

NOVA SCOTIA.

The second annual meeting of the teachers' association for the counties of Antigonish and Guysboro (district No 4) was held at Antigonish on the 12th and 13th of October. A large number of members were in attendance. Through the kindness of the Faculty of St. Francis Xavier's college, the fine mathematical hall of that institution was placed at the disposal of the association. The zealous inspector of schools, R. McDonald Esq., presided at the various sessions. Dr. Allison, superintendent of education, was also in attendance through nearly all the proceedings. After organization and the transaction of necessary routine business, the regular proceedings opened with a paper on "Irregular Attendance" by Mr. Williams. The arguments of the essay, which was studied with great clearness, was in favor of compulsory attendance as the only effective remedy for the evil under discussion. Mr. Williams' views were sustained by Mr. D. M. Chisholm and controverted by Messrs McIsaac, Cameron and McEachen. At a subsequent stage of the proceedings a resolution was passed by a majority of thirteen, disapproving of the compulsory principle. (At the previous annual meeting of the association a resolution to the contrary effect was carried by a majority of four.) The next paper was a highly practical one on "Reading" by Miss M. C. Thompson. The views enumerated led to the suggestions and commendatory remarks from Messrs McIsaac, Cameron, Williams Wall, O'Brien, McGillivray, and McEachen. Then came a very thoughtful and elaborate essay on "Education" by Mr. McIsaac. Various theories of popular instruction, conflicting views as to the true relation of the state to education, the scope of parental responsibility and effort, and kindred questions were discussed at length. The superintendent of education while not disposed to view all things just as Mr. McIsaac did, accorded the latter high praise for its literary merit. The exercises of the second day began with a paper by Mr. Cameron on "Teaching—what can be done to make it a profession?" This paper attracted the earnest attention of the association by reason both of its merit and theme. The tendency of lower salaries to impair the efficiency of the schools, and to make a true profession of teaching, was strongly dwelt upon. Messrs Burke, McIsaac, McGillivray and others discussed several of the points raised by the essayist. Mr. A. J. McEachen followed with a brief criticism on the course of study in common schools. He emphasized possible dangers connected with compulsory programmes. He agreed, however, that the provisions of the course were in themselves excellent, and if simply recommended to teachers much good might result from their use. The superintendent of education was obliged at this point of the proceedings to take leave of the association. In reply to a vote of thanks, he briefly addressed the teachers present. The Antigonish *Aurora* gives the following report of his remarks. — He was glad to meet the teachers of this district, and to hear them express their views frankly and fearlessly, even when opposed to his own. The more he saw of the teachers of the province, the more hopeful he became of its future. The services of teachers, he knew, were not sufficiently appreciated. A comparison of the work done in academies and colleges (where progress is not impeded by irregular attendance and lack of apparatus) with that done in our common schools should not make the common school teacher depreciate his calling. We should not apply to our educational system tests which are not applied to other systems. As it would be wrong to assert that christianity is a failure because moral evil exists, so it would be folly to depreciate our common schools because some ignorance still exists. No person who compares our present educational status with what it was a quarter of a century ago can deny that much progress has been made. He reviewed the papers and discussions to which he had listened, and complimented the members of the association on their ability, frankness and moderate tone. He spoke at some length regarding "The course of Studies," and explained that it was not contemplated to make its adoption compulsory. As some course of studies was essential to every school, the council of public instruction thought they were aiding every teacher in his work by furnishing him with a course which it would be his own interest to adopt as far as the circumstances under which he worked would permit. The remaining exercises consisted of papers on "Grammar" and "Qualifications of Teachers." The former by Mr. W. F. Kiely was an admirable statement of the logical method of teaching the principles of language. The latter by Miss Jane Thompson dealt with a different subject in an equally thoughtful and suggestive manner. Interesting discussions followed the reading of both. The election of officers for the ensuing year was then proceeded with. The following appointments were unanimously

made:—Vice-president, Mr. McIsaac; sec.-treas., Mr. W. F. Kiely; executive committee, Messrs. Williams, Burke, Cameron, McLean, O'Brine, Keating, Miss Dawson and Miss Thompson. Before adjournment the association passed a hearty vote of thanks to inspector McDonald for the skill and warmth with which he had guided the business of the association.

The convocation of Dalhousie college formally opening the current winter session was held on the 31st of October in the legislative assembly room. A large and brilliant audience was in attendance, including the Lieutenant-Governor, the Mayor, Sir Wm. Young, Judge Johnston, the inspector of education, U. S. Fielding, M. P. P., J. W. Langley, M. P. P., many of the city clergy, Rev. D. Bennett of St. John, N. B., and several prominent merchants and lawyers. After a few opening remarks from Rev. Principal Ross in which he alluded to the founding of a professorship in English literature by Geo. Munro, Esq., and the appointment of J. C. Schurman to the chair thus created. Professor McDonald as secretary of the senate read the following list of winners of exhibitions and bursaries:—

(1.) Senior exhibitions. Tenable for two years (third and fourth years of college course), worth \$200 per annum. 1. J. P. McLeod. 2. Daniel Murray. 3. H. S. Adams.

4. Frank Jones. 5. Unawarded. The five exhibitions, each worth \$200 per annum for two years, to be awarded to the five highest candidates in competition (open to all competitors) were won as follows:— 1.—E. McKay, Mt. Dalhousie, (Pict. Acad.) 2.—C. N. Cahon, Yarmouth. 3.—John Calder, Cape Breton. (Pict. Acad.) 4.—N. F. McKay, W. River, (Pict. Acad.) 5. A. Robinson, Sussex, N. B. (Pict. Acad.)

The Bursaries, each worth \$150 per annum for two years, were won in the various districts as follows:—

Dist. I. Halifax, Yarmouth, Pictou, Colchester.—1.—E. M. McDonald, Pictou Academy. 2.—Dugald Stewart, Halifax, Pictou Academy. 3.—A. W. Lewis, Truro, Normal School. 4.—D. H. McKenzie, Scotsburn, Pictou Academy.

Dist. II.—Remaining 10 counties of Nova Scotia proper:—1. S. M. Morton, Liverpool Academy. 2.—Robie L. Reid, Kentville, Pictou Academy.

Dist. III.—Cape Breton counties, not awarded. Dist. IV.—Prince Edward Island:—1.—A. Nicholson, Prince of Wales Col. 2.—V. F. Coffin, do.

Dist. V.—New Brunswick.—1.—A. W. Macrae, St. John N. B.

The inaugural address was delivered by Dr. Schurman, Munro, professor of English literature. Subject, "The Shakesperian type of manhood." The address was characterized by subtle discrimination of thought and careful analysis of character. Though cast in a scholarly mould, it was sufficiently popular to engage and retain the close attention of the large audience present. In response to an invitation from principal Ross, Rev. Dr. Bennett of St. John, N. B., offered some words of wise counsel to the students and spoke in appreciative terms of Dr. Schurman's address.

The annual session of the provincial normal school was formally opened with appropriate exercises on the 8th of November. One hundred and seven students were in attendance. The opening address was delivered by Dr. J. B. Hall, this subject was "the Moral Element in Education," which was treated with great appropriateness of thought and felicity of diction. Several brief addresses followed. A fine audience was present.

TEACHING BY LAUGHTER.

Most persons regard laughter, and the perception of the ridiculous, as pleasant companions, with whom we can be merry round the fire on winter nights, but few are they who rank these among the world's great reformers, and who not only learn to laugh, but also laugh to learn. The man who laughs wisely can instruct us; the fountains of this man's sympathies are easily moved, his mind is not only readily awakened by the ludicrous, but the influence of kindness and the impulses of love also readily stir his spirit; in a word, he is deeply sympathetic with all the tones and utterances of nature. And thus it is that error is best confronted by a good-humoured face and smiling countenance. Angry sarcasms, biting, rankling words of venom, can effect but little for the world; on the contrary, quiet innuendo and cheerful laughter have done, and will do much. We would have all who wish to be teachers of their fellows, to make men laugh in love not in terror; to fix their eyes on the bright ovals and orderly ways of nature, not on the sharp angles and crude crotchets of conventional men. For, although few men are capable of expressing the ludicrous or uttering the sharp periods of brilliant wit, who is insensible to the ludicrous when presented? The ludicrous to the eye or to the mind, the unwonted circumstance in strange association? How fond we all are of the anecdote bringing to light some incongruity of character, some eccentricity of habit or manners! We enjoy those biographies which abound with such things. This is the region of mental and moral incongruities. All incongruity is ridiculous, but it is in these that the ludicrous becomes artistic and humane, thus it is that the ludicrous pierces the sophisms of books and the sophisms of life, for our mental and moral incongruities are to be sought for there, sometimes incongruity has been employed to demolish an argument, sometimes to exhibit a character. — *Leisure Hour.*