

they reasonably enough become dissatisfied, and either seek other employments or leave the country altogether.

The unavoidable inference from these facts is, that the present great disparity in numbers between Male and Female Teachers is operating unfavorably upon the public welfare. We presume that the secret of this evil—as we fear we must call it—is to be found in the desire of the people, or their representatives, the Trustees, to keep up their schools in what they consider the most economical manner. We can assure them that it is altogether a false economy. The same principle applies here, as in the case of School-houses to which we have just referred. The best school is always the cheapest, if we are to look to substantial results; the money cost should be a secondary consideration. If our suppositions on this head are correct, they suggest the propriety of the rate-payers in every school section looking well to the men whom they select as Trustees; and of their taking care not to choose men who, through an excessive straining of prudent motives, virtually condemn their children to a deprivation approaching to intellectual starvation. In some instances, there may indeed be financial difficulties to be encountered, which seem to forbid the adoption of the more liberal and enterprising course; but we believe that active and large-hearted Trustees, backed up by a few energetic rate-payers resolved upon improvement, can always manage to accomplish the desired results.

We trust that the subjects above referred to will engage the earnest attention of those school sections to which our remarks are especially applicable; and that, at our next annual meeting, plans for improvement in all that relates to these subjects will be matured. We must add, however, that, notwithstanding all the drawbacks to which our minds are from time to time directed, and to a few of which we have called public attention in the foregoing remarks, Education is making steady advances in this Province. Our Public Schools are free and open to all, and are gradually securing to themselves the approval and sympathy of all classes in the community. On comparing those schools with what they were only a few years since, we have much cause for gratification. But we should not be content to know that we have made improvement upon the former very inefficient Common School system. We should look to the future rather than to the past. Our march should be ever onward—always in the direction of improvement. It is with this view that we call upon all the true friends of Education to assist in bringing our School system to as near a state of perfection as possible. It should be our ambition, as it is our duty, to endeavor to make the Free Public Schools of Nova Scotia the most efficient for the objects for which they were founded, and, in every respect, the best in the world. To do this, we require the action and earnest support of all classes in the Province; and accordingly it is not to any one class of our people, but to all, that we now appeal.

GENERAL LEE AS A COLLEGE PRESIDENT.

IT is doubtless true that the voice of universal sorrow that came up from the entire South on the death of General Lee was, in its depth and fervor, a surprise even to his greatest admirers. Never, perhaps, did the death of any man in a time of peace produce so deep an impression throughout any community. In one universal voice, commencing at Lexington—a spot henceforth sacred as his home and burial-place—and circling the whole round of States, and cities, and villages throughout the South, the lamentation of a whole people went up to Heaven, and a sense of personal loss was felt and expressed, as though every community had lost a friend, and each heart its hero.

General Lee had, indeed, not only become, for the whole Southern people, the most beloved representative of the principles for which they believed they had fought, but he had been accepted and revered by them as the highest type of their own ideal character. Their favorite hero in battle and victory, he had splendidly illustrated their most heroic qualities. He had also illustrated their profounder traits, not less by his sublime bearing in defeat than by the completeness of his self-sacrifice; and by his patience and serenity under continued adversity, and his uncomplaining devotion to the labors of a new life, he had at once set them the example of their highest duty as a people, and filled the measure of their admiration for his character. Thus, gradually, in the quiet but anxious years during which he had borne their sorrows, their affection seems to have centered around him with ever-increasing

strength; and when he died, the whole people went into mourning, with a grief even more profound and universal than it had fallen in the shock of battle, in the very crisis of their fate!

Such is, we believe, the explanation of this remarkable expression of public grief. The explanation of the ulterior fact itself, as we understand it, is to be found, we think, not less in the manner of General Lee's life since the war, than in the peculiar qualities of his character. If his career during the war, and his character, as then exhibited to the Southern people, were such as to attract their love and admiration, his subsequent life had certainly been such as to confirm and intensify these feelings to the utmost depth of devotion. And, strange as it may seem, this result had followed mainly from the very stillness and retirement of that life. General Lee, almost alone of the great Southern leaders, had not only taken no part in politics, but he had not been known—at least not until very recently—in connection with any of the ordinary enterprises of public business. He had also travelled but little, and had thus been but little seen by the people, and then at only long intervals; so that subsequent more ordinary associations had not grown up around his person to confuse the memories of the past. In the midst of political commotions and of public calamities that affected his deepest interests, he had uttered no word, but had pursued, with quiet serenity, the path of patience and of duty. In addition to all this, he was known to be laboring and enduring not for himself, but for the future of the South; and he was connected with a work in which, remote as it was alike from the gratification of personal ambition and from the possible pursuit of wealth for himself, the Southern people felt that they had a common interest, and that they and their children were the objects of his quiet, but far-reaching labors. The life of General Lee at Washington College was a life of pure devotion, consecrated to the service of the people of the South; and they, feeling it to be such, repaid it with an ardor of affection and gratitude which quietly gathered strength year after year, and formed no small part of their sense of bereavement and sorrow at his death.

We propose to consider, briefly, some of the aspects of these last years of his life. We shall consider them rather in illustration of his own character than with reference to the particular work itself. These years present, it seems to us, the most remarkable close that history records of such a life as his had been; and they illustrate his character not less signally than do his greatest public achievements. Indeed, without this final illustration the history of that character itself would have been incomplete, as it underwent its severest test, and received its highest and most emphatic vindication in the serene patience and self-forgetting devotion of these very years. It seems, indeed, as if fortune had reserved Robert E. Lee for this work in order to perfect the example of a character superior to all her powers, and equal alike to the triumphs and calamities of the highest, and the cares and duties of the humblest lot.

General Lee accepted the Presidency of Washington College, in the first place, from a profound and deliberate sense of duty. The same high principle of action that had characterized his conduct in the gravest crises of public affairs, marked his decision here; and here, as ever, duty alone determined his choice. There was absolutely nothing in this position that could have tempted him. Not only was it uncongenial with all the habits of his past life, and remote from all the associations in which he had formerly taken pleasure; but it was, at that time, most uninviting in itself. The College to which he was called was broken in fortune and in hope. The war had practically closed its doors. Its buildings had been pillaged and defaced, and its library scattered. It had now neither money nor credit, and it was even doubtful whether it would shortly be re-opened at all for the reception of students. The Faculty were few in number, disorganized and dispirited. Of the slender endowment that had survived the war, hardly anything was available, and ready money could not be secured even for the most immediate and pressing wants of the College. Under these circumstances, the offer of the Presidency to General Lee seemed well-nigh presumptuous; and surely it was an offer from which he had nothing to expect either of fortune or of fame. The men, however, who had made this election, the Trustees of Washington College—ever honored be their memory for their noble conception—had not calculated in vain in their estimate of General Lee's character. They felt that this position, however humble it might seem, would afford to him, what from their knowledge of the man they felt would be most acceptable to him, a sphere of duty in which he could spend his days in the service of his beloved people; and though the country looked on astonished and incredulous, the result showed that they had not been mistaken. General Lee received the announcement, which was conveyed to him in person by the Rector, Hon. John W. Brockenbrough, with surprise and with deep feeling. He was at first disposed to decline the offer; but the distinguished Virginian who represented the Trustees urged it upon him, and dwelt earnestly upon the high motives which had prompted their choice. These were motives to which General Lee could not be indifferent; and at last, reserving his answer, he promised to reflect upon the subject. Here, as ever, he was deliberate, as well as conscientious. Finally, after several days' consideration, he accepted the position. The details of this event, as well as of the