

haste and eager readiness to gratify clamorous and importunate though unwise solicitation.

"We trust, sir, you will experience, during your incumbency in office, a congenial sphere for the exercise of your distinguished attainments, and that in the discharge of duties to be exceedingly onerous, you will enjoy that exalted satisfaction that arises from a public recognition of great abilities worthily employed for the public good. While engaged as a Minister of Education, we beg to assure you that you may rely implicitly on the teachers of Oxford for the most hearty co-operation in devotion to your schemes for the further development and perfection of one of the noblest systems of education possessed by the civilized world.

"Signed on behalf of the Oxford Teachers' Association,

"GEO. J. FRASER, President."

Mr. Crooks made a suitable reply, thanking the teachers heartily for their cordial reception.

By the unanimous vote of the Association, the following resolution was passed, and the Secretary was instructed to transmit a copy of the same to Dr. Ryerson, viz. :

"Resolved,—That this Association avails itself of the first opportunity afforded it by a general meeting of its members, since the retirement of the Rev. Dr. Ryerson from the office of Chief Superintendent of Education, to give expression to the high sense it has (in common, it believes, with the Canadian public at large) of the very eminent services which have been rendered by that venerable and reverend gentleman to the cause of education in his native Province, of the wisdom and ability in devising, and the indomitable perseverance and steady devotion with which he has met opposition, allayed animosities and overcome difficulties, and by which he has succeeded in one short life-time in laying broad and deep the foundation of a national system of education excellent in itself, the envy of many, and the admiration of all; and that the respect, the gratitude and the affection of this Association shall follow him to his honourable retirement; and we implore upon him in his last days the choicest blessings of Heaven."

A number of other important resolutions were passed by the Convention; but on account of Mr. Huntsman, the official reporter, having lost his manuscript, we are unable to publish them. Altogether, the Convention was the most interesting and successful yet held in the county.

HON. MR. CROOK'S ADDRESS.

On Friday evening, Mr. Crooks delivered an address upon education, in the Town Hall. The hon. gentleman began by defining his own position, and stating that while responsible to the whole country for his official acts, he was more directly and peculiarly responsible to Oxford County, one of whose ridings he had the honour to represent. The change was a great one, from having the administration of affairs entrusted to a bureau, not responsible to the people, to the appointment of a Minister directly responsible for every act. He hoped there would be no cause to regret the change, although Dr. Ryerson's success and his peculiar faculties for the work left his successor a difficult task. The tendency of our governmental system was to local self-government, and this held good in intellectual as well as in political affairs. While men would not doubt differ on and discuss educational affairs, as they did other subjects within the arena of politics, these discussions were not to be deprecated, as it is only by discussion that we can arrive at the truth. He hoped, however, that political necessities would never make education a mere football of party politics. We had already settled the difficulty which was causing so much excitement in England. Our controversy regarding the denominational differences was settled, and by the British North America Act made a part of the constitution of the country. By our system of local taxation, imposed by trustee boards, township and county councils, and the Ontario Legislature successively, a thoroughly scientific system was attained, with a division of authority probably more nearly perfect than any other plan at present in practice. The central authority was not a dictatorship. It only prevented the abuse of local power, as in engaging unqualified teachers. For fifty years a system had been on the statute book, by which there need be no stop to the mental growth, but the High School boy of ability was to be enabled, by means of bursaries, established by the counties, to go on through the University. He regretted that this feature of the law had not been more generally taken advantage of, and that few or no counties had established bursaries. In our educational system the poor had the same chance to improve as the rich. The teachers give the principal bias to the people, and the object of training is to bring out all the qualities of the mind and body in the best way to train the moral, intellectual and physical faculties, in order to produce a sound mind in a sound body, which is, after all, the great end of education. It was evident that educators required

a careful education. He was glad that the Bible could be admitted into any school in the land. It was the best of books, and the best specimen of our Anglo-Saxon tongue. The objection was sometimes made that our teaching was not religious, but he considered it was. We had in 1874, 3,500 Sunday-schools, with 20,000 teachers and 80,000 scholars; so it is evident that Canadian youths are predisposed to be Christian. The physical education of the children was too much overlooked. A few schools were all that was to be desired in this respect, but most had very inadequate ventilation, and many had made no provision for the admission of fresh air. He next spoke of the qualification of teachers. At the present time there were only 215 first-class teachers engaged in the whole Province, and 910 second-class. Third-class teachers should be considered as only on probation, and should be under the direction of a first or at least second-class teacher. The third-class teachers must, to some extent, be considered an inferior article, and as a system of promotion by merit was open, any one might look forward to a second, a first, a County Inspectorship, or even the position which he himself held, which would, no doubt, in time be filled by some teacher from the ranks.

Mr. Carlyle moved, and Mr. McMullen seconded, a vote of thanks to the Minister for his able and instructive speech; and in seconding the motion, Mr. McMullen expressed the hope that the responsibility of excluding the Bible should be placed upon the trustees rather than that of admitting it. He wished to see it placed on the same basis as the third or fourth books. He also expressed the hope that High School expenses would be better equalized. Last year the County of Oxford paid \$300 and the Town of Woodstock \$2,000, while the number of pupils was about equal from each.

Mr. Crooks was repeatedly cheered during his speech, and all seemed to be pleased at having had the opportunity of hearing him.—*Woodstock Sentinel*.

2. MIDDLESEX TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

Under the auspices of the East Middlesex Teachers' Association, there was held in the City Hall last evening a meeting which was attended by about three hundred persons, mainly teachers, although there were several representatives of both City and County Councils and other citizens. The chair was assumed by Mayor Macdonald, while upon the platform were Hon. Adam Crooks, Bishop Hellmuth, Rev. Father Northgraves, Chairman Separate School Board, and others.

Mayor Macdonald, in opening the meeting, spoke for a few minutes on the subject of education, and briefly referred to the great advantage it will be to the western section when it shall have a Normal School. He then introduced

The Hon. Adam Crooks, Minister of Education, who, after a few introductory remarks, referred to the experiments of the past few years, and the lessons in education we had derived from the Continent of Europe and the United States. But of late years we had a good deal of experience, and the system of making the head of the Education Department amenable to the people has been followed. The speaker then proceeded to treat of the educational system of Ontario, which, while entirely undenominational, is fully capable of being carried out, while still inculcating the broad views of our national Christianity. The three great essential characteristics of our present education are its universality, its efficiency, and its economy. The advantage of education as a means of raising a better feeling was next spoken of, the speaker believing that the country school-house offers a greater antidote to crime than all our gaols and houses of refuge. The birthright of our children should be free entry into our school-houses. The general advantages of schools were next referred to, and the objects of schooling in general alluded to. At this point Mr. Crooks read a number of figures, showing the increase of money paid to support the schools to have been nearly doubled in ten years. An increase had also been observable in every line, and it is probable that expenditures in every department have been well spent, and the system is quite in accordance with progress. Understanding the principles upon which this progress was based, it is probable the expenditure will never be reduced. The question of compulsory attendance was next referred to, and this Mr. Crooks believed should not be adopted till all other means have failed. In this connection he quoted figures which went to show the attendance at school in England and Scotland under the different systems which prevail there, and remarked that the school attendance of Ontario is not so satisfactory as he could wish, and he thought well of the plan of making attendance for a specified number of days compulsory, as provided for in Viscount Sandon's Bill, introduced into the British House of Parliament last month. But it is not alone in the primary branches we need education, and provision should be made