

examinations, the examinations were conducted amongst the elder children in writing; amongst the younger, orally. He gave all his scholars a present at the examinations. This obviated the injudiciousness of giving one boy of sharp intellect a dozen of prizes, while a less gifted but it may be a more industrious scholar got nothing. As regards merit, he tested the scholars by the number of marks, and gave them honour cards marked with the position they occupied on the honour list. The good conduct honour card he gave according to the vote of the pupils. Mr. McCallum was strongly in favour of prizes. Of course the great thing was the proper distribution of the prizes. He thought the large honour cards issued by the Council of Education rather cumbersome; accordingly, he has introduced a card system of his own. In each division he had five prizes, and the whole onus of distribution was thrown upon independent examiners, so that the teacher had nothing to do with it, further than making out the list. He had found it work admirably. Mr. Alexander was, and always had been, opposed to the prize system. There was no comparison between the University and School prizes. The former was voluntary, the latter compulsory. Then, in the same School there might be two boys; the one of whom had aid, all the appliances of books &c.; the other had none of these. Was it fair to ask these two boys to compete? Then they often found that their prize takers were by no means the prize takers in the race of life, and it was often the slow boy. The boy whom their prize system marked "dunce" that proved the better man. Why should they throw impediments and discouragements in the way of the slow boy, by their prizes. Mr. Platt thought the chief objection to the prize system was the unnatural stimulus it created among children. The stimulus was unnatural, and like every other stimulus created an appetite which required continued renewal, and thus the system became a very important item of expenditure. Mr. King agreed very much with the remarks Mr. Millar had made. He thought the system he had propounded was both judicious and beneficial. Although he did not consider that either a book or a card was necessary, provided some distinctive mark was put upon the child. Mr. McAllister thought the prize system if judiciously carried out, was in consonance with the laws of nature, and was fitted to assist their boys in the race of life. He then indicated the Toronto system as follows:—Three pupils are selected from each division of each city school—these being selected by the teacher. The higher classes are examined in writing, the lower orally. The examinations are conducted by a Board of Examiners selected by the Board of School Trustees. These report to the Board of Trustees, who distribute the prizes. Among these are seven scholarships of the value of £7 each. Mr. Brine was in favour of prizes, and he thought it a good thing for children to have their names in the newspapers occasionally. Most people like that, and this was as powerful a stimulus as could be administered, either to children, or children of larger growth. The report was adopted by a majority of 16 to 4.

THE PROPOSED NEW SCHOOL ACT.

The Convention took up the consideration of the new School Act, as amended by the Chief Superintendent. On section 4, referring to the qualifications of County and City Superintendents, being read, Mr. Dixon objected to the clause as proposed. He did not think the qualifications were distinctly defined. He thought that no one should be appointed as Superintendent who was not a practical teacher and holding a first class certificate. Besides, he thought that those who are superintendents now should retain office, if the County Board so desire it. Mr. Miller agreed with the remarks of Mr. Dixon, and moved that the following be added to the clause: "And all candidates for the office of County Superintendent shall be required to have taught for at least five years." Mr. Brebner, objected to the constitution of many of the examining boards. He knew boards where even ignorant tailors figured as examiners. He insisted on superintendents being well educated men. Mr. Scarlett said Dr. Ryerson had been very definite on that point on his travels. He was in favour of local Superintendents being men of experience and high standing. Mr. Dixon—We have no guarantee for that in the Bill. Mr. McCallum suggested that any practical teacher should be eligible. Mr. Campbell had taught under six or seven Superintendents, and the most efficient of these had been clergymen. Mr. Archibald deprecated the idea of a man holding a County certificate being appointed a County Superintendent. There was no definiteness in such a qualification. As to the objection against the Council prescribing the qualifications, there was nothing in the objection. Mr. McLellan said that he had been examined in several counties and he had found a very striking similarity in the examinations. He had found many examinations ridiculously hard, but he had found none desperately easy. These examinations did the teachers good, because it made them fortify themselves on all points. Mr. Scarlett said he thought it would be sufficient for a

man to be an experienced teacher, to enable him to the appointment of Local Superintendent. Mr. Hodgins thought the Convention need be under no fear of the standard being fixed too low; the danger was it might be fixed too high. At present, with many honourable exceptions, several inefficient Superintendents had been appointed. Their expenditure now approximated to \$2,000,000, and it was of the utmost importance that a rigid oversight should be kept over this large expenditure. He was confident that the Council in prescribing qualifications would keep a strict eye to the public interest. Other countries were much in advance of us in the matter of Inspectors, and he should like to see the English system introduced. Now, in Canada the only standard for money grant was average attendance; but very soon they must introduce a system making "results" the standard of money grants. He did not entirely object to the resolution, yet at times it might occur that a man with every possible qualification in the highest degree might present himself, and it would be a pity by any clause as the resolution indicated to exclude such a man. Mr. Embree agreed with the remarks of the Deputy Superintendent of Education. He thought it would be rather hard to cut off capable men who had taught successfully in a grammar school. Mr. Brebner thought such prizes as Superintendentship should be confined to the profession. At the same time, he would argue for a thorough examination being passed by every one before being appointed as Superintendent. The amendment to the clause as proposed by Mr. Miller, was carried by a large majority. Mr. Dixon then proposed to move a resolution to the effect that Superintendents now in office should retain office. Mr. Hodgins thought it would be invidious that they should retain office on the old low standard while all new appointments should enter on the higher standard. The Chairman said that in all probability the Council would be inclined to give a fair consideration to the claims of old Superintendents. Mr. Dixon then withdrew his motion. On section 9th being read, Mr. Dixon said the examinations should be left in the hands of the Superintendent. Mr. Hodgins explained that the purpose was to hold all examinations throughout the Province at the same time. All the papers would be prepared by the Central Board, and the Superintendent and his associates would be only the machinery by which the work of the Board would be carried on. There would be a uniformity of standard over all the country if the Bill passed, which they have never had. The papers would be returned to the Central Board, who would award the class of certificate to the candidates. A lengthy discussion ensued, but ultimately the clause was adopted. Clauses 5 and 6 were passed. When clause 7 was reached, Mr. McCallum thought the maximum sum of \$1200 as the salary of local Superintendents should be struck out. Mr. Hodgins said the idea was in the framing of the Bill to get the Government to come up to the maximum amount. If that were struck out he feared the whole clause would be lost. Mr. Dixon moved that the original clause be passed as it stood. (Carried). A discussion took place on the 9th clause, but it was finally adopted without amendment. The various clauses to the 25th, inclusive, were read and argued, and carried without amendment. A slight discussion ensued as to clause 26, which defines the summer vacation to be from the 15th July to the 15th August. The city teachers thought it might interfere with their present extended vacation. The Deputy Superintendent explained that the law would apply to rural schools, but that in cities a latitude was given to trustees. The reason for fixing uniformity of vacation time was owing to the fact that rural schools were paid according to average attendance, whilst in cities the grant was given according to population.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL BILL. *

The Grammar School Bill was next read over by Mr. Dixon. When clause 3 was read, Mr. Hodgins said, in reply to Mr. McMurchy, who wished the word "commercial" inserted before "education," that no difficulty would arise in that matter. The circumstances of the country demanded that what had been so much overlooked by trustees in the matter of commercial education must be attended to; and in the regulations under the Act, no doubt this matter would occupy a prominent place. Mr. Watson asked the Deputy Superintendent whether it was not likely that the arrangements proposed relative to the Grammar Schools, would effect the interests of the Common Schools. Mr. Hodgins did not think it would. The Bill was then read to the end and adopted. Mr. Miller proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Hodgins, for his kindness in attending at their Convention, which was heartily responded to. Mr. Hodgins thanked them, and made a few remarks laudatory of their school system, which from a thing of obscurity, had now become well spoken of all the world over, and was being copied by several of the other colonies. Dr. Nelles, who had to leave at six o'clock, took farewell of

* See discussion in Grammar School Convention, page 140.