

But Mr. Buchan's somersault also admits of an easy explanation. In the meantime, however, a proper regard for the fitness of things should suggest to the Principal of Upper Canada College the propriety of retiring from a position in which he places himself in antagonism to many who would like to think well of him, and in which he cannot escape the imputation of looking after the interests of his own school at the expense of other more efficient but less pampered institutions.

THE PROVINCIAL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

IN another column, by the courtesy of the secretary of the Association, we are enabled to lay before our readers the programme of subjects to be discussed at the Ontario Teachers' Convention, to be held in Toronto on the 8th of August and following days—the President, Mr. Archibald MacMurchy, M.A., Rector of the Toronto Collegiate Institute, in the chair. Some of the subjects to be brought forward look promising, and may, and we think will, be profitable for discussion. Our own limited experience of Teachers' Conventions forbids our speaking dogmatically either about their utility or their inutility. We may be safe, however, in paraphrasing the couplet addressed to the little girl of many and varying moods, and in expressing this opinion in regard to them, that

“When they are good, they are very, very good;
And when they are bad, they are horrid.”

They undoubtedly have their value, though, as a rule, we fear that few go from them really strengthened in mind and purpose, and fewer still who have made any substantial additions to their resources, mental or moral. A contemporary, we notice, in discussing the point, is doubtful about their value, and seriously questions whether “the counsel of the many-headed” is not on the whole injurious. It makes this admission, however, that “they relieve some who have got over-full of new ideas, and

they fill some who never seem able to get filled except in a crowd.” The following, from the same source, may not be inaptly quoted: “Contact with life and thought is, in our judgment, more useful than over-much technical discussion, unless the latter is conducted by large-minded men—and these seem, now-a-days, to avoid conventions of every sort. . . . The conscience behind, and the will to work, are the great things, and the few strong guides will then help the teacher to his duty; but close connection with human life and thought, in their warm, active movements—and not alone in their trifling interests—will atone for a plentiful lack of the petty tricks of the trade. . . . If conventions would quicken this vital spirit in teachers, their work would be worth doing; but to do this they must enlist strong men. They should see to it, also, that the discussions are in the largest spirit, and conducted by men of intellect and power.”

DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATIONS.

ON the whole, the papers set this year were good. Objection, however, may very properly be taken to the introduction of Analysis, Derivation, and Parsing amongst questions on English Literature. There is a paper on Grammar, and the examiner who constructed the Intermediate Literature paper should have known this. But the English Grammar for First Class is the worst in the collection. Whoever set it, we make bold to say, did not know the subject. The paper shows it. Some of the questions are silly, considering the character of the candidates; others mean little and pretend a great deal; and we regret to say that most are cribbed from Fleming, Bain, and Morris's Elementary Grammars. The English Literature paper for First Class, also evidently set by the same examiner, is a very poor affair. There is little literature in it, and what little there is, is not of a high quality. Perhaps this examiner knows other subjects better than English. He should have a chance to show his knowledge at any rate. This examiner is evidently incompetent for his duties, and