

JOURNAL OF



EDUCATION,

Upper

Canada.

VOL. XVIII.

TORONTO: MAY, 1865.

No. 5.

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many noble qualities may have spurred on that boy to try for the prize. Perhaps he had parents whom he loved—some indulgent father, some anxious mother—and he knew that the prize would make them so proud. Perhaps he had already conceived the manly wish for independence; he looked on the future, saw that he had his own way to make in life, that it must be made by merit, and that every credit he won at school would be a help to him in the world. Or perhaps he was only animated by that desire of distinction, which is, after all, one of the most elevated sentiments in the human breast; it is that sentiment which inspires the poet and nerves the hero; it was that sentiment which made Nelson see not death but immortality in the terrors of the battle, and cry—"Victory or Westminster Abbey!" It was that sentiment which led the rank and file of the English soldiers up the heights of Alma. They did not hear the roar of the cannon, to whose very jaws they marched on with unflinching tread; they only heard the whisper at their hearts, "And if we do our duty this day, what will they say of us in England?" Ay, and when a boy sits down resolutely to his desk—puts aside all idle pleasures, faces every tedious obstacle—firmly bent upon honorable distinction, it is the same elevating sentiment which whispers to him—"If I succeed what will they say of me at school?" or a dearer motive still,—"What will they say of me at home?"

The late Prince Consort gave some attention to the question of prizes in schools. He had strong and peculiar views on the subject; and in the characteristic memorandum which he drew up in regard to the prize to be given by the Queen in the Wellington College for officers sons, he laid it down as a condition that the prize given by Her Majesty should not be awarded to the most "bookish" boy, to the least faulty boy, nor to the boy who should be the most precise, diligent, and prudent; but to the noblest boy, who should afford most promise of becoming a large-hearted, high-motived man—thus shewing how far he exalted, in his bestowment of prizes, the noble nature over the clever intellect.

With a view to illustrate the practical usefulness of prizes in our schools, we append to this paper a series of extracts from the Local Superintendents Annual Reports for 1864 on this subject. While these extracts demonstrate the importance and influence which the prize books have exerted, they also shew that the mode of granting these prizes has not always given satisfaction. In order, therefore, to remedy the evils complained of on this subject, the Educational Department for Upper Canada has prepared and issued a series of one,

NEW SYSTEM OF MERIT CARDS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF UPPER CANADA.

THE question as to the best method of giving prizes in schools, or of giving them at all, has been so often and so ably discussed by educationists and public men, and in educational periodicals, that we need scarcely re-open it here. Public opinion, however, and the practice in the schools generally, in various countries, and at competitive exhibitions of all kinds, has given an abiding sanction to the principle of awarding prizes to successful competitors. The apparent injustice done in particular cases has often given rise to the question of the inexpediency of the competitive prize system. But these cases are comparatively rare, and form the exception to the general rule, which, in the main, has worked well—has developed talent, spurred on even genius itself, brought out hidden powers of mind, and has contributed immensely to advancement in general knowledge, science, art, and human skill. The rationale of applying the principle of prizes to schools is so admirably put by Sir E. B. Lytton, ex-Secretary of State for the Colonies, and a distinguished writer and scholar himself, that we cannot do better than quote it in this place. At a school examination in Hertfordshire, he thus refers to the influence of prizes in schools:—

"Do not think that when we give a prize to a boy who has distinguished himself, it is only his cleverness in some special branch of study that we reward. Perhaps he was not, in that branch of study, so peculiarly clever; perhaps many other boys might have beaten him if they had tried as hard. No! how