., that there might be as uniform a system as possible throughout the country. (Applause.) It is impossible without central organization of this kind, that the necessary statistics can be obtained, or a correct view given of an educational system, and I believe a great deal of good must result from the obtaining of these statistics.—With regard to this institution so far, it has been most successfully conducted, and I feel bound to say that we must attribute all the merit of that success to the Rev. gentleman who has been at the head of our Common School system. (Great applause.) It is only due to that Rev. gentleman that I should take this public opportunity of saying, that since I have been a member of the Government, I have never met one individual who has displayed more zeal, or more devotion to the duties he has been called upon to discharge, than that Rev. gentleman. (Great applause.) A good deal of opposition has been manifested, both in and out of Parliament, to this institution, and a good deal of jealousy exists with regard to its having been established in the City of Toronto. I can speak from my own experience as to the difficulties experienced in obtaining the co-operation of Parliament, to have the necessary funds provided for the purpose of erecting this building. I will say, however, that there never was an institution in which the people have more confidence than the funds were well applied than in this institution. There is but one feeling that pervades the minds of all those who have seen the manner in which this scheme has been worked out. In regard to the school itself, the site has been well chosen, the buildings have been erected in a most permanent manner, and without any thing like extravagance, and I have no doubt, there will be no difficulty in obtaining the additional Parliamentary aid necessary to finish them. I feel, Ladies and Gentlemen, that I must again apologize for the total want of preparation. The hon. gentleman sat down amidst applause.

Dr. McCAUL said, in addressing a few observations he would follow the example set by the hon. gentleman who had just sat down, as far as brevity is concerned, not merely because it was desirable after the address already given but because no intimation had been given him until a short time since that it was expected he should appear before them. He would commence on this occasion by congratulating the Chief Superintendent of Education the members of the Council of Public Instruction and all connected with Toronto, on the success which has attended their exertions. The building itself is a credit to the city, and to the architect, and as we look around upon this beautiful theatre, and bear in mind the commodious arrangements which have been made throughout every part of the buildings, we cannot but feel satisfied that the remark has been well made by the Inspector General, — that you can find no instance in which a sum of money has been better employed than in the erection of this pile of buildings, whose inauguration we are now celebrating. But what, he would ask, is the chief thing which

given interest to this meeting? It is not the pile of buildings, not the rooms, however highly finished and provided with all the advantages for the successful carrying on of instruction, — it is the work that is to be carried on, and this alone, — a work second in importance to none in the province, for it impresses its holy influence on all successive generations. — Education impresses its stamp not only for the time but continues indelible from one generation to another, — so that whatever be the impress on the national character of Canada, it will be traced to that system of instruction brought forward in 1841 and spread throughout the country by the agency of this Normal School. This work refers not merely to preparing teachers, by giving them the necessary literary and scientific qualifications, but also in its teaching them — a most important distinction. Because, in the experience of those best acquainted with this subject, it is not the best scholar, not the man of the greatest information that is best qualified to communicate it. It frequently happens that those who have the highest qualifications are the least qualified to be effective teachers — hence the necessity of the Normal School with its drill and discipline. It is truly said that the aptitude to teach is the gift of nature, yet nature's gifts are rendered more available by discipline, and the ability to communicate knowledge, it derives polish often from the discipline applied to it in a Normal School. How important is that teachers should be prepared for the work upon which such immense consequences depend, and if they are well qualified it must raise the character of teachers individually and of the profession generally. He conceived that there was not previously that attention paid to the importance and to the dignity of the teacher that should have been paid. In other respects how carefully do people act, and yet persons would trust their children, whose happiness here and hereafter were dependent on their teaching, with persons whose competence for the task they took no trouble to ascertain, and to whom they would not give even a sufficient remuneration. These things have happily been remedied [Applause.] Of what consequence to the community is this wide diffusion of knowledge? What influence will the spread of education have in elevating the tastes and in repressing low and debasing habits? And Oh! how many are there who if they had but the avenues of enjoyment opened up to them which education presents, would not have so easily fallen into the debased and grovelling habits which have ruined them selves and their families. But in another respect too the diffusion of education must exercise a most important interest throughout the country. We live in times when the tendency is to a diffusion throughout the masses, of a greater amount of political privilege than has hitherto been usual. The times exist when the majority of the people must exercise political privileges, [Applause.] and if so, of what immense importance is it that the masses should be educated — that they should be placed in such a position that they should know their independence and understand their rights — that they should possess that power which education can alone give of protecting themselves against religious and political impostors. The learned Chief Justice has referred to the advantages which we enjoy under our form of government. Of what consequence that the people should be able to show that they maintain their allegiance to the British Crown, and their adherence to the limited monarchy under which we at present live, not through any antiquated prejudices, but because with the choice of another form of government on the opposite side — and I underline not the advantages of that system, for there are many things we might safely imitate — but from the conviction that under a limited monarchy such as that of England, they can enjoy all real advantages and all real individual liberty for themselves and for their children, that under it they can have happiness here, and the means and opportunity of preparing themselves for happiness hereafter. (Great applause.) So far as he had spoken, (he said,) he had referred to the diffusion of intellectual and moral education. There is one important element which he would briefly notice, with reference to religious education. His Lordship the Chief Justice touched upon it slightly and delicately,

and with that caution which the delicacy of the subject required, and that skill which characterizes everything which falls from that learned gentleman. (Applause.) In referring to the subject, he (Dr. McCaul) had no hesitation in expressing his opinion that one of the features connected with the Normal School which he most admired was, that provision is made for religious instruction. [Applause.] The difficulties of this question arise from the diversity of opinions in the Province on such subjects. He had ever feared that the man who most conscientiously held his own opinions will yield the most readily to the conscientious scruples of his neighbour, and no man is more likely to offend his neighbour than the man who does not hold his opinions conscientiously. How, then, in such circumstances, is religious education to be conducted? Not by the omission of religious teaching. Some persons believe that no system of education ought to prevail in which the persons who carry it on do not communicate religious instruction. Others believe that secular education might be communicated by one party, and that religious instruction should be given by others whose province it is to communicate such instruction. One point is of consequence, and he thought it is often lost sight of — that it, in whatever way this is to be accomplished, whether the religious instruction is to be given by the same persons who teach the secular subjects or not, there is no party whatever, whose opinion is worth listening to, that does not believe that religious instruction is indispensable in some way. There may be some that press one view, some the other view, but we have not yet, thank God! reached the point of discussing with religious instruction, and so thought it of the greatest importance that this scheme is based on the union of religious with secular education. When he considered the advances already made in Common School education in this Province, and the number of competent teachers sent out from the Normal School, he could not but feel that there was a prospect of the realization of that hope he had long entertained, that there yet would be a time in this Province when it regarded as perfection in the system of public education under public grants. He conceived that means would be provided by the public funds to enable the successful but indigent scholar to pass through the successive stages of education until he reached his profession, and there developed the talents which God has given him. (Great applause.) This he conceived it to be the perfection of national education — that which places the humblest man in so far as his children is concerned, in a position equal to that of the man of the greatest means. They all knew many who late sprung from that class, who have done honour to England and he doubted not that ere his own eyes were closed, he would see many grace the highest stations in the Province who have been originally educated at the Common Schools by the public funds — who have proceeded from the Common School, where they received free education, to the Grammar School, and from that to the University, where, by means of the scholarships provided by that institution, they might qualify themselves for a successful professional career, and by their own ability and their own industry, with the blessing of the Almighty, enrol themselves as members of that aristocracy of talent and learning, which, though it derives no borrowed light from ancestral honour or hereditary wealth, yet shines with the purer and brighter beams which emanate from the self-reliance and independence that characterise the man who is the maker of his own fortune.

Dr. RYBASON rose amidst applause. He said it was not his intention to make any observations on the present occasion. He felt that it was the duty of others to speak, and it was the province of the Council to present the result of their joint labours. But as allusions have been made to himself personally, which lay him under deep obligations, which embarrassed him most deeply, in the attempt to make any observations, and of which he felt himself entirely unworthy, and which cannot otherwise than afford the most grateful feelings of the heart that his humble exertions are so highly approved by those whose good opinion is worth his highest ambition to deserve, he felt called upon to make a few explanatory remarks. The Inspector General has observed that he understood that certain resolutions were to be proposed, and that all