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Our Ottawa Letter.
The fifth session of the eighth parliament has opened with a genuine sensation, for the debate upon the Address, which last year occupied over four weeks and was participated in by a third of the total membership of the House, was disposed of in two sittings only two on each side in addition to the mover and seconder taking part therein. All that was necessary to be said however was easily compressed into those six speeches. Sir Charles Tupper and Mr. Foster exercised their rights to the full of criticizing every aspect of the Government's policy, doing so much more effectively than if the usual procedure had been followed of reiterating those criticisms through the medium of a score or two of their supporters, until such points as they were able to make were entirely lost sight of in wearisome and unending verbiage. The brief discussion was equally advantageous to the Government, for it enabled the Premier and Sir Richard Cartwright to present a concise, clear-cut and complete answer to their opponents, and the country is now in possession of the real situation from which they will have no difficulty in drawing accurate deductions.

A TWO-FOLD COMPLAINT.
The Opposition leader confined his remarks to a criticism of the Government's policy in the matter of the South African contingent, and that criticism consisted of a two-fold complaint, first that the Government had refused to act until compelled to do so by the unmistakable expression of public opinion, and second that when action was taken it stopped far short of what it should have been, in as much as no provision was made for paying our volunteers out of the Canadian treasury after they arrived at the seat of war.

The Premier replied to each of these charges categorically and conclusively. He reminded the House that he had clearly stated at the first that the Government had no power whatever to spend the public money in military operations without direct authority from the people expressed through their representatives in Parliament, or otherwise; that Parliament, although it had been in session but a short time previously, had not anticipated the emergency that arose, and that it was therefore absolutely necessary that the mandate of the country should be expressed beyond all peradventure before the Government could act. The desired expression of the popular will was given, and instantly action was taken in compliance therewith, and so thoroughly well prepared was the Militia Department for all contingencies, that within three weeks of the call being made, the battalion was mobilized and on its way to the scene of conflict.

CANADA'S TOMMY LOSES NOTHING.
As to the second charge that the Government had fallen short of their whole duty in not undertaking to pay the men after their arrival in Cape Town, Sir Wilfrid laid before the House the correspondence with the Imperial War Office, which showed conclusively that the offer had been made and specifically declined, upon the ground that "Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that the arrangement by which pay at imperial rates should be provided from the imperial exchequer from the date of disembarkation in South Africa should be applied to all the colonial forces." "Therefore" added the Premier, "you have the principle laid down and determined by the imperial authorities and absolutely put outside the pale of discussion." But while it was thus shown to be impossible to meet the entire cost of the contingent as the Government and people would have preferred, the Premier demonstrated how completely his Cabinet were in accord with public opinion, by intimating that it was the intention to ask Parliament to provide a fund sufficient to pay the men the difference between imperial rate and the rate they would receive under Canadian regulations, such moneys to be held in trust for them until they returned, or to be placed at the disposal of their families during their absence.

THEY THREW UP THE SPONGE.
This announcement took the fight out of the Opposition, for it went further than they had at any time suggested and substituted a just and feasible proposition for their impracticable. It had been the intention of the Opposition to propose a grandiloquent amendment, which could have been utilized, they fondly hoped, to some purpose during the next campaign, but the ground was knocked from under their feet, and there was nothing left to make a pretense of fighting for. The result was that when Sir Richard Cartwright sat down, there was not a man to be found on the Opposition side to continue the debate. They retired from the battlefield without even the honors of war, and the motion for the Address was carried without a dissenting voice.

HAIR SPLITTING AS A FINE ART.
Thursday afternoon's sitting of Parliament was enlivened by a somewhat remarkable speech by the leader of the Opposition in which he made a most strenuous effort to repudiate the charge which has been frequently made that the Conservative party, has made a practice of appealing to racial and religious prejudices to secure party advantages. In the course of this endeavor he treated the House to a somewhat extended autobiographical sketch altogether too roving to follow in detail but one instance may be given as a fair sample of the whole. Sir Charles complained that Sir Wilfrid had in 1896 falsely charged him with appealing to the electors of Manitoba to vote for him, an Englishman and a Protestant, rather than for Laurier, a Frenchman-Canadian and a Catholic. That, said the Opposition leader was a gross misstatement of what occurred. The fact was that he was addressing the Conservatives of Manitoba who were deserting him, and he said to them, "Why desert me an Englishman and a Protestant, because of my course on the school question to vote in power a French-Canadian and a Catholic who is pledged to do even more for the minority than I am?" This distinction without a difference was greeted with loud laughter from the Government benches, and it is more than probable that it will be received in a similar manner throughout the country.

Sunday School Work.

On meditating on the subject "How to keep the larger boys in the Sunday School," which was ably handled at Woodbridge Convention by Rev. S. L. W. Harton, I find it is one of the vital and important questions of the day. The topic asserts the assumption that the larger boys are not attending the S. S. as they did, and that is so. Boys have a tendency to leave the S. S. after a certain time, and why? There may be several reasons and in order to remedy the matter we must get to the root of the subject. First, it may be the fault of the primary teachers. They may have neglected to instil into the minds of the little ones the desire to come to Sunday school. Telling them they ought to come to school is not enough; make them feel they ought to come, welcome them there, see that they enjoy coming and if they feel they are wanted there they will willingly come; interest them and you will have attention. Would you change teachers? No! Not if they loved the work, but would see if they could be instructed to do better work. There are many teachers who are capable and would make excellent instructors if they had a better knowledge of the Word of Truth, and the Methods of Teaching; also a knowledge of adapting themselves to the peculiarities of the individual scholar. It is not enough to tell the simple story of the lesson, but tell in such a manner that they can see it applies to them, and they can become interested and benefited by it.

Second—When they advance into another class they may find a difference in the teacher. They may feel a social distinction in the class, as I have noticed that sometimes a class is very reluctant in receiving a younger person as one of them. The teachers' methods of teaching does not interest him and as a final result he is absent. I believe it depends a great deal on the teacher of the intermediate class whether a boy continues going to school or not. And I believe the best teachers in the Sunday School are needed in the intermediate classes, as the training and development of the life depends upon them. Once safely carried through to the Bible class, with the ordinary favorable circumstances, you can depend on their presence at the Sunday School. The best illustration of this that I can think of is the growth and development of the fruit tree. In the nursery a twig of a good fruit is grafted on the roots of a natural tree that is growing there. Then it is watched and protected from damage, and the surroundings are kept in right condition. As it gradually develops there comes a time when it requires pruning and trimming, a certain branch to be shortened, another allowed to lengthen, another trimmed to grow more upright, and the undesirable branches lopped off, until it has formed a fruit tree noble and grand. It takes a skilled person to properly graft this, but the beauty and usefulness all depend on the pruner, who must understand the habits of the different varieties, and the proper method of doing the work. So it is in the Sunday School work. It takes a person of thorough knowledge, both of the Bible and the methods of teaching, to instruct the primary class, and lay in the child the foundation of a Christian life. But I think more devolves on the teacher who has charge of the scholars when they are on the verge of youth, and when nature will shoot out here and there as it does in the fruit tree and must be lopped off. Hence I think it

requires the best we can procure to teach the intermediate classes. Yes, but some say the parents ought to do this. They ought to, but they do not as a rule. It is left to the S. S. teacher and to social influences.

How to overcome these difficulties? is the important question. By having one system of teaching (as they have in the Public Schools), where they teach the elements principally to the smaller ones and applying them as they grow older. By arranging it so that primary teachers may have the best helps in teaching the lesson. By a thorough systematic study of the lesson in general, in detail, in connection. By having an organization so that the teachers some in touch with each other, not only in their own school, but also with those who are in the other schools, under the jurisdiction of the S. S. Association.

How would you accomplish this? By having the S. S. Association appoint a superintendent or teacher, and let him or them get a list of teachers and workers throughout the township and organize a teachers' society at the most convenient places, having the teachers, no matter of what denomination, meeting in one place, thus doing away with the obligation of the teacher to attend their own church at a great distance, when there is one in their own neighborhood. Let them be fully organized, and the most competent worker, layman preferred, as leader. Let them devote a portion of the time to earnest prayer. A portion to the study of the lesson in all its detail. A portion of the time to a primary teacher to show the best methods of teaching the lesson; also an intermediate teacher to the method of teaching the larger classes. This would do away with the unpreparedness and inadaptability of teachers we hear so much about. It would centralize the teaching of the lesson and give a uniform method in the different classes. It would do away with the difference in teaching as the scholar finds in going from one class to another. It will help our boys in the school, fill the classes, especially the Bible class, with earnest, Bible-educated Christians, make our homes in the future as they should be, Christian homes, and lay the formation of a national character such as God delights to see. But we must not forget that we must have God's blessing and Holy Spirit on the glorious work, in order to be successful, but it can be accomplished. With a good, enthusiastic earnest person as superintendent and the best methods that experience has taught us will succeed, we will find that the first decade of the twentieth century will find a grand improvement in our Sunday Schools and will bring in the convention and the teachers closer in union, and the enthusiasm regenerated there will nerve and stir the workers as a current of electricity does all its connections, and the cry amongst teachers of being unable, incapable and unsuccessful will cease, and the tired, despairing worker for Christ will find comfort and encouragement in these meetings if they meet together in the name of the teacher's model, Jesus Christ.

I have written this not to find fault or discourage teachers, but to stir up an interest in normal work and prepare the way whereby teachers can prepare themselves and the lesson thoroughly. May God help us to prepare ourselves to teach the children.

J. H. KEEFER,
Sherwood, Feb'y 8, 1900.

Maple
About twenty-five of our villagers, married and single, drove out to Mr. J. T. Saigeon's at Richmond Hill, last Friday evening, and spent a very enjoyable time. The time passed all too quickly in games and music, and when the time came for going home all returned well pleased with the way they had been received and entertained by host and hostess.

Miss Edith Keffer took part in the programme at the Red Cross Tea at Woodbridge last Friday evening. A large load from here attended the entertainment.

The programme committee of the Literary Society are sparing no pains to make the Patriotic Concert on the evening of the 21st a grand success. Quite a number from here intend going to Vellore to the concert on Friday evening. The debate promises to be very interesting.

Dr. T. Noble of Harvey, Ill., has been here on a visit to his uncle, Mr. J. C. McQuarrie, who is ill. We are glad to state that the latter is somewhat improved.

Mr. J. Parry of Toronto, spent last Thursday with friends in the village. Missionary sermons were preached in the Methodist Church last Sunday, in the morning by Rev. Mr. Ferguson of Newton Brook, and in the evening by Rev. J. Wilson of Bond Head.

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