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**HON. W. W. STETSON'S ADDRESSSES**

The Special Feature of the Convention—The President's Address—An Able Paper By Rev. Father Campbell—Last Night's Meeting.

An audience that almost filled the auditorium of the Y. M. C. A. assembled yesterday morning at the 20th annual session of the Teachers' Association of P. E. I. Shortly after ten o'clock the President took the chair and opened the convention with the following address:

**LADIES and GENTLEMEN:**—It is now about time to open our meeting. I am pleased to see such a goodly number of teachers already assembled and to you all I extend a cordial welcome. I feel sure that when all the trains have arrived there will be a large attendance. As our programme has been pretty well filled as regards papers and lessons. I will not take up the time of the Association in making any formal address but will limit myself to a few general remarks and then proceed with the business of the association. There are matters which are left to the Executive Committee from year to year such as, urging the Government to accept a representative of this Association on the Board of Education, to give to the country districts uniform school sessions throughout the year, to revise the school curriculum so as afford a more practical education than at present, to say nothing of the suggestion that steps be taken to increase the teachers' salaries rather than to pare them down below an already small allowance. The Committees appointed to look after those matters for the past year have continued to urge on the Government the advisability of making these proposed changes, but with what success we will know from their reports presently. A movement was begun last year by the Executive Committee to petition the Government to grant a Commission on the question of Education. It was left to a Committee to adopt from the suggestions made by the different members of the Executive a list of changes to be recommended together with the reasons why such a commission should be appointed, but as there was so much diversity of opinion on the matter it was allowed to drop.

I suppose that our chief object in meeting together in convention is our mutual improvement. The elevation or improvement of the Teacher's status is matter of deep concern to all Teachers. Whilst it is well for us in our conventions to emphasize the importance of proper school furniture and apparatus, of courses of study and different methods of teaching, these are all very important but let us not forget that it is the Teacher who is the most important factor in education and without the good Teacher no system of education will be a success. When we consider that the most precious interest of the community are entrusted to the Teacher, how very important it is to all interested in the welfare of the community that competent teachers should be pro-

cured and that they should be supported liberally, so as to be able to make teaching their life work and not a stepping stone to the other professions as it has been in the past. Although I suppose there is very little use in scolding and fault finding I must complain that the people as well as the Government of this province have not shown their appreciation of Teacher's labors during the past few years. My reason for saying this is that the Teacher's salaries instead of being increased are in the majority of cases being gradually lessened. There is not the encouragement for a good Teacher to remain in the profession that there was some few years ago. Then the amount raised by the District for the support of the Teacher was supplemented by an equal amount paid by the Government. We find that there were by far more liberal supplements paid by the people than at present. However it is the ratepayers in the majority of Districts seem to have taken a wrong view of the matter. Instead of paying more when the Government discontinued the supplementary grant they have in most cases voted less. This can readily be seen by the school reports of the past few years. The

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bonus too was an encouragement for the teacher to remain in the profession, but this too has been swept away so that now experience counts for nothing. It is true that the educational expenditure of the Government is large, but the amount contributed by the people for the support of the teachers is disproportionately small compared with that of other places. The money that is paid for education should I think be more equitably distributed than at present, for some teachers receive more pay than they deserve as an incompetent teacher is dear at any price. Since there is no normal training to speak of given at the Prince of Wales College, the young teacher has to spend a considerable time in learning by practice how to teach. I think it quite fair that a probationary third class license should be given to every young teacher for the first year at least. When he has proved that he can do good work his first or second class license as the case may be should be given him and his services ought then to be recognized by a liberal salary—a salary in proportion to the work he does while the salary of the incompetent teacher should be so reduced that he would be compelled to take up some other occupation for which he would be better fitted. It is true that the Government have taken a step in this direction during the past year by making some changes in the grading of schools with a view to cut down the educational expenditure, but I think that it would have been but fair to give the money saved by this deduction to supplement the salaries of those teachers who are doing good work. Trustees too often make little or no discrimination between competent and incompetent teachers and engage those having no experience or ability for the sake of a few dollars difference in salary or some other petty consideration. For this the Teachers are in a great measure to blame, for they cannot expect anything better when they will not scruple to underbid each other and send in applications where none are called for. Again while the indolent teacher is often more popular for a time than the energetic one, on account of his tact in making himself agreeable with the people, still it is the faithful work of the energetic and competent teacher that will tell in the end. It is gratifying to note that the Board of Education are raising the standard somewhat by increasing the requirements for the different classes of

(Continued on the Eighth Page.)

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Ch'town, 25th Sept. 2weod