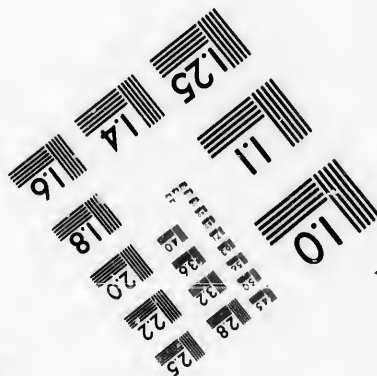
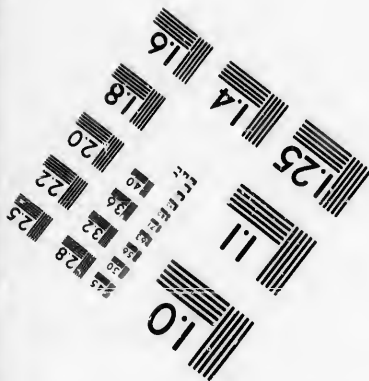
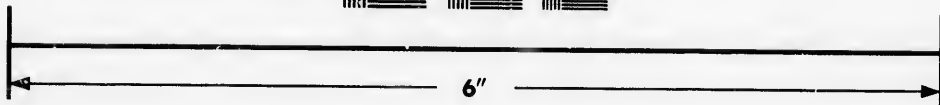
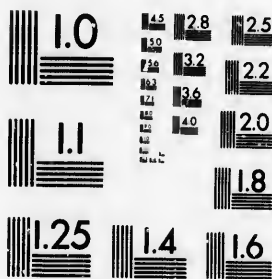


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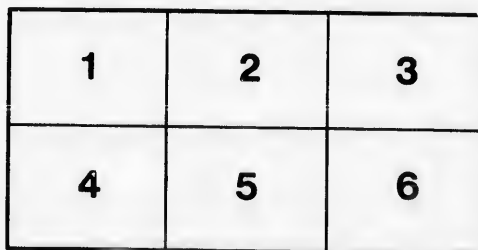
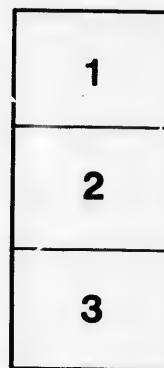
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TEACHERS AND TEACHING

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION FOR THE SOUTH
DIVISION OF THE COUNTY OF WELLINGTON, AT ELORA, 1877.

BY CHARLES CLARKE, M.P.P.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

WHILE, with a feeling of diffidence, I accept the invitation kindly extended to me, an outsider, it affords me pleasure, nevertheless, to comply with the request to say a few words on the present occasion. My only valid excuse for trespassing upon your time is the fact that, for many years, I have been connected with the School Boards of Elora, and have thus, although never acting as a Teacher, come often in contact with Teachers, and so acquired some knowledge of their ways, their wants, their value, and,—will you permit me to add?—their deficiencies. This acquaintance, more or less extensive, with matters in which you feel a common interest, prompts me to make the remarks which I now venture to offer to you.

Let me start out with the statement, that he is sadly behind the times who does not accord to the experienced Teacher that position in the workaday world to which he is justly entitled. As important to us as may be the laborer in the pulpit, or on the newspaper, the toiler at the desk and blackboard is as essential to the world's progress, and ought to be as well rewarded, as the one or the other. Education of the masses, the higher the better, is a necessity which can be no longer pushed aside. Ignorance is now, more than ever in the world's history, an enemy to stability, law, order, and all that is comprehended in the term "good government." He who is behind his fellow-man, in a fair acquaintance with the common branches of an ordinary education, is heavily handicapped in the race of and for life, and apt to be thrown out and distanced. The uneducated are sinking, more rapidly and certainly than ever, into the position of mere "hewers of wood and drawers of water," socially, mentally and politically. To be "without schooling," as the phrase runs, is to be condemned to the galleys for life. to sink into the mud which clings to the wheels of progress, and to be at a disadvantage, at every turn, in whatever this world finds for

man to do. There are those who, adhering to the traditions of the past, contend that education unfits and gives distaste for physical labor, and ought not, therefore, in the interests of a common humanity, to be pushed so far as, with general consent, is now being done. Neither you nor I can have a moment's sympathy with such belief. No unprejudiced man can conceal from himself the fact that education has lightened the toil of the laborer, increased his productive ability, surrounded him with comparative luxuries, and materially increased the purchasing power of his daily wages. That it would be advisable, on any ground whatever, to abandon these fruits of a quickened intelligence, no person, whose opinion you could respect, would venture to assert. The very security of property,—and this is a term fuller of meaning to the average man of to-day, than to him of one or two centuries ago,—renders the cost of education an insurance premium which we must pay, even if we do not extend a very hearty welcome to the tax-collector. To be totally ignorant is to be anomalous: to be taught, something or other, is unavoidable: to live without teachers is impossible. It seems like the assertion of the merest truism to say that a common education is a requisite of civilized society. But, having reached this point, upon which all agree, a divergence of opinion is at once perceptible. What shall be taught? How shall it be taught? By whom shall it be taught? Here are questions which are still, to a great extent, unsolved problems. After a fashion, we Canadians have endeavored to find the answer, and it is not claiming more than is justly due to us as a people, when we assert that our fashion is, in many of its features, one of the best the mind has yet conceived, and worthy, in its chief characteristics, of imitation by older countries. We have set machinery to work, in each Province, by which the education of every child is made possible. We have gone beyond the experimental stage, and although the results of our system may not be so high as the most sanguine expected, they are satisfactory. We know enough of its working to be able to mark its principal defects, and every succeeding year will see obstacles removed, and the way to complete success made clearer. In Ontario its operation has been complicated by difficulties existent before Confederation, and bequeathed to us by the dead Parliament of Old Canada. The cry of "Godless Schools" has, unfortunately, marred what would otherwise have been an almost faultless plan for general education. A large and important class of our fellow citizens has, in consequence, been condemned to remain at a disadvantage, and another generation, at least, must pass before the bad effect of a groundless panic can be, to any extent, done away with. We have dissipated a portion of our intellectual strength, as a people, in a fruitless discussion of the question "What shall be taught?" and split into two unequal, but antagonistic bodies, over what is in reality, whatever it may be in appearance, but the shadow of a grievance. "A school without a Catechism is Godless," cry some, "A school teaching all sorts of Catechisms, and all sorts of Creeds, is an impossibility," reply many others. And thereupon two armies of little learners are formed, one much more largely and liberally officered than the other, and therefore capable of doing much more effective work, and we have combatants where we ought to see united forces. This is the one blot upon our educational scheme, the one great cause of much weakness, the one excrescence of which others, copying our system, would do well to prevent the growth, and the one error in our

Confederation plan which we as a people have cause to mourn. Let us hope that the comparative failure of the experiment may speedily convince its supporters that a common school is better than a separate one, and that the church and the fireside are suited, more than the school-room, to the teaching of the various shades of religious belief upon which good men and women sensibly agree to quietly differ. When that day comes, and when the friends of our semi-religious schools, convinced that education can be safely and much more cheaply given in an institution open to all creeds, agree to cast in their means with those of their fellow-men, and make the common fund do much better work than can be hoped for in its divided state, our school system will more nearly approach what its projectors desired, and proudly boast itself superior to any which man has yet established.

If we are debarred from discussing these questions of how and what to teach, from what may be termed the politico-theological stand-point, we are at full liberty to examine them from what is a more practical one. Let us spend a few minutes in looking at them in this spirit. And, first, a word or two upon "how to teach." To you it may appear presumptuous in one, who has never had practical acquaintance with the art of teaching, to utter a single sentence upon this subject, but you must remember that there are theologians who are not in the pulpit, critics who are not on the press, politicians who are not law-makers, sanitarians who are not doctors, farmers who never touch a plow, financial authorities who are impecunious, and fault-finders who are not perfect. And as much of what is about to be said is intended specially for the ears of new beginners, I trust that the veterans in the ranks will not criticise too closely, because, it may be, nothing of a strictly novel character is placed before them.

If I have never taught, other than as a monitor in my youthful school-days, I have seen many teachers and closely watched their methods when opportunity offered, and this is the outcome of my observation. To teach properly, you must enlist the sympathy of the scholar, magnetize him with kindness, if you so like to word it, and get him on your side. He must become your partizan. He must believe that you know all, even if he does not know all you believe. Your word must be unto him a law, not merely because you are a strict disciplinarian or an efficient drill-sergeant, but because he has no reason to doubt your veracity or to question its reliability. Faith in the teacher is generally the mainspring of success in the student. Implicit confidence, in all said and done by the superior, leads to that attentive and intelligent obedience which is the first element of progress in the inferior. Whatever else you may study, learn to be a good talker. Tell, plainly and earnestly, all that it is necessary to impart. Depend upon yourself more than your book, but first master the book. Spare no pains to acquire all knowledge within your reach upon any given subject, and then think it no trouble to place the gist of all that you know at the disposal of those seeking to know. Do not forget that it is part of your business to learn something new daily, so that you may the better illustrate old truths. And bear in mind the fact, that you must make sure of the perceptive in your pupils before you can be confident that you command the receptive, and, still more, the reflective. Children think, and think correctly and quickly, but they must first have something to think about. "Seeing is believing," with the child as with the man. Fix the eye

of the scholar, and you have his ears and brain. In teaching, use objects, it matters not what, so long as you understand and can describe them, and you at once attract the attention of the learner. Let every reading lesson have, if possible, its most accessible illustration. A common stone can be made to tell the story of the formation of the crust of the earth upon which the school-house stands, the wayside weed will serve as a starting-point for a description of its bounteous covering, a piece of wood, with its marvelous grain and fibre, will exhibit the wonderful process of vegetable growth, and the burning of a pinch of salt in the school-house stove, or the melting of a few grains of sugar in the drinking-cup, will afford a practical lesson in chemistry. There is nothing in or about the school-house which cannot be utilized by the thinking, active teacher. The history of the very chair upon which he sits may be employed to illustrate several of the studies in which his scholars have an interest. He can give a simple chapter from Botany while tracing the progress of the tree, whence its component parts were derived, from the tiny seed, through the growth of years, it may have been for two or three centuries, until the axeman selected it for his purpose. A lesson in History may be given while speaking of the changes upon this continent, which that monarch of the forest has witnessed and survived. Natural History may be brought in to enumerate the many forms in which it has exhibited itself in the surrounding woods and streams. Mechanics may find a place in a description of the wedge-like axe which felled the giant, the leverage of heavy limbs which brought the lofty tree toppling and crashing down to earth, the power of the saw which converted it into boards, and of the turning-lathe which gave them form, and the force of the smoothing plane, the driving hammer, and the binding nail which invested the whole with shape and utility. Dynamics may deal with the force of the falling arm, of the moving sled of the lumberman, and of the buzzing saw. Mineralogy may be made to tell of the source of the iron of the tools, and screws, and nails, and of the paint which covers the whole with ornamentation. The very glue, which plays such useful part in the structure, has its own story to be profitably told. The Maps upon the wall are capable of being invested with new interest, and may have other uses than the primary and important ones for which they were purchased. The paper, and cotton, and printing, and coloring, and varnish which go to their make-up, have biographies, if the expression may be permitted to me, of nearly as great attraction to the young as the life histories of the brave discoverers and voyagers who successively, for ages, have gathered, bit by bit, the knowledge which has enabled the cartographer to lay down so accurately the outlines of the world's continents, and to place, at small cost, in every school, a bird's eye view of the earth's surface. Subjects for the object-lesson need never be wanting, and, however humble, are not to be despised. The coat you wear, the cup from which you drink, the stove which gives heat, the broom which cleans the floor, has each a separate story worth repeating, and an acquaintance with which cannot fail to have its deep meaning for the little listeners to whom you relate it. But you must supplement your stock of familiar objects. The black-board, a comparative novelty when I was a lad, is now an indispensable, and to use it effectively the teacher must not only educate his brain but his hands. As every man can learn to write, so

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every man can and ought to learn to draw. Some make better letters than others, and some will use the chalk more deftly than others, but every teacher ought to be, more or less, an artist. Drawing a house or tree, without being compelled to write under it, "This is a house," or "This is a tree," will yet be as necessary a part of education as learning how to sign a marriage contract, a deed, or a note. Making intelligible representations of everyday objects upon the black-board is one of the pre-requisites to the model teacher. With this ability, common to all, the art of teaching will be materially simplified. Ideas will be conveyed to the student with almost telegraphic facility. The rough way will be made smooth, and the toils of the upward march considerably lessened.

We are on the threshold of the Picture Age. Our books are rapidly becoming as much indebted to the artist as to the author. The pencil will, before long, be as powerful as the pen. There are old-fashioned folks who regret this, but much as I respect old-fashioned folks, and many of their good old-fashioned ways, I cannot join with them in their belief that thought will go out as art comes in. The imagination is as much strengthened by the realistic picture as the incomprehensible poem, and the robust intellect may learn as readily, and retain as permanent impressions from that which is written in artistic short-hand, as from that which is clouded in abstruse terms and elaborate verbosity. Do not understand me as underrating the value of books or their study. The world will never dispense with the alphabet. There are many thoughts, many facts which can be conveyed from mind to mind through the use of words alone. What I am anxious to impress upon you is, the great value of the object as illustrative of the written or spoken idea, and the use of the eye as the most ready avenue to the young brain. So convinced am I of the utility of the Picture method, and of its advantages over the ordinary and laborious committal to memory of mere words, by the juvenile student, that I would willingly see every School Board instructed to subscribe to some one of the many illustrated periodicals of the day,—notably the *London News*, the *Graphic*, or *Harper's Weekly*,—and set every teacher to exhibit and explain its contents to his pupils. I would cover the walls of every school-room, not with maps alone, but with well-selected engravings and chromos, conveying at once to the young mind correct ideas of the manners and costumes of varied peoples, of the vegetation of different climes, of the animals which are scattered over our earth, of modern discoveries and ancient methods, of all that interests and regulates our every-day life. Thus, at a glance, I would familiarize the student with the doings of the past and present, and carry him round the world while sitting at his desk. There are some who may think that this would convert the school-house into a play-room, and do away with the mental discipline which is necessary to the success of the pupil. The idea is erroneous. Boys and girls, young men and women, are sent or go to school with a settled purpose—an intention to obtain ideas which may be useful in their after career. Convey these ideas in as effective a manner as is practicable. Appeal to as many senses as you can, but make a lasting impression. At the best, many of our rural schools are but fitfully attended, and it is impossible to give a liberal education in a few brief intervals of a broken course of study. This is a deplorable fact, but we cannot ignore it, and it supplies us with

the strongest reasons for making the school as attractive and utilitarian as we can, so that the greatest possible good may be effected in a limited time. Therefore would I employ objects, wherever practicable, for the purpose of hastening the mind to something like maturity. And this brings me, rather abruptly, I confess, to another branch of my subject—"What to teach."

The law restricts our teachers in the number of subjects to be taught, but this is not a cause of complaint. The general belief is that the programme of studies is too extensive. My lack of practical acquaintance with the actual work of teaching may account for a want of sympathy with this belief, but I must confess to looking suspiciously upon the cry that the teacher has too much work to do. The programme, however, affords to the head of the school ample opportunity to impart to the public all that he knows. A necessarily large share of attention is given to the three leading branches of education,—reading, writing and arithmetic,—a somewhat disproportionate length of time is devoted to grammar, and geography and history have their claims sufficiently recognized, but with a well-devised scheme of monitorial help for the younger members of the school, even in rural sections where but one teacher is employed, there is surely time every week,—I would willingly believe in every day,—to instruct the more advanced scholars in that useful knowledge which the merest acquaintance with the physical sciences plainly implies. Why it is, appears difficult to determine, but this important branch of education too often seems to receive a willing neglect from the average teacher. To know something of the bodies which we possess, of the world which surrounds us, of the soil upon which we tread, of the growth and decay which are constantly going on, of the air which we breathe, the heat which we enjoy, and the cold which we dread, of the unerring laws which govern ourselves and the Universe, of the progress of invention and discovery, are surely things to be desired. To be able to form a conception, however crude, of the force, be it varied or one, which produces dew and launches the hurricane, which gives life to the vegetating germ and shatters huge blocks of granite, which upheaves continents and congeals oceans, which conveys the telegraphic despatches along the wire or destroys the lofty pine, which carries the sound of the human voice over miles of space or bellows forth the roar of echoing thunder, is to give a fresh fillip to the awakened intellect, and elevate man still higher above the brute. The Book of Life is opened by the modern scientist, with its first pages so simply worded that all may read, tells us of a world which our forefathers knew not, and introduces us to a library of which the volumes are ever varied and endless. That which has, until recently, been the possession of a few, is now within the reach of all, and the teacher is unfitted for his work, and an immeasurable distance behind the times in which he lives, who does not introduce his scholars to the new wonders which the researches of the last quarter-century have made common property to all who care to take the little trouble necessary to possess them. The day has passed, or is rapidly passing away, in which men asked each other of what use are the labors of the diligent student of science. Improved general health, extended means of rapid locomotion, a system of higher and more productive agriculture, an increase of labor-saving machinery, a profitable use of raw products, once waste and worth-

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less, economy in the consumption of material, a cheapening of the cost of production, an intelligent direction of labor, a spread of the little necessities, once luxuries, which make the life of the man of small means more and more endurable, are practical effects of the diffusion of scientific teaching which brings home its value to the fireside of every citizen, however humble the sphere which he may occupy.

The prejudices against science,—always unfounded, but not the less bitter on that account,—are rapidly wearing away. He is no longer heterodox who declares that the earth has revolved on its axis for millions of years, and he is not heretic who expresses the belief that it moves around the sun. Ignorance is yielding everywhere to Truth, and it is difficult to startle us with a novelty, even when it is incomprehensible. We have almost ceased to marvel, and accept the new, however striking, as but a nine days' wonder. The Telephone is a child of three short years' existence; the Phonograph was born yesterday; and yet each seems to be an old acquaintance. There are some in this room who can remember when gas was almost unknown, when railways had not even a legal existence, when the lucifer match was unthought of, and when the telegraph, the daguerreotype, the sewing machine, and the reaper were in the future. Aniline dyes were the products of a few years ago, gun cotton has not lived more than a quarter-century, dynamite is of recent origin, the coal-oil lamp is a comparatively modern improvement upon the tallow candle, chloroform and the other anæsthetics are blessings vouchsafed to us by the scientific investigations of but a generation back, and even the mohair so commonly used was foreign to the grandmothers of many of us. Every decade has its swarm of novelties. There may have been nothing new under the sun in the days of Solomon, but we have fallen upon different times. Soon the cry will be that there is nothing old but Truth and the Planet. The ancient will be constantly thrust aside by the modern, and the time-worn ever displaced by the latest discovery. Can the teacher of such an age afford to ignore Science? A knowledge of its alphabet, at least, is as necessary to him as his acquaintance with the first book of lessons. And to acquire it in the most easy and thorough manner, he must not be satisfied with the written observations of other men. None has better opportunity than he to become an observer in turn, for to none is the book of nature so widely opened. I often envy the rural teacher the many chances within his reach for outside studies. In his morning and evening walk to and from his school, his summer holidays, his unbroken Saturdays, he has more time for such work than has been at the disposal of many of our noted scientists. One sixth, at least, and often more of his waking hours, could be profitably devoted to the studies which have made men eminent as the greatest benefactors of their race. His usefulness would be increased, his health benefited, his mind improved, his intellectual powers strengthened, his whole manhood braced, by such an acquaintance with natural laws as lies within his daily reach, and there is no study which would yield a larger return of pleasure and consciousness of well spent labor.

I have dwelt somewhat lengthily upon this point, because earnestly believing in the value and urgent desirability of greater attention to this practical education, through our public schools, than we have yet been

blessed with. If we are to fill Canada with a prosperous, intelligent race, capable of taking advantage of their great opportunities, and fitted to develop our natural resources to the fullest extent, we must teach something more in our school-rooms than the mechanical art of reading a book, writing a name, and casting up an account. With the teacher, to a large extent, rests the near future of this great country, and of the enormous territory, stretching towards the setting sun, over which we hold dominion, and I do hope that he will thoroughly arouse himself to the importance of the task, and the high mission which he is called upon to fulfil.

Pardon me if, tempted by my opportunity, I venture to suggest another subject to which the teacher may worthily and properly direct his attention. We Canadians are pre-eminently a self-governing people. We are fairly entitled to assert that we have institutions for the protection of life, property, and the general welfare of all classes, second to none which the wisdom of man has produced. Free from the expensive burdens which are necessitated by the circumstances of the old world, we have no standing army to maintain, no favored church to support, no privileged classes to salary, and no enormous national debt to hamper our movements. If we borrow money, it is not to arm against foreign foes, but to build railroads, construct canals, open up our forests, drain our swamps, and make homes for the present and future generations. We are truly governed by the people, through the people, for the people. Here Jack is really as good as his Master, and sometimes better than that little more than proverbial personage. Liberal laws have invested nearly every male with the franchise, and a free education is the birthright of every child. Property is safe, taxes are such as we like to make them, and our moral standard is at least equal to that of the old world. We have our party differences always, our depressions at times, and our comforting grumblings just before an election. But, as a rule, we are happy, contented, and prosperous. The chain which attaches us to the old empire is too light for us to feel as galling or even binding, and to-morrow we could assert our independence if we cared for a distinct nationality, without any to say us nay. We have all the elements of future greatness, a territory almost boundless in extent, and a population hardy, prolific, energetic and enterprising. Four millions to-day, we may be twenty before another half-century passes away. From Fort William to the Saskatchewan, the sun rises and sets daily upon long trains of settlers who go up to possess the land. To the foot of the Rocky Mountains they carry with them the institutions of Ontario. The school-house will rise up wherever a handful are gathered together. Our municipal system will be rapidly adopted in its entirety by the prosperous settlements. Our form of government, with all its seeming intricacies to the uncultivated, will speedily prevail where Sitting Bull and his braves now hold their simple council. Has the teacher nothing to do with all this? Has he no responsibility in the matter? Has he no duty to discharge in preparing the boys of to-day,—the young men of to-morrow,—for the part which thousands of them will be called upon to take? He cannot answer "No," and yet how few of those who mould the future man from the impressible child placed under their care, ever think of explaining to the youthful student, our system of government, the admirable legislative and executive machinery which we possess, and the working of the municipal and school

laws which govern us daily. There are few children in this country, I fear, who can point out the difference of the functions of the Local and Federal Governments, and of the obligations of the one to the other; who know anything of the *modus operandi* of a Law Court; who understand the meaning of "Vote by Ballot;" who have the faintest conception of the modes by which revenue is collected and expenditure checked; who have more than a vague comprehension of the term "The Government;" and who could sit down and write the barest essay upon the ther. "How we are governed." And yet many of them can tell you when Trial by Jury is supposed to have originated, how the Feudal System declined, how, when, and where Magna Charta was signed, what distinguished the reign of the Tudors, and from what cause the union of England and Scotland came about. In a country like this, where almost every boy, in one capacity or other, is destined to become a law-maker, or law-executor, at some period or other of his life, it is surely worth while to teach him how laws are made, and in what fashion administered, and there is no place in which the work can be more thoroughly done than in the school-room.

Having thus cursorily discussed the questions "What and How to Teach," I will turn, for a brief space, to the third point: "By whom should our schools be taught." Our Legislature has answered this query by declaring that none other than "a duly qualified Teacher" shall be employed in our Public Schools, and that the qualification shall be determined by an educational test, impartially administered; and this is, probably, as far as, with a view to keeping up a supply equal to the demand, any statute or regulation can go. We must all admit, however, that it is but a meagre and unsatisfactory proof of any person's fitness for teaching. Literary attainments, alone, valuable and essential as they may be, are but half the outfit of the successful teacher. It is probably true that the best teachers must have an intuitive knack and liking for their profession. However that may be, it is certain that the simple ability to secure a third, or even second-class certificate, is not all that is requisite to make an effective instructor of the lowest class in the school. The brain may be saturated with the contents of books as a sponge with water, and yet unable to communicate its absorbed treasures to thirsty minds. A knowledge of human nature, of men and places, is as important as profound acquaintance with the most valued literary treasures. Some inherit this familiarity with human nature and its workings: some can only acquire it through experience, and intercourse with the world: and it is by that intercourse, rest assured, coupled of course with literary ability, that the really valuable teacher is formed. Circumstances, the want of means, may have prevented the young beginner, the simple apprentice to the profession, from making acquaintance with much beyond the radius of the home circle, but, by the expenditure of a liberal share of the first moneys received from the Trustees, should this self-improvement commence. The methods of communication have been so multiplied and simplified, the cost of travel has been so cheapened, that the recipient of the smallest salary, paid by the most economical Trustees, can now utilize a fair proportion of the summer holidays in learning something of the great land in which we live, and of the bustling, active people of whom we form a part. A few dollars, not more than a fifth of the average income of the worst paid of

our youngest teacher, will carry a careful person to the head of our chain of mighty inland seas: a similar sum will give a view of the glories of the St. Lawrence, and enable the traveller to visit Toronto, Kingston, Montreal, and Quebec, and gaze on the sublimities of the Saguenay: little more will suffice to convey the sight-seer to New York and the ocean, or to Chicago, the Prairies, and the Mississippi. Of the advantages of such a series of summer trips it would be idle to speak. Upon the necessity of some such actual knowledge of what is going on around us it is unnecessary to dwell. Our American cousins understand this better than we. Every summer-day our steam-boats and railway cars are crowded with tourists, from the other side of the lines, and common amongst them are beves of school girls and school teachers. Young women cannot conveniently travel long distances alone, but they can have no scruples which would prevent them from joining a friendly party of their own sex, under the guidance of some experienced person, and so overcoming the little difficulties which might otherwise beset them. And slender purses, under such co-operative arrangement, would not be so depleted, probably, as would be that of the single traveller, for a large party often commands cheaper rates than ordinary and lessens individual expenditure. There are no such obstacles, however, in the the path of the young man. To him the whole Dominion is open, whether as a traveller by rail or boat, or as a pedestrian, and there is nothing to prevent him from seeing every nook and corner of our land. In Germany, the young mechanic is compelled to complete his education as a workman, by years of travel in search of fresh employers, and is not admitted by the State to the full privilege of citizenship until he has finished his term as a wanderer. Here, as we are proud to declare, we are a freer people, and such a law is an impossibility, but it would be well that the higher law of public opinion and common sense should be brought to bear upon the question, and that the teacher should be valued for what we know him to have seen of the world around him, as well as for that which we believe him to have acquired through the school-room. Between two men of equal abilities, one of whom has travelled and the other of whom has staid at home, there is a wide difference in teaching value. He who tells of what he has seen, conveys his ideas to the mind of another much more readily than does he who retails, at second-hand, what he has heard or read. His own impressions are more vivid, his descriptions more natural, his ideas fuller, his ability, and, let me add, desire to convey knowledge more intense. Travel, too, removes that self-adoration,—some call it self-conceit,—which mars the best of us, and which is apt to become stronger in a limited home world in which we are nearly supreme, than in an extended one where we rub coats with better men, and find that we are not taken at exactly our own estimate. It develops our originality, and prevents that parrot-like repetition of others which makes mere machines of us. He who is a simple echo of the very phrases and thoughts of other men, however lofty the plane on which he stands, is an intellectual monkey, an empty chatterer, performing to the often indifferent music of his own barrel-organ. Contact with the world, such as travel affords, which is within the easy reach of every young teacher, and will be availed of by all who care for the work in which they are engaged, does much to correct this growing evil, and is, next to hard study, the best possible educator of

him who specially sets himself apart to become the guide of others.

I have thus, rapidly and imperfectly, surveyed the ground over which I purposed to carry you when setting out to write this paper. I have endeavored to answer the question "How to teach" by dwelling upon the advantage of object lessons over the simple exercise of memory in the committal of words without accompanying ideas. I have sought to impress upon you, in considering "What to teach," that more prominence should be given to the practical than is now the rule. And I have ventured, in looking at the question "By whom shall our children be taught?," to suggest that experience and culture are quite as requisite to the successful teacher as a certificate, of however high a character, obtained before a Board of Examiners of whom none, probably, has become personally acquainted with or even seen the candidate. It would have been possible to go much further in illustration and elaboration, but that would have been unfair to you, and I must content myself with the hope that one or two of the hints roughly thrown out will bear fruit somewhere, and that the work of putting together these words, which to me has been an agreeable if somewhat unsatisfactory task, has not been altogether thrown away.

In conclusion, let me, as an old Trustee, impress two or three other things upon young teachers. You complain that your efforts to make changes, which you regard as improvements, are not always seconded by your Trustees. If this is the case, you are, depend upon it, nearly altogether to blame. Let your employers be convinced that you are in earnest; show by your acts that you are anxious to serve your scholars, and so enlist the sympathies of their parents; don't be afraid of asking boldly for what you want; and, in nine cases out of ten, (and I could almost assure the tenth itself,) any reasonable plan for the advancement of the interests of the school will certainly be adopted by those who hold the purse-strings. As faint heart never won fair lady, so the teacher afraid of Trustees never succeeded in building up an efficient school. Do not become dissatisfied with your profession because the salaries of beginners are low. Remember that, as new beginners, you are but apprentices, and that, generally, you are really not worth more than you receive. A young lawyer, a young doctor, a young preacher is, as a rule, not so well paid as you, and few young mechanics realize such large profits on their year's work, at the commencement of life. Stick to your profession, however, and it will stick to you. It has prizes for those who deserve and struggle on to win them: comfortable homes and competency for those who remain long enough at the work to become entitled to them. And do not abandon study because you have already gained a certain status. When you have your third-class, if you remain at the desk, you *must* obtain a second. After you have gained that second, strive for its higher grade, and then work for a first. He who does this is sure of a money return for his labors, and will never regret that he has become a member of one of the highest of our professions. Do not run away with an idea, common to many, that teaching is the worst paid of all methods of obtaining a living. Look around you and see how many failures there are in life, and then compare notes, and it is venturing little to assert that, when you have completed the comparison, you will find that, numbers considered, the teacher has "better times" than the members of almost any other working class in the

community. That this may be your conclusion, and that, believing it, many of you may remain in the profession which you have deliberately chosen, and be numbered amongst its brightest ornaments, is the earnest wish with which I close this paper.



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THEN AND NOW.

AN ADDRESS

READ BEFORE A PUBLIC MEETING, HELD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION FOR THE FIRST DIVISION OF WELLINGTON,
AT GUELPH, 14TH MAY, 1880.

BY CHARLES CLARKE, M.P.P.

THEN AND NOW! A short text, but full of meaning. Three little words, yet covering all time. Ten letters only, but sufficient to comprise the history of the world. With them, we can travel in imagination from creation to the present, call up visions of the rise and fall of empires, rebuild the foundation and superstructure of every religious system, and trace the progress of commerce, civilization, education and freedom. THEN peoples Eden, sets afloat the Ark, passes with the children of Israel through the desert, reinvests Babylon and Nineveh with barbaric splendor, fills the sacred places of far-off India with mighty images of Eastern Gods and the prostrate forms of devout worshippers, crowds the Coliseum with an excited throng of brutal pleasure seekers, presents to us Athenian athletes, supple in body, every curve in form a line of beauty, contending for the simple prize more valued than gold, carries us to the fierce struggle at Thermopylae, recalls the fortitude of Spartan heroes, re-enacts for us the fall of Byzantium, and brings down from the north the hordes of Goths and Vandals who trampled rising civilization under foot. THEN takes us back to days when toiling thousands, with appliances of which we are ignorant, slowly erected those huge pyramids amidst the sands of Egypt, for purposes unknown to us, theorise as we may, and which stand, defiant of time, vast monuments of man's industry and his imperfect records. THEN marched with Alexander, overwhelming all until he found no more foemen with whom to do or die, was with Hannibal on that Alpine pass whence he looked on fair Italy, a rich prize for ruthless conqueror, and was with Xerxes and Darius when they marshalled their mighty hosts and wrote a blood-red page in history.

THEN reoccupies Stonehenge with priest and devotee, lands Cæsar on the shores of Britain, builds Roman cities in our fatherland, and floats across the German Sea the hardy Saxon adventurers who have given to the world an all-pervading tongue and an all-conquering race. THEN lifts the curtain and exhibits a world of crass ignorance, without a press, without a school for the common herd, without a book other than the costly manuscript, and without instruction other than that which came from priest or clerk. THEN revives that dark period of the world's history when might was right, when superstition was religion, when civil rights were a thing unknown, and society was little better than a chaos from which the mailed hand alone could enforce order and obedience. THEN, too, tells us of strange people overspreading this land in the long ago, building vast mounds, using uncouth weapons, swarming thickly in enormous camps, and leaving vague records from which we painfully spell out an indefinite history. THEN brings before us a picture of small shallops tremblingly feeling their way across the western waste of waters, with despondent crew but heroic master mind, until land was seen like distant haze, and America was discovered. THEN shows bold buccaneers, and greedy hunters of gold, and ruthless slayers of men and women following in their track, but nevertheless opening up the New World to that fertilizing flood of white man's blood which has since overspread it. THEN reanimates the band of austere men and women, who, defiant of fellow-man, and loyal only to their God, braved the dangers of the deep, and the terrors of the savage, for conscience sake, and, landing at inhospitable Plymouth Rock, made their mark in the world's annals, and have lived ever since, and will live, despite their bigotry, in man's grateful remembrance as the Pilgrim Fathers. THEN invokes, in our own land, the shades of men as devout as they, as self-sacrificing as they, as ready to meet death for Christ's sake, as willing to endure hunger and thirst and fatigue for the furtherance of the Cause which they had espoused, and who, carrying their lives in their hands, habited in the simple dress of their order, and armed only with the cross, traversed our then unknown rivers and seemingly boundless lakes in frail canoes, and braved the horrors of the wilderness that souls might be saved and savages redeemed. And THEN portrays to us the struggles of our pioneers, the doubts and difficulties and battle for existence of those who have here preceded us, and the mighty work which loomed before them, enough, to appal the bravest, when the first iron axe rang on the bark and trunk of the first felled tree.

Leaving this THEN, the Past, and turning to the Now, the Present, what a contrast presents itself! Clanking presses, panting engines, clicking telegraphs, talking telephones, have made the whole world kin. The canoe of the savage has yielded place to an ocean marine which has spread its white wings on every sea, or with the heavy smoke of its fleets of throbbing steamers has darkened every sky. There is scarcely a remaining spot upon the earth which has refused to yield its secrecy to the enquiring gaze of pushing travellers, and to pay tribute through man to all mankind. We leave home no longer to discover but to utilize and enjoy, and when we move from place to place we traverse, in a day, a space which would have occupied our grandsires for a week. The comforts of life have increased a hundredfold within the century. We have left the Tinder Box era behind us, and seek illumination in an Electric Light. We have exchanged the,

pack-horse for the railway, the flint-lock for the Martini-Henry; the dash-churn for the dog-power, and the "between" needle for the sewing machine. We save labor in everything, and dignify the laborer everywhere. Even the old names of household things, which were common in our childhood, are becoming obsolete. Rush-bottomed chairs, rushlights, tallow candles, brimstone matches, pattens and clogs, leather breeches, nankeen trousers, and mops, are almost unknown, save by repute from their elders, to the present generation. There is scarcely a young lady under twenty now present who could snuff a candle with a pair of snuffers, at the first attempt, without extinguishing it, and it would puzzle some of the seniors to successfully manufacture a light out of a piece of flint, a bit of bent steel, a few burnt rags, a splint of wood, and a little roll sulphur. Yet with such materials did their mothers go to work to create a fire, or light a tallow dip. And we are growing æsthetic as we become more comfortable. In our cities and towns,—our centres of intelligence,—Art is a rage. Our walls are covered with chromos, or engravings, or photographs, or something better, and there is no home so poor, if the habitation of an intelligent man or woman, as to be entirely destitute of pictures. The very interchange of Christmas, New Year, Easter and Birthday cards, the production of which has grown in a few years from nothing to enormous magnitude, is one of the shapes in which culture is manifesting itself. The love of sound has kept pace with the desire for the gratification of sight. Nearly every house has a musical instrument, of one kind or other, as it has carpeted floors; and a bath is no longer the rare possession of the wealthy only. We live surrounded, every hour, by more conveniences than the wildest flight of ancient Eastern story-teller ever compassed, and our everyday matter-of-course necessaries out-do the luxuries of our not very remote ancestors. Now is the opposite of THEN in nearly every particular; and the world is in almost every respect the better for the change. And while the whole world has had its great illimitable THEN, and has its no less marvellous Now, each of us, in his or her little span of life, has a miniature history. Each, if called upon, could tell a tale of happy youth, of hours of sorrow, of rough-and-tumble contest with the world, of hope deferred and expectation realized, and, let us hope, in every case, of steady progress. Each looks lovingly back to the green fields, the bright flowers, the merry play, and trusted companions of a buried but not forgotten childhood, and dwells with deep pleasure upon the retrospect. Each can claim a THEN which but intensifies the pleasures of the Now. But a consideration of these, and a hundred other kindred memories, would take us into a poetical and sentimental past, while this assemblage must feel that it has more properly to do with a prosaic present.

The THEN of which I have come here more directly to speak to you, is not buried in the dim pages of old-world chronicles, nor is it of what one may term an individual character. It requires no great stretch of imagination; no painful effort of memory, but takes us to a point in Canadian History within the remembrance of some amongst us this evening, and of many inhabitants of this Province not yet past the prime of life.

Little more than thirty years ago, much of the country, now known as the County of Wellington, was a wilderness. The territory north of Guelph was almost unsettled, beyond the Townships of Nichol, and the

settled portion possessed but few residents. In Wellington, the upper tier of Townships had scarcely been entered upon, and names of places now "familiar as household words" were unknown. Such roads as there were had been simply cut through the bush, and had experienced little other improvement than that which the axe, the handspike, the logging chain and fire had afforded. Peel was in the early stage of settlement; Maryboro was almost unknown; Minto was really a *terru incognita*; Luther was, in popular estimation, a vast and irreclaimable swamp; Arthur had a mere handful of settlers; Mount Forest was a nameless and unbroken government reserve for a town plot, covered with a virgin forest; Elora possessed some half-dozen houses; such places as Harriston, Palmerston and Drayton were not even a dream of the future; and the gravel roads, thrifty villages, and smiling farms which now make pleasant travel from the northern bank of the Grand River to the utmost bounds of Wellington, were covered with thick and luxuriant growth of maple, hemlock, elm and cedar. Everything was in primitive shape, and yet the mark of future progress was made, here and there, and coming events cast their shadow. Oxen were far more numerous than teams of horses, and neither could be regarded as plentiful. The axe was more busy than the plough, and regularly prepared more acres for the annual sowing. Money was scarce, produce was low in price, barter was the rule and not the exception, postal communication was defective, wages were poor, and "hard times" were as commonly talked about and as earnestly believed in as to-day, when, measured by the past, the term is comparatively meaningless. There was a feeling of despondency throughout the community, and people were divided as to the cause of the general depression. Some blamed the Rebellion of a few years before; others said that the effects of Family Compactism had not yet died away; and still others attributed all evils to the newly effected Union between Upper and Lower Canada. There is little wonder that, at such a time, schools and schoolmasters were under the weather, and reckoned as but of "small account" by many of our people. Thanks to the energy, however, of a noble few, prominent amongst whom stood Egerton Ryerson, the Government of that day took steps to obtain information as to the system of public education in force in some of the States of the American Union and in Europe, and, taking Massachusetts and Prussia as a guide, enacted a sweeping amendment to the School Act for Upper Canada, in the ninth year of Her Majesty's reign, and put it into operation in 1847. In 1841, the first Common School Law had been passed, and in 1843 it was amended, but the system was defective and unproductive of expected results. Under it, townships were divided into school sections, by Township Superintendents, who were practically uncontrolled, and therefore, in many instances, arbitrary, and these divisions were unequal in size, often unnecessarily small, and frequently unfairly made. The consequence of this state of things was unpopularity of the law, and a pretty general conviction that common schools were too often common nuisances. The Report of the Superintendent of Education, for 1847, tells us that the system produced "miserable school-houses, poor and cheap teachers, interrupted and temporary instruction and heavy rate-bills." In some Districts, before the passage of the amending School Act, 9 Vic. Chap. 20, the District Council had never imposed a school assessment, depending for

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school maintenance entirely upon the small Legislative Grant apportioned to each District, and an equivalent raised solely by rate bills or voluntary contributions. No uniformity existed in the use of Class Books, the Township Superintendent or the Teacher, or even the Parent dictating what should be employed in each particular section. In 1846, no fewer than 13 different Spelling Books, 107 Readers, 35 Arithmetics, 20 Geographies, 21 Histories, and 16 Grammars, were used in our Common Schools, besides varying Class Books on other subjects. The methods of teaching were almost as numerous as the teachers, and followed no specified rule. Sometimes it was by classes, often by individuals, and in other cases by an extensive use of monitors, being generally a mixture of the three styles, and nearly always a higgledy-piggledy, go-as-you-please arrangement, as easy as possible to the teacher, and as unproductive of good results to the pupil as such indefinite work might be fully expected to be. And the character of the teachers, speaking in general terms, and not forgetting many bright exceptions, was not above suspicion. Certificates were granted by Township Superintendents, who too often relieved the charitable, and the District Council, by thrusting into the school-house the ne'er-do-wells, the infirm, the crippled, the sickly and the unfortunate, who, under ordinary circumstances, would have become dependent upon the good nature and benevolence of their fellow-citizens. In one District, a Superintendent, after the passage of the new School Law, was compelled to give notice that he would not grant certificates to any candidates unless they were strictly sober, and that he would cancel the certificates of all teachers who suffered themselves at any time to become intoxicated. And, we are gravely informed, the result was that a majority, not all, of the hitherto intemperate teachers became thoroughly temperate men, and that the incorrigible were dismissed. The quality of the teachers may be guessed at very fairly, it is safe to say, from the salaries paid to them. In 1845, the average was £26 2s, or \$104.40; in 1846, £26 4s, or \$104.80; and in 1847, £28 10s, or \$114, and this, too, for the most part, exclusive of board. Had the schools been kept open during the whole of the teaching months of these years, the salaries would have averaged \$134 in 1845, \$147 in 1846, and \$148 in 1847. It must be borne in mind that, in those days, male were much more numerous than female teachers, so that the smaller amounts generally paid to those of the gentler sex had comparatively little influence in lessening the general average. The parsimony and poverty of the people had much to do, of course, with the quality of the teacher, for men who could obtain higher wages at almost any other occupation, through physical or intellectual superiority, would not waste time and opportunity to earn more than the paltry pittance paid to the pedagogue, simply through philanthropic desire to advance the interests of the rising generation. Says Dr. Ryerson, in the Report to which I am indebted for these facts: "This small compensation of teachers is the great source of inefficiency in the common schools. Persons of good abilities and attainments will not teach for little or nothing so long as they can obtain a more ample remuneration in other pursuits." He adds, in language as truthful, and as worthy of notice to-day, as when it was written: "People cannot obtain good teachers any more than good lawyers or physicians, without paying for their services." And, as he says in the next sentence,

so say we all, and so I am happy to observe are many of our school corporations saying all over the Province: "The intelligence of any school section or corporation of trustees may be tested by the amount of salary they are disposed to give a good teacher." If Egerton Ryerson had said and done nothing more than this, he would have deserved the gratitude of every teacher in Ontario, simply because he had the courage to put upon record a sentiment which, at the time when he used the words, was eminently unpopular, and a direct and stinging rebuke to nearly every school-board then existent. In those days, cheap teachers were wanted, and the supply equalled the demand, while the pockets of the charitable were saved, a semblance of education was kept up, and County Poor Houses were not required so long as every other school-section provided for one, at least, of those who would, in these days, be generally regarded as eligible candidates for admission thereto. The amount of interest taken in educational matters was not evidenced in small salaries alone. The school-house, in its quality, too often matched the teacher. Of 2,572 school-houses in Upper Canada in 1847, 49 only were of brick, and 84 of stone, the others being frame and log. Of the 2,500, 800, or about one-third, were in good repair; 98 had more than one room; 1,125, or less than half, were properly furnished with desks and seats; only 307 were provided with a suitable play-ground; and not more than 163, out of 2,572, had necessary out-buildings. Coming nearer home, we find that the municipalities now comprised in the County of Wellington contained, in 1847, 43 school-houses, of which one was built of stone, 9 were frame, and 33 were log, and the Report states that only 13 were good, 25 were middling, and the balance were inferior. When we remember the standard of "goodness" in those days, when school authorities at Toronto were thankful for small favors in rural districts, we can have some faint idea of the character of the buildings pronounced inferior. It is probable that they came up to the style of accommodation of the Mapleton school, in Manitoba, which I find described in the last report of the Superintendent of Protestant Schools for that Province, as follows: "Found that since my last visit the school-house had been floored; it still required plastering and ceiling and weather-boarding." What sort of a building it was before these improvements were effected, it doesn't require a very active brain to imagine, and when you have the picture in your mind's eye you will have some conception of the pleasures of teaching in the "good old times," of less than half a century ago, in Upper Canada. Returning to 1847, we are told that in the whole of Wellington District, composed of the territory now forming the three counties of Wellington, Waterloo, and Grey, there were 102 schools, of which only 22 possessed good buildings. Let us glance for a moment at the then state of finances of the school corporations in which we feel most interested. Guelph Township, including the Village of Guelph, raised \$507.38 by municipal assessment, for school purposes, realized \$556.75 from rate bills, and received 416.69 from the Legislative Grant, or a total of \$1,480.82, wherewith to pay seven Teachers, maintain, more or less efficiently, ten schools, and afford instruction, good, bad or indifferent, as the case might be, to 517 scholars. The Township of Puslinch was nearly abreast of Guelph, and kept up ten schools, paid 13 Teachers, and had 558 scholars on the roll, at an outlay of \$1,381.86, but it must be

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remembered that if two or three Teachers were employed, at different portions of the year, in one school, they increased the grand total of Teachers for the year. It may have been that, while 13 appear to have been engaged, there were not more, and probably less than 10 employed for the full teaching year. In 1847, Erin had the highest number of scholars of any municipality in the County, having returned a total of 585, in six schools, and with 11 Teachers, at an outlay of \$1039.06. Amaranth was at the foot of the list, with one school, one Teacher, 38 scholars, and an outlay, made up from rate-bill, assessment and legislative grant, of \$68.04. Peel and Wellesley, combined, had one school, three Teachers,—employed at some portion or other of the year,—and spent \$80.52. Nichol, (including Fergus and Elora), Eramosa, and Garafraxa made returns,—the name Garafraxa being spelt with a double r, as I have found it to be in all old official documents,—but Pilkington, Arthur, Maryboro, Luther and Minto do not appear to have had school organization, not even municipal existence, while, of the whole County of Grey, Derby and Sydenham, were alone mentioned in the return. It may be interesting to know—although I am aware, from painful experience, that listening to strings of figures is not the most enlivening occupation in the world,—that the whole amount paid for school purposes, in the County of Wellington, for that year, was \$5,862, of which \$5,763 was given to Teachers, and that the average cost for each pupil taught was \$2.10. One other fact may be adduced which will enable you to form a still clearer estimate of the educational status of Upper Canada at the date referred to. The Chief Superintendent had, in Forms and Regulations issued by him, specified the lowest general standard of qualification for Teachers, but was forced to believe that a much lower standard had been acted upon by School Visitors. These Visitors were Clergymen, Magistrates, and District Councillors,—equivalent to our Reeves,—and any two of them could examine a Teacher, test his or her qualification, pretty much as they deemed best, and grant a certificate, available only for one school and one year, it is true, but nevertheless renewable, and answering every purpose of the certificate of to-day. It is not difficult to imagine a much more easy and varying examination, under such circumstances, than that which an improved system soon rendered necessary, and the quality of Teachers so produced need not be further particularized.

We have thus obtained some glimpse of the THEN of our educational facilities of a generation ago. The picture might be elaborated. It would be easy to fill in details from memory; to tell how the blind oft times led the blind; how the ignorant teacher insured the ignorant pupil; and how "schooling" was frequently a farce, and mere waste of time. But it is more agreeable to spend a few moments in looking at the NOW which has taken its place.

That the Province has made enormous strides in population, wealth, intelligence and importance, during the last thirty years, admits of no doubt. Our forests have disappeared, an improved system of agriculture has followed, manufactories have sprung up, railways have connected every County, a daily press has become an established and indispensable institution, the telegraph has economized time by practically annihilating distance, while numerous inventions and discoveries have created new wants, and

supplied as rapidly as they have made them. Without losing our characteristic love of hard work,—I here speak of everybody in general, and nobody in particular, and purposely avoid all personal allusions,—and that industrial enterprise which springs from it, we have become a reading and much more cultured people. To make money, honestly if possible, but to make it, anyhow and anywhere, is no longer the be-all and end-all of individual existence. While we still regard money-making as the first essential to the solid comfort which ensures human happiness, we begin to see that it is not the only or chief end of man. The fine arts have been fostered, a better literary taste has been established, a higher moral tone prevails, and every man aspires to be something more than a mere animated machine. On all hands there is a firm conviction that the educated man is more likely to win in the business race than the ignoramus, and the school has come to be generally regarded as the main avenue leading to wealth. The breadwinner who can read or write, and so better employ his intelligence, counts for more in daily life than the mere animal man who delves and cuts and plows by instinct. The soldier, even, who has long been an automaton, is, in these days of individual fighting, more highly prized if able to know why he is told to do this and abstain from doing that, and to intelligently put this and that together. The scholar, endowed with physical capacity equal to that possessed by an illiterate competitor, is worth more than he in the factory, the workshop, the store, the mill, the mine, or on the sea or farm. Cultivated brain has a market value, and book learning is no longer despised, or regarded with half contempt, as the mark distinguishing the mere dreamer from the worker. To possess the "Reason Why" is no proof now-a-days of physical and practical inferiority: to know a little of everything, and everything of something, is not now the peculiar privilege of the English Gentleman. Little wonder is there, therefore, that what the school has helped to bring about, should tend to make the school more valued. That such has been its effect, we have but to look around to see. Where in 1847, we, in Upper Canada, had 2,863 school-houses, our last returns show that we possess more than 5,000, and while the number has so largely increased, the advance in value has been in much greater proportion. In 1847 we had, in all Upper Canada, but 49 school-houses built of brick: now we boast of 1,569 built of that material, or over thirty times as many. In 1847, we had eighty-four constructed of stone: now we claim more than 500. In 1847, half of our school buildings were of logs: now not more than a seventh are of that primitive character. There are no returns of money cost of buildings or of amount expended in their erection in 1847, but we find that the expenditure for all school purposes, in that year, inclusive of teachers' salaries, was \$350,000, while for 1877, for erection and repairs of school-houses, fuel, etc., alone, we paid \$1,035,390, and a total for school purposes of \$3,073,489, or, in round numbers, nine times as much as in 1847. The improved financial value of the Teacher is another strong testimony, willingly borne by the people, to their increased interest in education, for, as a rule, a free people will not pay for that which they fail to appreciate. In 1847, there was paid for Teachers' Salaries a total sum of \$310,398. In 1877, the amount was \$2,038,099. In 1847, there were 3,028 Teachers employed, while in 1877 there were 6,468. In 1847, board was often

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given in addition to the nominal salary, and was, in fact, part of the teacher's remuneration. Grant that the Teachers here enumerated as serving in 1847 were employed eight months in that year,—which is more than the average,—and put board at \$2 per week, which was higher than was the average rate in those days,—the average payment to each teacher would not exceed \$170, and this was fully equal to, if not greater than was actually allowed. In 1877, the average amount paid to each Teacher was \$315. The larger amount willingly paid in 1877, for the support of Free Schools, than was unwillingly given in 1847, for the maintenance of rate-supported schools,—for payment was then made under protest, and the school law was exceedingly unpopular, while rate-bills and contributions were nearly everywhere necessary, in addition to municipal assessments, to make up the teachers' salaries,—is yet another proof of the hold which the educational movement has taken upon the judgment and sympathy of the people of Ontario. In 1847, too, pupils were grudgingly taught, at a cost of \$2.80 per head, while in 1877, the average was \$6.20. And when we add to all these things the fact that, in 1847, only 124,829 pupils attended our Common Schools, out of a school population of 230,975, scarcely one in two, while in 1877, out of a school population of 494,800, not less than 490,860 names were entered on the roll, it is needless to say anything further in illustration of the marked contrast between the two periods, of the immense superiority of the present over the past condition of our schools, and of the public opinion which is necessary to their effective maintenance. And the standard of teaching ability, in so far as literary acquirements go, has kept pace with the progress which has otherwise characterized the history of a scholastic generation. We have long got past the period when any two magistrates, any two reeves, or even any two clergymen, could grant permission to teach, and annually invest the teacher with legal status. We subject our examiners themselves to examinations, have uniformity in the character of our examination papers, and propound questions to candidates which fully and fairly test their educational attainments. We have gone beyond *that*, and instituted county Normal Schools—for such our Model Schools may be fairly termed,—at which we require applicants for a certificate to still further establish their fitness for the work upon which they seek to enter. We have not reached perfection, but we have travelled a long distance in the direction in which it lies. We have made every school practically free, built up a High School system which opens up to all seekers after higher education ample opportunity to prepare for the University course, at a minimum of cost, and placed our University upon such a footing that its advantages are not the exclusive privilege of the well-to-do, but are proffered to even the poorest student, who cares to submit to a period of self-denial, and lose a little extra time in early life, for the purpose of securing them. As a people, we have done no more than, probably not so much as we ought to do, with the view of placing educational facilities within the reach of every child born or brought into the Province, but we have, nevertheless, ventured and effected more than has been attempted in many older and more wealthy lands. We have the consciousness of having done our duty, according to our lights. In our long-settled sections of country, the school-house bell is within the hearing, or the school-house itself is within sight of

nearly every family. In newer portions of the Province, wherever half-a-dozen or so of clearances are commenced, in the wilds of Muskoka or Algoma, provision is made for the instruction of the little ones who bless those backwoods' homes. The schoolmaster is abroad throughout the land, and is doing much to ensure a glowing future for our country, and when his work is done, and he is compelled to retire from his labors, we willingly open the public purse, and give to him that which keeps him above absolute penury, and assures him that, while Ontario cares only to help those who possess the disposition to help themselves, she is neither ungrateful nor forgetful. And, seeing all these things, we cannot help feeling that our youthful Province may modestly and yet proudly lift her head amongst the nations of the earth, assured that there are none who can reproach her with neglect of the first and best interests of those little children whom God has entrusted to her keeping.

At such a place as this, and on such an occasion as that which has brought us together, it cannot be ill-timed to offer a few of the suggestions which almost involuntarily present themselves to all who consider this question of improved education in its various aspects. As we have seen, and as the tax-collector annually reminds us, it costs more to educate our children than it did those who paid for schooling a generation ago. But while it costs more, is it worth more? In so far as my own observation enables me to offer an opinion,—and I claim to have paid as much attention to the subject as any ordinary and non-professional man is likely to do,—I find no hesitation in replying in the affirmative. The literary preparation of our teachers is more thorough than it used to be, their literary work is better done, and the literary standing of those placed under their charge is superior to that of the average pupil of former years. This is beyond dispute, and arises partly from the fact that we offer larger salaries than in olden times, and so secure a better class of teachers, and partly from the other fact that the general education of the country is advanced, not merely by an improved system of school management, but by the instructive influences of the press, and the cheap literature of the day. He who runs may read: he who reads at all reads much,—much trash, it may be, but much of something, and in the midst of a pile of chaff there is abundance of wheat for him who winnows it carefully. A young Teacher of 1880 would bemoan a Teacher of the "fifties" and "sixties," as will the Teacher of the "eighties" and "nineties" go far beyond those now daily chalking the blackboard, and holding even the highest second-class certificates. But while this must be frankly admitted, and the improvements, present and to come, gratefully acknowledged and anticipated, it must have struck every careful observer that there is a something lacking, a something wanting, a something to be desired and obtained, if possible, in the system now prevalent. To some it may sound ungracious to pronounce, but to more it would seem cowardly to withhold the firm conviction, and one which is beginning to be entertained in many quarters, that while we have gained in literary ability,—the mere increase of book-learning,—in our instructors, we have seriously lost in the worldly experience, the knowledge of men and things, and the acquaintance with the requirements of everyday life which distinguished many of our old-fashioned Teachers. We grant certificates at too early an age. A year or two ago, we gave to smart,

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precocious girls of sixteen, the right to control a public school, and it was only as yesterday that we saw and condemned that folly by declaring an additional year's knowledge of life necessary to the female teacher. I venture to express the opinion that we are yet under the mark, and that we must still further raise the standard, by enacting that no young lady shall be qualified to teach until she has reached eighteen. I would go even further; were it possible, and prevent any person from taking charge of a school until fully twenty-one years of age. Just now, that would probably be impracticable, but the day will come, and it is not far distant, when it will be found feasible and advisable to place such a restriction upon those seeking certificates. It will be a step in advance when it is declared that while assistants must be over eighteen years, none under twenty-one shall be qualified to assume sole control of any school. We are all familiar with the argument urged against such a change as is here indicated. Young men, worth anything, are anxious to get along in the world,—some of them wish to take the University course,—and of these a portion hope to earn sufficient, as teachers, to supply them with the necessary means. This seems praiseworthy, from a certain standpoint, and is undoubtedly a convenience to sundry promising young men, but no individual has a right to seek his own advancement at the general cost. To place callow youths in charge of our public schools, and to so enable them to acquire a few needed dollars, at the expense of our boys and girls, whose education must, in consequence, be necessarily of an inferior character, and to keep up an exchange of unfledged matriculant after unfledged matriculant, until the ordinary "schooling" of many of the sons and daughters of our farmers is completed, is to throw away much of the advantage which our costly scheme of public instruction ought to confer upon the community, and to get the smallest possible good out of it for the special benefit of a limited number of our citizens. Nor is this the only objection to the employment of very young teachers. For good or ill, character is often moulded in the school-room. Life receives its cue, in many instances, from the first contact with life which daily intercourse at school affords. The Teacher, as largely as the parent,—in a majority of cases, much more largely than the parent,—forms the mind, the morals, and, to some extent, the future of the child. How all important is it that he or she who assumes this vast responsibility should enter upon the charge of these little ones, with character somewhat developed, with some knowledge of the world, and possessed of that self-control which, although it may seem intuitive to a few, can only come with experience to the great majority! I know much of the precocity which enables our boys and girls to carry off certificates at intermediate examinations, and before County Examiners, but I have yet to learn that efficient Teachers are necessarily and at once manufactured out of this material. Teachers may all be heaven-born, but I fear that the heaven-born qualities do not often develop themselves before manhood and womanhood have put their stamp on the recipients of such special advantages. It seems almost unnecessary to mention, in this connection, the unfair competition to which Teachers, whose lives have been devoted, wisely or unwisely, to the profession, are thus subjected, by boys or young men who use the school salary merely as a stepping stone to something higher, whose hearts are never in the work for the work's sake, and who are

ready to leave teaching directly it has netted the coveted purse; or by girls, to whom teaching means \$200 or so a year, until marriage brings relief and ends their sufferings. Don't understand, by this, that the young man is to be condemned, who uses fair means to obtain a proper end, or that the young woman is worthy of disapproval who embraces the first good opportunity which presents itself, for settlement in life, as the helpmeet of a desirable man. On the contrary, the young man is to be commended who avails himself of every legitimate chance offering for his elevation in the social scale, and it must give us all pleasure to remember that many of the best men in our courts, our pulpits, our surgeries, our offices, our editorial chairs, our legislatures, have taught the first book to young beginners in a country school-house. And the young female Teacher, who, intelligently and prudently, assumes the important cares and responsibilities of the married state, seeks that condition which should be and is the chief end of her sex, and has lived to some purpose. Entertaining these convictions, it would be folly to raise objections to the fact that the ranks of our school Teachers are yearly depleted by the marriage of scores of the best-looking and most sensible of the young women who hold certificates. But I *do* object to the regulations which have afforded facilities for crowding the ranks with those, whether male or female, who are too young to teach effectively a school containing pupils ranging from boyhood to adolescence, and who have outbid, in the keen contest for employment, old and tried members of the profession, whose salaries have been reduced by a competition as unfair as it is injurious to the educational interests of the community. And I especially object to the extraordinary facilities afforded to young girls to enter the profession, when it is evident that but a very small percentage expect to remain in it, and make it a life's work. The fact that early marriage is the primary and proper object of the great bulk of our female population, is proof that few female Teachers hope to continue in the teaching ranks, and to me it seems sheer folly to unnecessarily encourage the enlistment of so many in a labor for which they have little real liking, to which but few become attached, and from which all hope to speedily escape. An overstocked market, crowded with applicants for positions which their age and lack of life's experiences render them unqualified to fill, with justice to their pupils or themselves, has nevertheless presented "tempting bargains" to mistakenly penurious Trustees, for "cheap goods," in either the educational or dry goods market, ever find most favor with poor judges of quality. As a consequence, we are not receiving that benefit from our costly school system which we have a right to look for, and many of our young people leave the school which they have been attending as pupils, with a bald possession of mere words and phrases, and destitute of that valuable general knowledge which those invariably possess who have been subjected to the training given by a competent instructor. The only remedy for this undesirable state of things is an elevation of the standard, in the matter of age, and it is to be hoped that the day is not far distant, when our Minister of Education will boldly grapple with the difficulty.

There is another point to which I may be permitted to briefly allude. A cry is going up, in many places, which declares that we are overteaching our young men and women, that education gives a distaste for manual

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labor, that to keep a boy at school, after he is twelve or thirteen years of age, is to alienate him from the farm, and enlist him into the vast army of those who live by their wits, and that the number of mere brain-workers thus created, and of whom the necessary force of hand-workers is thus depleted, is altogether beyond the requirements of the country. While I have no sympathy with the cry of over-education, and believe that the farmer's son can profitably know as much as is imparted to the son of the lawyer or the merchant, I must frankly acknowledge that it is difficult to combat, nay impossible to refute the statement, that too many of our young men, at least, leave the farm in search of an El Dorado which exists only in the pages of the poet or of their own, in this particular, too active brain. That some, who abandon the plough, succeed in finding wealth no farmer could hope for, or would care to enjoy, as the citizen enjoys, even if he found it; that many, flushed with the vigor of rural youth, have entered the professions, and secured a competency; that a few, reared on the old homestead of two or three generations, have reached the highest positions in the state, is beyond contradiction, and we live in country parts proudly point to such instances of the success of the country lad. But it is safe to say that a largely preponderating majority of those, who desert the farm for the city, commit a capital blunder, and that where one succeeds three absolutely fail in securing more than a tithe of the substantial happiness which rural life affords. Our cities teem with wrecks—with ill-paid clerks, broken-down merchants, briefless barristers, needy doctors, and graceless ne'er-do-weels, who followed their father's team when young, and who, had they stuck to the land, would have been comfortable and wealthy farmers now. The itch for something better—a valuable incentive to progress, and its most valuable aid when driving us along in the right path, and therefore not to be despised,—urged them from plenty to penury, induced them to gamble for stakes which but few win, and impelled them into a life for which they were totally unfitted. In too many of such instances, the little learning which the school-house afforded, had been a dangerous thing. Unaffrighted at the warning so pointedly conveyed to all who care to see it, seeing, as they fondly believe, a chance to escape the drudgery of the home-life, and the prospect of affluence without excessive labor, worried often by unappreciative surroundings, our farmers' sons are continually leaving a certainty for an uncertainty, and solid happiness for a mixture of bitter-sweet, and learn, before middle age comes, that they are on the wrong track, and would retrace their steps if that were possible. That young men should desert the farm, when they obtain that glimpse of the outer world which a smattering of education affords, is not surprising. Labor, in any form, unless there is some stimulant, some reward, present or prospective, is not in itself attractive to any, and especially to the young. Again and again—I was about to say almost everywhere, but that statement would probably be of too sweeping a character,—we see how the farmer's son does the work of the hired man, without the opportunities and remuneration of the hired man. It is very well for a parent to assert, as many do, that, until a young man is of age, he cannot legally or reasonably expect wages, from his father, but if by working for others that young man can earn more than board and clothing, and gratify the little tastes, call them "fancies" if you will, which raise him above the animal, and which

are denied to him in home service, he will prefer "hiring out" to staying with "the old man." He sees that he can "do for himself" much more early in life, when "with the stranger's gates," than when remaining in his father's house. And in this country, where labor is valuable, some opportunity or other presents itself to him daily, by which he can obtain more remuneration than his father thinks it right, or advisable to give to him. His position at home is not made specially attractive to him. The "hired man" occupies a higher social position, in many instances, in the eyes of the farmer, than does the farmer's son. If the latter ventures an opinion, he is snubbed: if he suggests improvements, they are decried as new-fangled notions picked out of books: if he asks a holiday, it is given to him grudgingly as the occasional dollar or new suit of clothes. In short, the farmer's son, under majority, is looked upon, now and then, as southern chattels used to be, and finds life about as endurable; and frequently he is treated as little other than an overgrown lad, useful for work if well and closely watched, and profitable inasmuch as he earns more than he eats, drinks and wears. There are noble exceptions. I am dealing, unfortunately, with a too common rule. This mistaken view of the young fellow's worth and position arises often from mere thoughtlessness—from that love of power which is common to all of us, and makes the parent jealous of that increasing mental and bodily strength of the son which gradually loosens control, and from a selfishness which is short-sighted and frequently overshoots itself. The motive is good, in nearly every case. The father must save that the son may have, and the economy practised with regard to that son to-day is dictated by a desire to lay up a store which he may enjoy in the future. But to the lad, who, if possessing ordinary ability, generally appreciates his father's intentions, and is conscious of their object, that future is uncertain, distant, indefinite. He would like to do for himself. He feels that he possesses powers which will enable him so to do, and he kicks against a restraint which he regards as useless and uncalled for. He sees an easy entrance to the outer world through the school-house, and, if ambitious, as most intelligent youths are, he soon convinces the home authorities that he is not much fit for anything higher than a Teacher, and, amidst groans and lamentations against his "laziness," is permitted a year or two of extra study, and succeeds in securing a third-class certificate. And in this manner, I regret to say, many good farmers are lost, and a somewhat smaller number of indifferent teachers is found. A little self-denial, a little give-and-take, a little forbearance, a little more common sense, on both sides, would have prevented the catastrophe, and father and son would have been more happy, if not better men, if they had possessed a more thorough understanding of each other. I but repeat what has been said, over and over again, by many wise men who began life as farmer's boys, when I say to our farmers' sons, "Stick to the farm," and don't forsake it for teaching. There is plenty of material in the world out of which Teachers, and good ones, too, can be made and are being made everyday, apart from your class altogether, but there is *not* a superabundance of that out of which intelligent, go-ahead, full-of-snap, up-to-the-times cultivators of the soil can be manufactured. It is very well to say that teaching is a noble profession, and worthy great efforts and sacrifices, and casts a halo of something or other, and all that sort of

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thing, upon all who enrol themselves in its ranks. Granted. So you may say of the profession of Law, and of Physic, and of the Gospel. So of the profession of the Dry Goods Dealer, of the Plane-driver, the Brick-and-Mortar man, and even of the Legislator—*sometimes*. I have seen men who have conferred dignity upon a wheelbarrow and a whitewash brush. Much depends upon the manner of doing things, and nobility is, after all, a very common quality amongst decent people of all sorts and conditions. You may rely upon it that there is no profession more truly noble than that of the farmer, none more worthy the fullest energies of our best men, none yielding more substantial returns for intelligent labor, none more calculated to call forth our highest qualities, and to enlist more heartily our deepest sympathies. Once I became a farmer, and feel ashamed to confess to desertion from the ranks. There were reasons, however. I went from a draper's counter, in England, to a tough, worked-out, thistle-covered clay farm in the Niagara District, in the days of No. 4 plows, pine stumps, and wheat which invariably turned to ches and cockle, two years out of three, and I didn't succeed in becoming a success. I had a fair eye in my head, but, from some cause or other, never explained and to me yet a mystery, my furrows wouldn't come out straight. The wheat crop averaged from five bushels per acre down to zero. The hay, when there was any to cut, consisted of mullein stocks, thistles, and more mulleins. Potatoes grew, I believe, but the soil about them was so solid that you might have cut it with an axe, and that sort of thing was discouraging to one who had never had much experience in chopping. As an additional attraction, there were wolves on one side of the farm, wild cats on the other, foxes everywhere, and rattle snakes scattered promiscuously about so as to be handy whenever you required them. And, as a capsheaf to all, fever and ague set in with great regularity every July, and stuck closer than a brother until snowfall. Under these peculiar circumstances, I thought it better to leave, and left accordingly. And that comprises much of "what I know about farming." To me it is often matter of regret, nevertheless, that when removing to Wellington, the centre of advanced agriculture in Ontario, I didn't "stick to the farm" as closely as, speaking from a rather odd experience, probably, I now advise every farmer's son to do. Taken all the year round, there is no career so satisfactory, in its general results, as that of the agriculturist, if followed, by an intelligent, industrious and healthy man, and the more thorough his education, the greater his appreciative enjoyment of the direct contact with Nature which rural life affords. Let farmers' sons once learn to respect themselves and their calling, to realize the dignity of labor, and that nothing worth having can be obtained without it, to feel that the more they know the more they can produce, and to be proud of the fact that they belong to a class upon the success of which rests true national prosperity, and they will cease to run from the farm as if it were a plague spot, and help to put an end to the cry of "over-education," which will soon come to be numbered with the weak sayings to which every generation is liable.

There are many other matters to which I should gladly allude did opportunity permit, but having deprecated selfishness, I must avoid inconsistency and a bad example, by but brief encroachment upon time which is fairly claimed by one whom you are anxious to hear. At the risk, however,

of imposing somewhat upon your good nature, I cannot close this paper without giving utterance to one or two other remarks which seem called for at a meeting of Teachers in the County of Wellington. You have been told, again and again, that we live in a transition age, and in the Scientific Era. Our lines are drawn in places and in the midst of things unknown to our forefathers. Each new day seems to be pregnant with some fresh discovery. The Man of Science has gone forth from his study and taken possession of the workshop. The whole world is in commotion in its efforts to cast off the Old and assume the New. Everything is done by rule, but it is no longer the rule of thumb. Fixed laws, immutable truths, scientific facts are the bases of our action, even if we do not always know or acknowledge them, where guess, and conjecture, and chance not long ago prevailed. We are leaving the worn ruts, deep mud-holes and rock-obstructed paths of the Past, for the smooth road-bed and easy progression of the Future. Every workman of to-morrow will know more than the philosopher of yesterday, if our schools and schoolmasters do with ordinary diligence the work which we have a right to expect from them. There never was a time in the world's history when schoolmen had better chance to make their teachings practically useful. But to be able to teach it is necessary to know, and it is the bounden duty of every educator to keep abreast of the wonders in physical discovery which distinguish the present. To do that is to go ahead of the text-book, to see as well as to read, to enquire, to examine, and to take notes of all that is passing around you. Omit no opportunity, therefore, to acquire all sorts of knowledge other than that which is contained in your duly authorized Manuals. Read magazines and newspapers; make yourselves familiar with the thoughts, the inventions, the history of to-day; visit manufactories and public institutions; learn something of the laws by which your country is actually governed, as well as of those which are said to control the universe; live in the world, be of the world, thoroughly know the world; pick up, and stow away any scrap of information which comes within your reach, for in turn every shred will have its use; and bear in mind that you are, in great part, the moulders of future citizens, and that the most useful average member of a community is the man who possesses the largest share of general knowledge. As one of the means to the desirable end which you should ever keep in view, convert your school-room into a museum of things useful as object lessons to those under your care. Every neighborhood contains some novelty, some curiosity, valued simply as an ornament, or valueless as a piece of household lumber, but which may serve to illustrate a lecture on Natural History, or Mineralogy, or Archæology, or some kindred subject. Ask for these in the public name, and you will find many men and women willing to help on the public good either by loan or gift of the desired article. How much may be done in this manner is illustrated by the growth of the School Museum in Elora, which has already acquired a Provincial reputation. Compared with Provincial institutions of similar character, it cannot be described as extensive, but it already occupies a room as large as some school-rooms in this county, and has hundreds of objects crowded for space, and of which the classification is consequently carried out with difficulty. That collection has cost little, comparatively, in the shape of pecuniary assistance, but much in the

labor of its indefatigable curator, but there is ample return in its usefulness, which is demonstrated daily in the pleasurable instruction it affords, not only to the pupils in the Elora Schools, but to the general public, who, during each year, visit it in hundreds. What has been done there, may be done elsewhere—much better in a city like Guelph, than in a country place, and equally well in many other parts of the county. Its utility to the teacher may be readily understood when it is remembered that every reading, every scientific study, every geographical lesson, can be made plainer by the exhibition of some object taken from this admirable collection. There is no village in Wellington, with an enthusiastic teacher to do the work, and with sympathizing teachers in surrounding sections willing to assist in it, which could not, in the course of a few years, obtain similar advantages, and I have thus alluded to the matter in the hope that in the ranks of those now engaged in the education of our children there may be found some willing to imitate that which has been found to be practicable, and to resolve that, before the next meeting of this Association, they will unflinchingly “go and do likewise.” If I hear of one such resolve followed up by action, I shall feel that this paper has not been written without result.

In taking leave of those who have complimented me by such an attentive hearing, permit me to express the wish that the success which has hitherto attended the Teachers' Association for the South Division of Wellington, may mark its future progress, and that, when, a quarter century from this time, some one of the present audience appears before it, in a city containing double or treble the population of the Guelph of to-day, he may be able to draw a more marked contrast between the educational “Then and Now” than that which I have placed before you on this occasion.



