

My Lords consider Mr. Whitworth's letter to the First Lord of the Treasury, dated 18th March 1868. In this letter Mr. Whitworth offers to found thirty scholarships of the annual value of one hundred pounds each, to be applied for the further instruction of young men, natives of the United Kingdom, selected by open competition for their intelligence and proficiency in the theory and practice of Mechanics and its cognate sciences, with a view to the promotion of Engineering and Mechanical Industry in this country; and he expresses hopes that means may be found for bringing Science and Industry into closer relation with each other than at present obtains here.

It is unnecessary now to repeat the thanks which the First Lord of Her Majesty's Treasury and the Lord President of the Council have already conveyed to Mr. Whitworth for his generous offer which they are convinced the country will fully appreciate.

Mr. Whitworth proposes that these scholarships should be tenable on conditions to be defined by a deed of trust regulating the administration of the endowment fund during his life, and that thereafter the management of this fund, subject to the conditions specified therein, should rest in the Lord President of the Council or other Minister of Public Instruction for the time being.

It is the wish of My Lords to see provision made in several large centres of manufacturing industry in the United Kingdom for affording to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects ample opportunities for acquiring instruction in the Sciences which are applicable to productive industry. My Lords are of opinion that by the union of local and private efforts supplemented as far as is proper by State assistance this provision will be best made.

This will be rendered easy if the munificent example set by Mr. Whitworth shall be extensively followed by others.

My Lords will be happy to receive any further suggestions from Mr. Whitworth should he desire to make them, and to be informed if the Department can render him any assistance in carrying out his liberal intentions.

McGill Normal School.

PRESENTATION OF DIPLOMAS.

The annual public meeting for the presentation of diplomas to teachers in training in the McGill Normal School was held in the hall of the school on the 30th ult. There was a fair attendance of ladies and gentlemen, in addition to the students of the school. Hon. Mr. Chauveau, Principal Dawson, Hon. Mr. Ferrier, Professors Hicks, Johnson, Robins, Fowler, P. J. Dorey and DeSola, and Rev. Mr. Bonar, Rev. Mr. McVicar, Rev. Mr. Gibson, and others were present.

Hon. Mr. Chauveau, Minister of Public Instruction, presided and opened the meeting with an address to the students. He said this was the eleventh time he had been called upon to confer diplomas upon teachers in training in McGill Normal School. Disregarding other calls of duty he had come there to-day, because he claimed a kind of parental relationship towards the school, as he had been one of its founders. With one or two exceptions he had attended every one of the annual meetings, so that he came amongst them again to-day as much for "Auld-lang-syne" as for the fulfilment of a duty. With regard to the system of public instruction taught in this Normal School, so much has already been said upon it that he would only be repeating were he to enter upon the subject. He stood before them on this occasion in a different position from that which he held when he last addressed them. At that time he had just arrived from England and the continent, where he had been making a tour of enquiry into the systems of education there, with a view to the improvement of our own system. He little thought then that, when he should next address them, he should be in such a different position—that he should be a political man. His present position, and the near approach of Dominion Day, might lead him to speak of the change that had taken place with regard to our political relations, and of the part they, as teachers, were called upon to perform. Those who were trained in the Normal School, and who would go out into the country as teachers, would, under God, largely control the destinies of the Dominion, and particularly of the Province of Quebec. The Dominion of Canada, with the exception of two or three Provinces, which, he hoped, would soon be annexed to the Dominion, was the only representative of British institutions on this vast continent.

We were placed in a very peculiar position; one that was fraught with considerable danger, and the success of which depended mainly on our own exertions. But if, on the one hand, we had reason for apprehension from this exceptional position of a country, which was rapidly growing from a mere colonial state into something which, under the aegis of the mother country approached towards independence, on the other hand we had a great deal to be hopeful for compared with the neighboring Republic. Our country was small in extent, but we could boast of longer annals of those things which create a State than any other portion of America. He wished those English speaking teachers of the Province of Quebec not to lose sight of the fact that that portion of this country which to a certain extent seemed to 'long more especially to French origin was still an heirloom of theirs. The glorious annals of new France were as much theirs as they were those of French origin. And if that fact had more prominence in the teaching of our schools, he considered, it would go a great length towards creating a real national spirit, a real Canadian feeling, without which we could never hope to obtain any high degree of strength or of respectability among other nations. The fact that we, in the Province of Quebec, were a people speaking two languages, professing two different creeds, should give no cause for apprehension, and need not be regretted. He believed that we were the stronger, from the fact of our belonging to two different nationalities. We had at our hand all the treasures which had been accumulated by the great men who wrote in both languages. One point which they particularly insisted on in the two Normal Schools which were more especially set apart for those of French and Catholic origin, was that the students should become masters of the English language. Similarly he had constantly insisted in the English Normal School upon the necessity of the pupils mastering the French language. In fact, it was almost necessary now that every one should be competent to read and write in both languages. As teachers, they would have double the advantage, double the chance of being employed, double the ratio of usefulness if they understood both languages. The various duties they would have to perform, and the position which they as teachers would hold had frequently been alluded to, and would again be alluded to by gentlemen who would address them. Still he could not refrain from alluding once more to that position and those duties. There were those who believed that their system of public instruction had not attained that degree of proficiency which might be required or hoped for. That might or might not be the case. At all events, any one who would compare the present state of things with that which existed some twenty-five or thirty years ago, must admit that very great strides had been made. They might not be able to point to such great statistical results as they could in other countries, but that they had arrived at permanent and important results was evident. In the United States and Ontario, they prepared their teachers in a shorter time than in this Normal School; but he must say that if McGill Normal School had followed the example of those countries in that respect it would have been a failure. The length of time they required teachers to train in the school was short enough to prepare any person for the important duties of teacher. According to the statistics of 1866—he had not the figures of '67—the aggregate number of pupils in the schools of the Province of Quebec was 206,000. In Ontario the number was greater, but their population was greater, and was not so much scattered as it was in our Province. Being more congregated in towns and villages, the children would attend school more regularly, and thus the discrepancy in the aggregate attendance for one year between Ontario and Quebec was greater than it would be if the attendance for five or ten years was calculated. The diplomas they were now about to receive were the reward of a year or two of hard study. The objection which had been raised against these Normal Schools was the large number of subjects to be studied. There was some force in this objection, but it should be remembered that the essential subjects—such as reading, writing, &c.—subjects which every student was thoroughly drilled in were not many. Speaking of reading, he must say that it was not so simple a study as some people imagined. He had met with people who had received a high classical education, yet failed when they came to instruct pupils in the art of reading. Still he was glad to see that the art of reading had been particularly attended to in this school, and with great success. The great object of education was the culture of the mind, and he believed it was a mistake to suppose that this culture could not be obtained before a subject has altogether been mastered. In the short time they were at school, it would be impossible for them to master every subject; but what they did learn would go a great way in cultivating their minds and preparing them for a further study of the subject to which their attention was directed while at school. The further pursuit of those studies could be followed by them while they were engaged in teaching, and this would be a preventative against idleness and would make their occupation more pleasant and profitable, both to themselves and to