

Now it may be said that there is nothing new in such a curriculum—that it is now in force in all the Public Schools of the Province. I admit there is little that is new in outline. There is much, I think, involved that is new in detail.

For instance, while in every school our pupils are taught to read, that is to name a certain number of words in the order in which they occur, how few are taught to read with expression and force, how few read with any appreciation of the author's sentiments—how few are able to express in their own words the sense of the author! Besides the teacher utterly fails in doing his work properly while teaching his pupils how to read, if he fails to excite in them a love for reading. And it is here perhaps more than anywhere else that we must look for national results from Public School education. It is not what the pupil gets in school that makes the course valuable to him, it is what it inspires. He may get here and there a few scraps of knowledge coupled with a somewhat rugged discipline, all useful in their way, but if to knowledge and discipline could be added the inspiration for further acquisitions—if like the first shilling earned by Astor, which made him a millionaire, his school work could be made the inclination to steady, plodding efforts for more information, then and only then might we say that the teacher has done his work well. To teach a child how to read, as I have indicated, is to give him the key-note not only to all the treasures of science, but to that literature described by Prof. Eliot as "The completest, most various and most splendid the world has ever seen." But reading is not only the key to literature, but also to history. By what species of national depreciation has it arisen that Canadian history is virtually excluded from our public schools? We study the history of Greece and Rome, of England and France, and yet we have failed so far to give a place even to the history of Canada on our examination papers. Apart altogether from the duty we owe to ourselves as a people, I think the study of history should occupy a higher place than it does in the school curriculum. As Prof. Eliot says:—

"If any study is liberal and liberalizing, it is the moderate study of history—the study of the passions, opinions, beliefs, arts, laws, and institutions of different races or communities, and of the joys, sufferings, conflicts and achievements of mankind. Philology and polite literature arrogate the title of the 'humanities;' but what study can so justly claim that honourable title as the study which deals with the actual experience on this earth of social or progressive man? What kind of knowledge can be so useful to a legislator, administrator, publicist, philanthropist, or philosopher, as a well ordered knowledge of history. If the humanity or liberality of a study depends upon its power to enlarge the intellectual and moral interests of the student, quicken his sympathies, impel him to the side of truth and virtue, and make him loathe falsehood and vice, no study can be more humane or liberal than history. These being the just claims of history in general, the history of the community and