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## CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, 28th Oct., 1876.

### THE TEACHERS' CONVENTION.

"Archee," said Diogenes Laertius twenty centuries ago, "Archee, the foremost and dominant principle in all statesmanship is the education of the young." This being so, a meeting where such foremost educationists as Dr. Jenkins, Dr. Dawson, Dr. Howe, Principal Hicks, Professor Robins, &c., were present can have no slight interest for Canadians.

The reports were very badly taken for the local press. So many blunders were made that hardly any statement can be taken up as entirely trustworthy until corroborated by the official yearly report of the Association. But, for the first time solid progress may have been said to be made in educational knowledge at a meeting of this convention. Every important paper made the subject of a distinct resolution, and where such resolutions were agreed to unanimously by such a large and influential body of men interested in education (for the Association is by no means exclusively confined to teachers), they may be looked upon as, for all intents and purposes, ascertained facts.

Perhaps the most important resolution, so far as its practical effect on the country is concerned, was that "it is the unanimous opinion of this Association that it is to the advantage of the pupil as well as to the teacher that the hours of teaching in country schools should not exceed five hours a day and five days a week." From the form in which the motion was put, any single person present who thought that the scholars would learn more if taught six hours a day, as at present, instead of five hours as proposed, could have prevented the motion from being passed in its actual shape. But none such appeared, and any commissioner or board of commissioners who do not act upon this recommendation, (and it was resolved that a copy should be sent to every school trustee and commissioner in the province) sets himself against the united wisdom of the leading educationists in the Dominion.

Mr. DAWSON, the delegate from the Teachers' Association of Canada, did honor to the body who selected him. His brief, clear, lucid speeches pretty well established the advisability of the co-education of the sexes, the granting of teachers' diplomas by one central board with the subsidiary aid only of local boards and county inspectors, and the urgent necessity of a superannuation fund for the teachers. "Once make all teachers," he argued, "the servants of the State and then they will have a right to a retiring pension like any other civil servant." We ourselves know of teachers fifty, sixty and even seventy years of age, depending on charity for subsistence, and that after years of faithful, earnest labour. Such cases are a disgrace to a country, and Government should step in to remove the anomaly. The amount of public money required to do so will not be large, as unfortunately too many men enter the teachers' profession merely as a stepping stone to something else, and lady teachers are the first to be sought in matrimony by the most sensible and am-

bitious young men of the neighbourhood where they reside. School Inspectors' reports complain bitterly of the fatal facility with which they marry.

One way to defer this much lamented catastrophe would be, we think, to open up a vista of advancement in their profession to them. By attaching different salaries to the schools in each municipality and advancing the better teachers to the better schools, many an ambitious teacher will tell her lover that "she had rather bide a wee" till she has attained to the honour of teaching the best school in her district.

The way to retain an Anglo-Saxon in an employment is to persuade him, not that he "is," but that he is going to be "blest." The Bishoprics attract much talent and genius to the English Church. Similarly if school-masters saw that they had a chance of becoming Inspectors by a faithful discharge of their duties, with an ultimate hope of a place in the Department of Quebec when tired of the Inspector's homeless and houseless life, there would be more hope of retaining the leading lights of the teacher's profession in their useful and important work.

There are some subjects which may well be thought over by teachers against their next meeting. There is the desirability of establishing cheap gymnastic appliances around our leading country schools, of teaching singing and drawing however imperfectly in all schools, of teaching all girls the art of sewing and cutting out clothes (which may be done in conjunction with a French conversation class), and the elements of domestic economy. It might be possible for the teachers to inaugurate a system of making a teacher's diploma a sort of university degree conferred by the State, beginning with the E.D. or elementary degree; passing through the M.S.D. or model school degree and culminating in the B.A. or bachelor of arts for gentleman, and M.A. or mistress of arts for lady academy teachers. All teachers would have to submit to these examinations, especially those from our Normal Schools and Universities who would be sure to obtain the highest honours.

One great lack in the past teachers' conventions has been the scanty attendance of school commissioners. It is on them that the education of the country finally depends. It is their orders which teachers are bound to obey. When teachers meet they mostly tell one another facts perfectly well known to them all. It is the commissioners who need the most instruction and persuasion, and indeed, like Dominies, encouragement in their thankless and important office. Some steps must be taken to coax the attendance of all the school commissioners in Ascot to the next meeting at Sherbooke.

Finally the teachers might bring prominently before the attention of the clergy, justices of the peace and school commissioners that the duty is laid on them by act of parliament of visiting all the schools in their neighbourhood once at least in the year. The clergy at any rate, who raise such complaints about the little influence they are allowed to have in education, ought to avail themselves of this obligation to see that the great disgrace of Protestant schools—the utter ignorance of all Scripture history—is wiped out from the escutcheon of the province.

### COMPETITION AND COOPERATION.

The system of free imports commonly spoken of as "free trade" has doubtless certain advantages as affecting particular peoples and countries, and branches of labour. Its tendency, while providing markets for large establishments, is to keep down prices, and prices sometimes have to be kept down in the interest of the consumer. It will also occasionally run prices to a very low point, so as to put manufacturers to their wits' end to compete with their outside competitors. Where commodities circulate freely, markets are increased in area, and the obstruction to manufacturers and their improvement, which consists in merely limited fields of

action, is overcome. Establishments are enlarged, while local industries run risk of extinction. By promoting the inflow of foreign commodities, the system often supplies new and better ideas to those who produce similar goods in the home country, and thus infuses a quickening influence into the world of design and labour. It may even go on to promote good feeling between distant peoples, and seem to be hastening the approach of the ideal brotherhood of men, which poets and philanthropists have dreamt of, and which, however it is obscured by the contentions around them, is the faith of Christians. And yet with all these advantages before us, we do not know how to advocate an indiscriminate or an unjust free trade. So far as markets are the object of the arrangement, the plan fails entirely if we permit our neighbours' country to supply us with their goods without restriction, while we are receiving no similar advantages at their hands in the permission to sell to them what we produce. We find our own market restricted by the influx of foreign competing goods, and our difficulty added to by the want of the outflow we are looking for, for our own. We want to have our production enlarged and our people employed. The arrangement hinders both. In starting any factory, we have to assure ourselves of the sources from whence its custom is to flow. If it be one designed only for the supply of home and neighbouring necessities in a community, and if it is also capable of doing this properly and well, there can be no advantage in bringing in goods of the same kind from elsewhere; but, on the contrary, the entire enterprise may be upset by that course. In the case of a local manufacturer who is doing well in supplying a district, and comparing well in his goods and prices with other places, the introduction of goods from far or near to compete with his will make him do worse and not better, for by losing his custom or a part of it, he loses his strength and capability for worthy production. But the establishment may not be doing its best, or may at least be far from competing properly with the general or widely social best in manufacture. In that case it would seem better to replace the establishment or management by what shall be worthier or more capable, than to set two to work to outdo each other and strive who can operate for the most falls for its opponent. If custom increases, two or more can, of course, be set to work. A market may be either too large or too small for a factory, regarding its strength in men and means, but it is often easier to increase the factory than to enlarge the market. A sufficient market secured for the productions of a local factory, the question of prices, buyer and seller being reasonable in their demands, could be fairly arranged between them; but when the market is diminished the profit charge, has to be increased, to enable the producer to live and keep all going out of more limited returns. But a manufactory may be quite of another class than this, and be started on a great scale; and with a view to the production of staple articles demanding large markets to keep the organization alive at all. Here, of course, come in new anxieties and new forms of enterprise. We have to see that as a community whose numbers, and strength and skill have suggested the enterprise, we secure those markets somewhere, and are not deprived of them by excessive imposts in the shape of customs duties in the country to which we carry our goods. The compliment of free access we are willing to return by opening our own markets. For some trades the most advantageous thing would be to have this interchange, because, by their speciality of manufacture, they command to some extent the home market and the foreign one—the same speciality being only restrictive in a small market. Other trades, limited in strength and capital, will often go on best without extension or interference. The less the market, the less can division of labour be sustained. Division of labour expended on the several parts of one production

will sometimes destroy the unity of it by the absence of a combining mind. Divided labour turning out one complete and special article will often yield it in great proportion; but all will depend upon the adaptation of the market and the manufacture to each other,—whether the enterprise be extensive or more humble. It is not sufficient to generalize only on this subject and neglect to take note of the surroundings of each class of manufacturing enterprise.

As it might in some trades be found inconvenient in practice for customers to bind themselves not to purchase for a certain term except of the one manufacturer, the plan of subscription orders for a stated quantity of goods deliverable as required during the year, might take the place of the first arrangement, in the annual session which would be called to adjust the interests of Buyer and Seller.

### THE EASTERN WAR.

By the confession of the *Times* Vienna correspondent, he was mistaken about the powers which had declared their acceptance of the six months' armistice. Neither Austria, France nor Italy had notified the Porte of their adhesion to that proposal, though none had objected. England alone, therefore, took formal action in its favor. The effect of this is that all the powers except England remain in a position to urge the Porte to concede the Russian demands. On the other hand, it seems certain that Russia has not the support of either Germany or Austria in the contemplated movement against Bulgaria. The announcement that the Czar will visit the Courts at Vienna, Berlin and London seems to indicate that Russia is hesitating to act separately. Anyhow, the mission of Colonel Deteshkoff, the Czar's adjutant, to the Emperor of Austria fared no better than that of Gen. Suwarakoff, and the weight of evidence seems to show that the other powers have, like England, taken up an expectant attitude in face of Russia's warlike preparations; for we have also the contradiction of a Russo-Italian alliance from several quarters, including an inspired Reuter despatch from Rome, which says:—Contrary to rumor, Italy, up to the present, maintains an attitude of reserve. Bismarck is still at Varzin; the Emperor of Austria and Count Andrassy are at Pesth, and the Russian Court at Livadia. At Belgrade it is declared that the Czar's return to St. Petersburg will be the signal for the entry of the Russian army into Bulgaria. A special despatch from Vienna to the *Standard* says two large clubs of the Constitutional party in the Austrian Reichsrath, a club of the Left and a club of Progressionists, held a sitting yesterday on the questions to be put to Ministers respecting the attitude of the Government upon the Eastern question. The majority of both clubs declared against any intervention, occupation or annexation whatever. Some objections as to the competency of the Reichsrath in foreign affairs hitherto reserved to the deliberation of Austro-Hungarian delegations, were overruled. In the Servian camp, according to the *Times* Vienna correspondent, the idea of peace is scouted. Fighting continues before Saitzchar. The Servians under General Doctorff, General Tchernayeff's new chief of staff, are endeavoring to drive the Turks from their position there. The Servians considerably outnumber the Turks, but have not effected anything yet.

Councillor Woods, in Quebec, has moved for Gas Lamps and Life Buoys on the wharves of the city. This is noble, and we look to see the proposal carried out faithfully by the Council. Being human themselves, they must like to save life, as well as to enforce the laws, and the public, who are all interested, hate to be deceived. The improvement, in addition, was brought before the House at Ottawa, by Mr. Cook, M.P., of ladders on the face of wharves, to which, we believe, should be added a few hand-lines festooned, for a rapid grasp by the person unexpectedly immersed in the flood of something that will not give way.