

ever, of reiterating the view which is steadily gaining ground among us, that our Public School system as a whole is not adapted to a country which now is, and must long continue to be, mainly given to agriculture and industrial pursuits—that the curricula and examination methods in vogue from the Universities downwards lend themselves too much to a superficial and unpractical education, and that the course of studies, even in our elementary schools, is in many respects too complex, barren and pretentious.

The remedy for these evils, it may be said, does not lie in your power or in mine; yet each of us in our several spheres may do something, be it ever so little, towards the formation of a sounder public opinion which will in due time bear good fruit, and lead to wiser action in this important matter.

No offence will, I trust, be taken when I record my deep conviction that, while the views of professional educators of every degree are worthy of the most respectful consideration, and ought to be fairly represented in any body of men to whom the moulding and guiding of our educational system is committed, yet to place the whole matter almost exclusively in professional hands, would be a mistake of the gravest character.

The natural tendency of the professional mind is to lose sight of the end in the means.

The preacher, for example, is continually tempted to regard the sermon as a work to be appraised as good or bad in itself, forgetting that its value is mainly relative, that it is merely a means to an end, an instrument designed to effect a certain practical result, and that the tool must be adapted to the material upon which it is intended to operate, and must *succeed* in obtaining the desired result. Although taken in itself, it

may be excellently composed and well-delivered, yet as a sermon which neither instructs nor persuades, it may to this audience be *bad* because it is a *dead failure*. Of this latter point the common people, who may know little or nothing of technical theology, are better judges than the preacher himself. There is such a thing as a well-made or an ill-made coat as a work of art, of which point a jury of skilful tailors would be the most competent judges; but to decide practically whether or not a particular coat is really a good one, something more is required. We want to know whether it fits the man it is made for, and what kind of work the man is to do in it, and the price he is prepared to pay. If I am the man who is to wear the coat and foot the bill, I should like to have some little say in this matter.

Thus our educational tailors, however skilfully they may wield the shears, need to be continually confronted with their customers, not however as represented in the persons of ward politicians, or even of members of our Provincial Legislature, but by parents and friends of youth, chosen men and women of blameless character, fair education and good common sense—persons not at all under the domination of professional ideas, but who know what the country requires. Thus it comes to pass that a very plain sort of man, if he has only common sense, and honestly desires the welfare of the school, may make a very useful trustee. But to engage a high-minded educated man, or a refined and intelligent woman, trained and competent and full of that enthusiasm and sympathetic sensibility which mark the temperament of a successful teacher, and then to subject him or her to the pragmatism of intermeddling of some vulgar and illiterate busy-body of a trustee, or worse than all, to some blatant ward