

lected once by acclamation and twice after hard-fought contests. From the first he has been considered a ready debater, a lucid and incisive speaker, and has steadily risen in the ranks of his political party.

Mr. Ross' earnest advocacy of temperance forms a pleasing feature of his life-work. In 1879 he was elected Patriarch of the National Grand Division for North America, and presided over the deliberations of the Sons of Temperance for two years, at Washington and at Cincinnati. In all temperance legislation brought before the House of Commons Mr Ross has taken a prominent part.

In addition to the severe work already outlined, Mr. Ross has successfully prosecuted the study of law. In 1879 he matriculated at Albert University, entered a law office, and after passing the several examinations of the lower years, he wrote for the degree of LL.B., and passed successfully in the early part of the present year.

As a public speaker Mr. Ross has a remarkable faculty of grouping his facts and presenting his arguments in clear, logical order, in which we find the influence of his early training as a teacher. He is quick at repartee, possesses a retentive memory, and a contagious enthusiasm which frequently expresses itself in genuine eloquence. He has the ardor and impulsiveness of a Celt combined with much prudence and sound judgment. He is a living example of the power of continuity of purpose and indomitable will, when linked with intelligence and high motive. His life is instructive to every young man, and his example is worthy of imitation. It is necessary to add, however, that Mr. Ross' remarkable powers have enabled him to accomplish a multitude of labors which would have broken down a more delicate constitution. It is only just to add also that labors in the school-room equally great would have failed to receive equal honors and present reward.

#### NORMAL SCHOOLS AND THEIR DEFECTS.

On the 10th of July last the Pennsylvania State Teachers Association met at Williamsport. The attendance numbered four hundred and fifty, and we find all the names reported by counties in the *Pennsylvania School Journal*. In passing we call attention to this idea of making a full report of all members present. Many of the papers and addresses were of great interest. We give a short outline of the discussion on Normal Schools, partly for the purpose of entrenching the position taken by the JOURNAL long ago, and partly for the purpose of giving a glimpse of the views held by leading educators in the neighboring State. The subject was introduced by the reading of a paper by *Dr. A. M. Raub*, of Lock Haven Normal School. He first refers to a severe onslaught on the Normal Schools made in the House of Representatives a few months ago. It appears that the violent attack in the House almost endangered the usual government grant. One of the points urged in opposition to the Normal Schools was the fact that the graduates drift rapidly from teaching to other professions. To this *Dr. Raub* replies:—

"Now, I take it that if the work of our Normal schools is so well done that the students graduated can stand shoulder to

shoulder with college men in the great battle of intellectual and social progress, Pennsylvania has a system of schools of which she may well be proud. I do not deny that the graduates of our Normal schools drift into other professions. Why should they not? Does the great State of Pennsylvania buy all a young man's talent, and culture, and scholarship, and services, for the paltry sum of fifty dollars which she gives him when he graduates? You can't buy even a salable member of a political convention for that sum, much less a man whose moral character is above reproach. I say to every young man and woman, when you receive the fifty dollars upon graduation, and sign a contract to teach for two years in the common schools of the State, fulfil your contract to the letter; give for the time specified the best services of which you are capable; but when the two years' work has been done, you are free, and you owe not one penny to the State, nor would she be so mean as to claim services for which she has not given an equivalent. If you are appreciated and properly remunerated, teach on, for there is no more exalted position on earth than that of the true teacher; but no man is under obligations to put aside positions which will yield him sufficient income for the protection of himself and those dependent upon him in order that he may follow the starveling life of a seedy school-master, and accommodate himself to the penuriousness of a community which neither appreciates his services nor cares for his comfort. Away with this sentimental nonsense that because one has received assistance from the State, to the extent, all told, of less than a hundred dollars, he must therefore give his services to the State for a lifetime!

"But back of all this, is the truth that a large majority of those who graduate from the Normal schools of Pennsylvania teach not only the two years in accordance with their promise, but continue to teach for a much longer time, and many of them to-day hold some of the most important positions in the educational work of the State."

The paper proceeds:—

"The opposition have charged upon us also, first, that the Normal schools of the State do not furnish any considerable number of properly prepared teachers, while from another quarter comes the cry that we have too many of these institutions. Surely if one of the positions is right the other must be wrong; and I am sorry to say that we have calmly sat and listened to these charges without making any attempt to combat them with any effort at success. In one of the troublous periods of France, a witty Frenchman said, 'We are despised because we are on our knees. Suppose we get up.' Has not this been our position, my friends? We have been accustomed to receive censure and reproof too long; it is now time for us to get up and assert ourselves. If any educational institutions in the State have a right to stand on their feet and proclaim the importance of their work, certainly it is those which are attempting to give that professional instruction and training which are the essential qualifications of every good teacher. There is no reason why we should bow, and cringe, and apologize for either our existence or our work. I think I speak the honest truth, at least as I understand it, when I say that there is not an intelligent, honest opponent of professional training to-day, not an opponent who is not either ignorant of the work which Normal schools are designed to accomplish, or who has not a grievance which he dare not tell to the public."

Further on we find:—

"We have been severely censured for mismanagement because the indebtedness against our Normal schools is in the aggregate nearly a quarter of a million. This is not as formidable a matter as it at first sight appears. It must be remembered that the Normal school property of this State is worth a full million and a half, above one-half of which has been contributed