

N. B. TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.

FIFTEENTH MEETING—PROCEEDINGS, PAPERS, DISCUSSIONS.

Three hundred teachers attended the Provincial Institute held in St. John, June 27th, 28th and 29th. All parts of the province were represented, and the proceedings were of a most interesting character throughout. The fog spread its mantle over the city during two days at least of the meeting, and was most grateful to those who had been enduring the almost tropical heat of the interior of the province. His Worship Mayor Robertson went so far as to say that should this representative gathering of the wisdom of the province decide upon any scientific plan of transporting the fog inland, he would let them have all they wanted—for nothing. A fine programme of speeches and music was carried out at the Mechanics' Institute on the first evening of the gathering, and on the second evening the New Brunswick Natural History Society opened its rooms and museum to the visitors, and several hours were most delightfully spent in enjoying the hospitality so courteously extended and so fully enjoyed.

Dr. Inch, Chief Superintendent, presided at all the sessions of the Institute with that ease and dignity so characteristic of him, and which went so far to make the proceedings pleasant and profitable to all. Mr. J. M. Palmer resigned the office of secretary-treasurer, the duties of which he has performed with skill and tact, and Mr. John Brittain, of the normal school, was elected in his stead, with Miss Grace Orr as assistant secretary. The secretary-treasurer's accounts showed a balance of \$175.21 in favor of the Institute. An excellent system of recording the attendance by depositing ballots, instead of the tedious process of calling the roll of members, was adopted at this meeting with seemingly good results.

The Chief Superintendent's address to the assembled teachers was as follows:

Ladies and Gentlemen—Members of the Institute:

It is my privilege to greet you once more in this annual conference of New Brunswick teachers. You have passed through another year of labor and responsibility; and you are here to congratulate each other on whatever success has attended your efforts, to sympathize with each other in the trials and discouragements you have experienced, to review the past, to plan for more effective service in the future, to learn from each other, to give and get in mutual converse and association,

I am glad from my general outlook to be able to report progress—slow it may be, but progress notwithstanding. There are yet parts of this province

where great ignorance prevails. There are districts where it is almost impossible to organize a board of trustees, the members of which can subscribe their own names to the teacher's contract. There are settlements in which a school has never been organized. There are here and there young men and women who have grown up in this country, boasting of its free school system, who have never had a day's instruction at school. And yet the light is penetrating into these dark places. The former days were not better than these; they were much worse, for the light did not then reveal the darkness.

The facts, as compiled from the last annual report, show decided progress. There are facts even more encouraging which cannot be tabulated in a report. I am happy to believe that the tide of popular interest in educational work is advancing, that the outlook is auspicious, and that the tendencies are in the right direction.

To create and help forward such tendencies is the best work we can do as educators. In our work we must patiently wait for results. As individual growth in healthy youth is not from day to day marked by any conscious change, and is not observable by his associates; so the educational progress which effects society "cometh not with observation." It can only be measured by comparisons made at intervals of time widely separated—by comparing generations of men, not successive years of the calendar. The educational schemes which promise wonderful results within brief time limits, as well as those which dispense with long continued study, voluntarily pursued, may always be regarded with just suspicion. If we can set tendencies in operation, the good results of which will be clearly manifest to the general public in ten, twenty, or thirty years, we are doing well. The man who plants the seed may not live to eat the fruit, but he has benefited his kind, notwithstanding. It is our duty to plant the seeds, to see that the conditions of growth are present, and then confidently trust the results to the unchanging laws which Divine wisdom has established in the universe of mind as well as in the universe of matter. Lord Bacon says: "Man can do nothing else than move bodies to or from each other; nature working within does the rest." It is much the same in regard to the work of the teacher upon the sensitive soul of the pupil. The teacher presents truth in many and varied forms in its relation to the senses and the reason; the child's mind, working under its own laws of apperception, elaborates the facts and truths so presented, and the result is knowledge, power, culture, which after many days transform society, and make the difference between barbarism and civilization.