

Fifteenth Conference of the Teachers' Association in connection with the Laval Normal School.

This conference took place on the 25th January last, in the hall of the Normal school. Among those present were Rev. Principal Langevin, M. Lacasse, President; and Inspectors Juneau and Bardy.

The minutes of the preceding conference were read and approved.

The Secretary read a paper on the *origin and formation of the French language*.

The Rev. Principal lectured on the *utility of object lessons in the schools*; and at the request of the meeting, summed up his observations on this question as follows:—

1. Object lessons are very useful in the schools, provided they are given in a manner suitable to the age, capacity and condition of children.

2. These lessons, if too long or too frequent, would be attended with serious inconvenience: 1st by diverting children from more important studies, which require constant application; 2ndly, by giving them very imperfect notions on a great many subjects, and this prematurely.

3. Object lessons should rather be restricted to things of every day occurrence, and made as practical as possible.

4. The master should first explain the lessons, then question the children, sometimes individually, and sometimes in classes or simultaneously.

On motion of M. Norbert Thibault, seconded by M. Jos. Létourneau, it was

Resolved,—That the members of the Teachers' Association in connection with the Laval Normal School shall meet together to commemorate the fifth anniversary of their first Conference.

On motion of M. O. Legendre, seconded by Mr. N. Thibault, a committee of five members was appointed to carry out the foregoing resolution.

The meeting then adjourned.

MONTHLY SUMMARY.

EDUCATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

—We copy from the *U. C. Journal of Education* the following extract from the report of the Committee of the Toronto deaf and dumb institution:

"The number of pupils resident in the school was at present twenty-one, an increase of nine over the number at the last annual meeting. The number of day pupils remained the same, namely, six. The number of applicants had increased in Feb., 1861, to 86 at the present time. Nothing but the want of adequate funds stood in the way of these causes being provided for, and but very slight encouragement would, there could be no doubt, very largely increase the number of applicants. Within the past few months the Superintendent (Dr. Morris) had succeeded in commencing the instruction of the blind, and had now three girls and one boy under tuition. The progress they had made was a satisfactory proof of the capability of the teacher engaged in the instruction. The committee had sent Dr. Morris to Quebec to urge the government for additional aid, and the mission had so far been satisfactory as to secure the doubling of the annual grant, and would have obtained the use of the Parliament buildings had they not been subsequently required for military purposes. It was much to be regretted that this disappointment had occurred, for every day showed more forcibly the desirableness of buildings larger and better suited to the purpose than those now occupied by the school. The committee alluded to the fact that eight or nine years ago the Legislature voted \$80,000 for the express purpose of erecting an Asylum for the deaf and dumb and the blind in Upper Canada. This showed that Parliament was not only willing but desirous that something effectual should be done for these unfortunate classes. During the past year the superintendent, accompanied by the head-master and some of the pupils, visited and held meetings in several towns and villages. Much interest had been excited by the efforts of the Society, and a considerable sum of money had been paid over to the Treasurer. At Whitby the sum of \$37 35 had been realised; at Oshawa \$21 40; at Berwick \$7 73; at Brampton \$36 94; at Rockwood \$13 67; at Guelph \$90 71; at Georgetown \$32 41;

at Norval \$21 03; at Lindsay \$13 86; at Peterboro \$34 47; at Stewarttown \$23 78; at Bowmanville \$16 83; at Port Hope \$24 18; at Cobourg \$11 00.—Total, \$388 06. In addition to these sums various amounts had been since collected and sent in from other places previously visited by the deputation, in all \$224 82. Another very considerable sum had also been paid in, collected by the pupils of various Grammar, Union, or Common Schools. Thus, the pupils of the Union school, Port Hope, sent \$40; Normal school, \$12 75; Berwick common school \$20 10; young ladies of Bowmanville Grammar School, \$13 60; Richmond-hill Grammar School, \$8; Hamilton Central School, \$97; Rockwood School, \$26 40; Grimsby Grammar School, \$10.—Total, 311 99. The following County Councils continued to evince their good-will towards the school by still voting money for the support of poor children within their respective bounds.—York and Peel, Simcoe, Norfolk, Wellington, Peterboro' and Victoria. The committee having incurred liabilities beyond their power to meet at present, trusted the clergy of all denominations would bring the matter before their congregations; and, in conclusion, desired to express their heartfelt gratitude to the Giver of all Good, not only for the general success and prosperity of the school, but especially for its exemption from the visitation of sickness, when almost every house in the vicinity suffered severely, particularly from the recent malignant and wide-spread epidemic of scarlet fever. From the Superintendent's report it appeared that there was a great want of accommodation in the present building. The impossibility of separating the girls and boys was a serious evil, and caused much trouble and anxiety. Notwithstanding the want of drainage in the yards, no serious illness to the institution had been experienced. The conduct of the pupils had been very good. The progress of the Deaf and Dumb was satisfactory, and would have been much greater were there a resident male teacher. The education of the Blind, four of whom were now under the tuition of Miss Cody, was satisfactory. There was a scarcity of apparatus, however, but still their progress was solid. The Blind were learning music, but not yet geography. Soon a map of the Holy Land would be prepared for them.

—Speaking of the lectures at the Clarendon Academy the *Pontiac Pioneer* says:—

"The late lectures of this course were delivered by the Rev. Messrs. Gribble, Morton, Creighton and Wardrope,—Messrs. Gribble and Morton taking for their subjects the same as recently delivered in this village, a synopsis of which we published. We have only to add that the people of Clarendon fully endorse our opinion on the matter. The Rev. D. Wardrope took for his subject "Ventilation," which was most ably handled. The anatomy of the chest, the composition of the atmosphere and its action on the blood, were fully described. The learned gentleman was very happy in his style, and communicated much valuable information.

The Rev. Mr. Creighton's subject was "The Literary Character of the Bible." After the exordium, he described the character of the Authors of the Sacred Volume—their style, and lastly the state of proficiency in the sciences that had been attained by the various nations mentioned in the Bible. The lecture was an interesting one, its only fault being its brevity. We hear the attendance on each occasion was large."

—The annual report of the Superintendent of Public Schools in New Jersey shows that the number of these in operation last year was 1669, which were attended by 137,578 pupils, i. e. 62,214 on an average. In forty-two cities and townships the schools are free. The amount of money raised and expended in 1861, was \$549,123, an increase of \$17,383, as compared with 1860. Of this sum \$80,000 was appropriated by this State for the support of public schools, \$10,000 for the Normal School, and \$1200 for the Farnum Preparatory Institute. The remainder was mostly raised by local taxation, \$40,440 having been derived from "other sources."

—The Department of Education for Eastern Canada will be among the contributors to the great Exhibition in London, the articles sent for exhibition being copies of the *Journal of Education* and *Journal de l'Instruction Publique*, specimens of school books printed in Canada and approved by the Council of Public Instruction, and samples of the seats and desks used in the Normal Schools and many other educational institutions in the country.

—The pupils of the Laval Normal School, recently gave a literary, scientific and musical reunion, which met with great success. Recitations and addresses abounding with patriotic sentiments were listened to with evident delight; Mr. Ahern initiated his fellow students into the mysteries of the telegraphic art, and a few amateurs who had kindly lent their valuable services on the occasion did much to captivate the numerous assembly with sweet musical performances, the entertainment being altogether in accordance with the great precept of Horace: *Utile dulci*.

SCIENTIFIC INTELLIGENCE.

—Mr. Green, the famous diver, relates singular stories of his adventures, when searching in the deep waters of the ocean. He gives some sketches of what he saw on the Silver Banks, near Hayti:

"The banks of coral on which my divers were made, are about forty miles in length, and from ten to twenty in breadth.