

7. JAIL LIBRARIES IN UPPER CANADA.

At the suggestion of the Chief Superintendent of Education, the Municipal Council of the County of Oxford have sent to the Educational Department the sum of Fifty dollars, to be applied towards the purchase of an addition to the county jail library. Lists selected by various ministers in Woodstock have been transmitted to the Department, with a "request that the Chief Superintendent may be pleased to make such a selection of books (to the amount of the appropriation) from the list sent to the County Council committee, as he may consider to be most suitable."

Steps are being taken at the suggestion of the Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada to procure a library for the Wentworth jail. The *Hamilton Times* thinks the locality inauspicious for the reception of moral influences. But a proper selection of books might be instrumental, under the Divine blessing, in accomplishing unspeakable good even among the most abandoned and degraded inmates of a prison, whilst those who are not far gone in crime, would unquestionably be benefitted. It is for man to use the means and leave the result with God.

The Standing Committee on Education reported, that they have taken into their consideration the communication from the Chief Superintendent of Education in reference to the establishment of libraries in prisons and gaols, your Committee have made inquiries of some of the prison officials of the county, and find that a few books furnished by the Sheriff are about the only means of mental improvement now available for prisoners confined in the County Gaol. Your Committee are of opinion that the well-being of Society as well as the moral improvement of persons who may be confined in prison, would be beneficially advanced were a library of proper books furnished for that purpose.—Your Committee would therefore recommend that the sum of fifty dollars be appropriated from the funds of the County, on condition that the city of Hamilton furnish the like sum—which said sums would, with the addition of the percentage offered by the Chief Superintendent of Education, furnish a suitable library for the prisoners confined in the County Gaol, and that the Clerk of this Council furnish a copy of this Report to the Municipal authorities of the City of Hamilton.*—*Spectator*.

8. TOWNSHIP COMPETITIVE SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS.

We have already given an interesting account of various municipal competition examinations (among the schools of the township) which were instituted last year through the liberality of the Hon. Billa Flint, (see *Journal* for November, page 174.) The names of the municipalities in which Mr. Flint's examinations were held, are: Hungerford, Huntingdon, Madoc, Rawdon, Elzevir, Tudor, (with the new townships of Wollaston and Limerick) North Fredricksburgh, South Fredricksburgh, Belmont and Methuen, North Monaghan, Smith, Asphodel, Thurlow, Marmora, Adolphustown and Dummer. During 1865-6 the following individual municipalities instituted competitive examinations among the various schools of the township, viz.: Nassagaweya, East Oxford, Gosfield, Bruce, Nelson, Kincardine, Wallace, (new township), Whitby, Minden, (new township), Derby, North Elmsley, Gloucester, Moore, Otonabee, Finch, Puslinch and Osgoode.

In regard to the Puslinch examination the Editor of the *Guelph Herald* remarks:—"Before closing we beg to express our unqualified approval of the action of the township Council, and the several Boards of Trustees in this matter. It evinces a liberal and progressive spirit—in keeping with the age. The interest manifested by the whole community, people, parents, teachers and pupils, proves it was also a popular measure. Competition, we are told, is the life of trade. We believe, too, it is the life of education. Teachers and pupils will both work harder, and be more in earnest, when they know there will be an opportunity given of showing the result of their labor. The effect is magical, and we hope, therefore, that the other townships will copy the good example set them by Puslinch, and have their competitive examinations. We also hope that Puslinch will repeat the experiment the next year, and that it will be even more successful than the last one."

At the Osgoode examination not less than six hundred people attended, and the interest and enthusiasm manifested was very great. The success of the examination was chiefly due to the Rev. Mr. Whyte, local superintendent, Mr. Dow, and R. Bell, Esq., ex-M.P.P. In the course of his remarks in delivering the prizes, Mr. Bell said:—"I am very glad to see that so great an interest has been taken by a very large audience; but there are more competitors from school than in previous years; and this will show that inside the schools the interest in the examinations is increasing. This fact should encourage those who have these meetings in charge,

to go on in their good work. I think that the results of such meetings as this cannot fail to be highly beneficial. We cannot be too diligent in these matters, and I am pleased to observe that the people of this Township appear to understand their duty. Great or highly beneficial results cannot in any case be looked for without diligence—without zealous application, but with perseverance and well directed effort is almost sure of success. To the children I will remark that when they see their parents here, they cannot fail to understand that a great interest is taken in their welfare; and I will ask of them to remember the many kindnesses which they receive from them. The object of education is simply to fit us for the duties of this life and to prepare us for that which is to follow, and with that explanation of the object it seems to me that the parents of children here are doing their duty well. I have observed with some little surprise that the girls have taken most of the prizes to-day, I do not know how this happens. I am not sorry to see the girls ahead, as it has been a fair contest, but I would have been better pleased to see that the boys were not so far behind. To the girls I would say, you have a duty before you for which you are now preparing. The promise is good and we all hope that the happiest benefits will be realized. To the boys I would say do not be discouraged, but let your present defeat prompt you to greater exertions in the preparations for another examination. I think that you have good cause to feel proud of your advancement, although it is not quite as great as it might have been, and I would simply say exert yourselves for further success. I came here to observe how I could make myself useful to you all—how I could advance education among you. As I take deep interest in educational matters you may always rely upon my doing what I can to further these interests. It is a pleasure to me, also, to meet here so many clergymen who are taking a zealous and active part in promoting the interests of education." Mr. Robertson was next called for. This gentleman was formerly engaged as a teacher in the township of Osgoode. He was of opinion that the exhibition on the whole was very creditable, but in some branches they were not up to the mark—as for instance in Canadian History. A few days ago he had attended a similar examination in the Township of Gloucester and the proficiency there when compared to the proficiency shown here to-day was much higher. He was sorry to have to say this. He looked upon Canadian History as one of the most important of School studies. He should be pleased to see some improvement next year in this matter. These examinations, in his opinion, were good for both teacher and scholar, if they had a tendency to raise the standard of education both in teacher and scholar. They would have a good effect upon the parents, upon the clergy and upon members of the Legislature who witnessed them and saw the general ability with which the questions were answered. Rev. Mr. Whyte remarked that this was a proud day for Osgoode. He believed that thanks were due to Mr. Dow to the Committee who had labored night and day in making arrangements—to the gentlemen who had come so far to conduct the examination, and to the seven schools whose pupils had competed for the prizes. The Editor remarks:—"In concluding our notice of this very interesting meeting we would congratulate the parents, the Clergymen, the Reeve and Committee of management upon the great success which has attended their efforts to advance the standard of education, and we trust that they may still labor with zeal to perfect what they have so nobly begun."

9. RULES FOR THE GRANTING OF SCHOOL PRIZES.

The Hamilton Board of School Trustees have adopted the following in carrying out the Resolution of the Board in reference to Prizes in our Public Schools:—

The basis on which they shall be awarded shall embrace, care in the preparation of lessons, punctuality and regularity in attendance, correctness in deportment in school, and proficiency in all the studies prescribed in the course.

No pupil shall be eligible to compete for a prize unless he or she has attended school at least one-half the session then closing. The competitors in each Division shall be the twelve pupils who have attained the greatest number of honor cards during the session then closing; but the Principal may select four additional, whom he may consider otherwise worthy. The candidates shall be examined *viva voce*, or otherwise, by examiners appointed by the Board, who, with the the Principal, shall make all awards. The books to be used by the examiners shall be those in use in the Public Schools. The pupils shall be admitted to the competitive examinations on presenting their honor cards to the Principal, and in case any of them have been lost, the Teacher's roll-book in which the honor cards given are regularly recorded will be the authority in deciding the number obtained by each pupil.

No prize shall be awarded unless the minimum number of marks—one-half the number possible in that Division—will be exceeded.

* No remittance for this library has as yet been received by the Educational Department.