

**THE EDUCATIONALIST**

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SEPTEMBER 2, 1861.

**TEACHERS' CONVENTION.**

The School Teachers' Convention for the East Riding of the County of Northumberland, will take place on Saturday, 28th inst., in the Village of Castleton.

At the last commencement of the University of Allegheny College, one of the oldest institutions in the Union, the Degree of Master of Arts was conferred on Lancelot Younghusband, Head Master of Scotland County Grammar School.

This is the second College that has conferred its highest honor on this gentleman who has for many years been engaged as a Teacher of Canadian Youth.

**PRESENT AND PROSPECTIVE WANTS OF OUR COMMON SCHOOLS.**

During the last year it has been our lot to visit a large number of the public schools in the principal cities, towns, and villages; and we might add many of our rural school sections in this our fine Province, during the present year; and if we would be allowed we would express some of our convictions as to the present and prospective wants of our public schools.

One of the most pressing wants at the present time is more ample accommodation for our common schools. In most cases there are more children than can be accommodated with convenient seats—In our primary schools, and more especially in the county schools, the case is more urgent than in that of the high schools. Benches and sometimes slabs (where Saw-mills are convenient,) are instituted for comfortable seats, and this is something which must be remedied for the safety of the pupils. An improvement in our school buildings, and our school grounds, are too little considered. But few, comparatively speaking, of our school rooms, are very inviting or convenient. They have no play-grounds around them, are not well ventilated, and answer but poorly the purpose for which they are used. Every thing about a school room should be made as attractive as possible, so that children, as they go from their comfortable and pleasant homes, may have comforts and pleasures at school.

Another thing needed to perfect our school system, is increasing carefulness in the selection and examination of teachers. There is a tendency to fall into habits of neglect in this respect, and often teachers are employed first temporarily, and then permanently, who have not all the requisite qualifications. And yet scarcely anything is more injudicious and hurtful than such a course. Too much care cannot be exercised in selecting good teachers, who have the charge even of the youngest children in our primary schools, and in our small rural schools. Children form habits there which they carry with them through life.

To avoid danger of this kind, let there be the utmost caution in the selection of teachers; let there be a careful inquiry into their mental and moral qualification, into their aptness in imparting instruction, their ability to interest and control those committed to their charge. There are those who are adapted to their profession, who have a fondness for children and a love for teaching them, persons whose energy and enthusiasm are enkindled by this work. Such are the teachers we need—teachers who have qualified themselves for the work, because they have a love for it; teachers who will keep themselves qualified by a study of what pertains to their profession, a knowledge of the improvements of the age, in regard to the best methods of imparting instruction. If our present salaries are not sufficient to command such teachers, and re-

tain them, then let the salaries be raised, for we can afford anything rather than to have poor teachers for our children.

While it is a matter of rejoicing that our schools are accomplishing so much for the children and youth of our country, it should not be forgotten that there is much remains to be done. The work of improvement should go on in every department of our educational system. But in order to effect this, the public generally must be interested, and have intelligent views of the importance and magnitude of this work. They must not only be ready to have liberal appropriations made for the subject of education, but they must feel that no better expenditures can be made for the rising generation than to provide for them the best facilities for acquiring knowledge. It is not very generally admitted that it costs less to educate children, and furnish them with the means of advancing in society, than to support them when they have grown up without mental or moral culture. As a matter of policy merely, we might urge the importance of having our school of a high order, and of furnishing all classes with facilities of acquiring a good education. But there are other considerations higher than these, and benefits which cannot be estimated in dollars and cents. To every educated mind there are opened sources of usefulness and happiness which are perpetually closed against other minds. The demand of the coming generation upon the present is great, especially in regard to the subject of education. The expenses of the age call loudly for increased efforts and comprehensive views. The minds of our children crave knowledge, and demand the means of acquiring it. "Educate; open to us the avenues of light and knowledge; deny us not the privilege and the pleasure of looking abroad upon the works of the Creator with cultivated minds. Send us not out into the world without the discipline and training which will fit us to participate honorably in life's duties, and share largely in life's joys." And to such language the people, and especially parents and guardians, must give heed. The Superintendent, Trustees, and Teachers, need the hearty co-operation. The influence of the best qualified teacher, may be lost to the child; and a spirit of indifference and subordination be awakened by the injudicious acts and unguarded words of a parent.

We would here press the fact upon the parents and others the necessity of