

ed on the recommendation of a high educational authority ; that they had complied with all the conditions of the department and that they were self-supporting. There were some parents in the City of Toronto who would not send their children to the Public School, and for those children the preparatory classes were a great advantage. Apart from other considerations, he argued that the mere change from the Public School to the preparatory school stimulated a boy to greater diligence who might in a Public School class make no advance at all. He was strongly opposed to the abolition of this branch of the educational system.

Hon. Mr. Harcourt declared the preparatory classes to be an anomaly and an incongruous portion of our educational system. They had been reported against by the inspectors, and were of no real service to the community. Experience had been everywhere against them. They were a refuge for a certain number of pupils who failed to pass the High School examination, and whose parents did not desire that they should return to the Public School. It was imperative that the pupil should not only pass his examination, but should pass it well before he became a full-fledged student at the High Schools.

Mr. Meredith seized the opportunity to remark that the hon. gentleman appeared to concentrate all the power in the Education Department, and not to leave anything to the educational authorities. It had been contended that these classes were an anomaly, but so was Upper Canada College, yet it was felt in this House when the matter came up for discussion that that institution was fulfilling an important part in the educational system of the country. This was the first time he had heard the statement that an inspector had reported against the efficiency of the preparatory school. If the inspector had so reported it was the duty of the department to have it put in writing. The hon. gentleman had no right to act upon the advice of a subordinate and put an end to this institution in Toronto. He asked pathetically whether it was fair to the gentlemen who had been employed in these schools, to the pupils who had gone there, to put an end to this system. The children were sent to these schools entirely at the cost of the people themselves. He saw no reason why the House should interfere with them.

After a few remarks from the Hon. Mr. Gibson, who explained how in Hamilton the system had to be abolished, Hon. Mr. Ross replied to the debate. He remarked that although Dr. Young four or five years ago, or Dr. Ryerson twenty years ago, may have believed these classes to be necessary, the condition of things was different now. What might have been useful then might be entirely out of place now. He did not believe that the City of Toronto was so constituted socially as that any considerable number of people would object to sending their children to the Public Schools, and he saw no reason why special and exclusive privileges should be granted to any class. As to the remarks of the member for London with reference to Upper Canada College, there might be and no doubt were substantial reasons for the maintenance of Upper Canada College, but there were no good and substantial reasons for maintaining these classes.

Mr. H. E. Clarke—Nor for their abolition.

Mr. Ross submitted that they were a relic of the past, and the period of their usefulness was over. Replying to the statement that the individuality of the pupils was interfered with by the system, he pointed out that this was necessarily the result of any system. The only way to avoid interference with individuality was to have separate tutors for each child, but this was an utter impossibility of course. Even under the system, if it were properly carried out individuality would assert itself, and the best scholars would come to the top.

The admission was frankly made by Mr. Wood (Hastings) that to make a preparatory school in his own town would weaken the Public School and would destroy the democratic spirit of the system. He did not pretend to speak concerning the special circumstances of Toronto.

In reply to Mr. White, Mr. Ross said the pupils in this school paid for their own education, and Mr. White proceeded to argue that there was no reason for the abolition of the schools. In amendment to the subsection abolishing preparatory schools, Mr. Clarke moved that this should not apply to any existing school or class. This caused a renewal of the discussion, and Dr. McMahon put closer questions to the Minister as to the cost to the Province of the preparatory school in Toronto, and was told that the school was inspected at public expense, and the building, maintained by public taxes, which it occupied was also inspected at the public expense. There was a good deal of conversational discussion, ending in the putting of the amendment, which was declared lost.

Under the bill it is provided that county pupils attending a High School in a city or town may be charged fees sufficient to pay cost of instruction. At Mr. Meredith's suggestion the Minister agreed to make provision that the fees charged might cover not only the pupil's proportion of current expenses, but also enough to cover a proportion of the interest on capital expenditure as well.

There was some discussion of the proposal to bar municipal councillors from becoming members of Boards of Education, Mr. Meredith and others objecting to it. The Minister defended the principle, being ably seconded and supported by Mr. Stratton. The clause was carried.

The committee rose at 6 o'clock, asking leave to sit again. The House then took recess.

The Estimates.

In the evening the House took up the estimates in Committee of Supply. The early part of the sitting was taken up with the consideration of the salaries of officers in the several departments and those engaged in connection with the administration of justice. In connection with the latter Mr. Meredith urged that means should be found to reduce the cost to suitors of the expense of getting copies of the evidence as taken down by the stenographers. He did not say that the reporters were paid too much—he did not judge of that. But certain it was that paying for this evidence was often a grievous burden upon suitors. Mr. Mowat in replying said he would be glad to hear of a plan which would accomplish the object sought. The stenographers were not paid more than they were fairly entitled to, and he could see no way to reduce the cost to suitors save by having the Province bear a part of the expense now borne by suitors. It might be advisable to consider this plan.

In the course of the consideration of the educational estimates there was a very interesting discussion on kindergarten schools arising out of the new item of a grant of \$3,000 for those schools. In answer to Mr. Gibson of Huron, Mr. Ross gave a brief but comprehensive statement of the principles underlying the kindergarten system and of the advantages presented by it. He also gave a general outline of the development of the system in Ontario, and pointed out how, under the law, any school board might establish a kindergarten. Mr. Stratton spoke of the kindergarten established in Peterboro', and said that the school was now one of the most popular branches of the Public School system of that town. Mr. Meredith wanted to know generally what class of pupils attended the kindergartens, suggesting that anything which made inroads upon the home life of the children more than the present system did was to be regarded with careful scrutiny. One of the disadvantages of the Public School system was the home life of the children was much transferred to the State, the feeling growing among parents that the State should do everything for the educa-

tion of the children, not only mentally but morally. Mr. Ross said that the children who attended the kindergartens, so far as he knew, were of the same class as those who attended the Public Schools. The pupils who had attended the kindergartens made more rapid progress on their entrance into the Public Schools. One of the strongest arguments in favor of the kindergartens was the good they had already done.

The discussion of various matters relating to education was continued until all the estimates under that head were passed. The Opposition criticised freely but not unfairly, while the Minister was always ready with information to explain the item under discussion, showing a marvellous knowledge and detail of the affairs under his charge.

The House adjourned at 10 o'clock.

The City of Toronto Bill.

The meeting of the Private Bills Committee this morning was very largely attended and several important bills were discussed. Of these the most important was that relating to the City of Toronto. The greater part of this measure, including the Macdougall civic reform scheme, was laid over for further consideration and will come up on Tuesday morning next in the same committee. The clauses relating to the Don agreement formed the principal topic of debate. Mr. J. D. Edgar, representing the Belt Line Railway, objected to the confirmation of the agreement with the Canadian Pacific at this time for the reason that the agreement of the city with the Belt Line had not been signed. The Grand Trunk Railway had leased the Belt Line for 40 years, and the new line, when completed, would need to make use of the Don improvements. To ratify the agreement with the C. P. R. at this time might prejudice the position of the Belt Line and of the Grand Trunk. The bill gives authority to make an agreement with the Belt Line, but, as Mr. Edgar stated, this agreement has not yet been made. City Solicitor Biggar objected to postponement, contending that by the agreement with the Canadian Pacific the city had gained some concessions which were important, and desired to have it ratified independently of any other contemplated agreement. The mayor also spoke in opposition to Mr. Edgar. After some discussion both changes were laid over pending the discussion of the Belt Line agreement by the City Council. The clause was passed allowing the expenditure for general waterworks purposes of about \$100,000 surplus over actual expenditure of the amount voted by the citizens in April, 1889, for specific works. On the Macdougall reform scheme, while the reduction of wards elicited no opposition there was strong criticism of the proposed board of control. Ex-Ald. Fleming and Ald. Phillips were present to oppose the clauses. Mr. G. B. Smith and Mr. Tait spoke in opposition to the scheme, directing their criticism mainly to the proposed board of control.

Bracebridge and Trading Lake.

A description of the interesting and important project covered by the petition of the Bracebridge & Trading Lake Railway Co. has already been published. Last evening a large and influential deputation waited upon the Government to urge the claims of this road upon their consideration. Among the gentlemen present were Jas. Sharpe, M.P.P., G. F. Marter, M.P.P., Jas. Glendining, M.P.P., John Feil, M.P.P., Dr. Wylie, M.P.P., W. H. Hammell, M.P.P., E. J. Davis, M.P.P., A. P. Cockburn, manager Muskoka Navigation Co.; H. P. Dwight, manager Great Northwestern Telegraph Co.; from Bracebridge, S. H. Armstrong, ex-mayor; W. W. Kinsey, mayor; Alfred Hunt, reeve; Judge Mahaffy, R. Robinson, James Dollar, Thos. Myers, R. P. Perry, James Boyer, Peter M. Shannon; from McLean, H. McQuarrie, reeve; from Macauley, Geo. Yearly; from Toronto, D. W. Alexander, Walter Beardmore, J. F. Eby, Thos. Milburn; from Penetanguishene, Dr. Spohn, M.P.; from Orillia, J. P. Secord, J. Adams, Longford Lumber Co.; A. A. Mahaffy, barrister.