

PAPERS

READ BEFORE

THE ONTARIO TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION, 1881.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

Ladies and gentlemen, I purpose speaking to you about an experiment in teaching junior classes which has been in operation for the last year in the Public Schools of the town of Galt. The Galt half-time system, as it is usually named, was suggested by Messrs. Cowan and Mowat, members of the Public School Board of the town of Galt. It was these gentlemen who first suggested that the children should, during play hours, be placed under the charge of some person competent to control and oversee them. The plan was devised for the purpose of lessening the hours which the junior scholars spend in the school-room in the study of their lessons—I might more truly say in the pretended study of their lessons—and yet not have them sent home during any portion of the school day. A half-time school generally means a school in which the pupils are one half of the day at school and the other half of the day at home, so that one group of scholars attend in the forenoon, and another in the afternoon, of the same day. Such half-time schools are established in a number of places. They have such schools in the city of Washington, D C. The Superintendent in one of his reports says: "Eight half-day schools were in operation during the past year, and in September last three more were added to the number, making a total of eleven. In the first year of the school course, the children in these schools progress as rapidly and accomplish as much as those in attendance the whole day. In the second year a daily session of four hours would be better than one of three. The objections to half-day schools come chiefly from those parents who desire to be relieved from the care of their children through the day, and look upon schools as the legitimate and proper nurseries for them. These objections must fail to have weight while our school fund continues so inadequate to supply more pressing wants." Galt tried a