

Under such a system of public instruction, how blessed would Upper Canada be in itself, and how enviable and glorious would she appear in the eyes of civilized nations! What an impulse, what energy, what hope, would it impart to many an obscure youth, whose bosom burns with the latent kindlings of genius, or the incipient strugglings of talent, to feel that the path of knowledge, of distinction, of usefulness, is not barred by so much as a single impost—is a free highway before him, even to the highest attainments which can be reached within the walls of a public university! What love, what pride of country would such an educational system create! What intellectual developments would it produce! What power of knowledge would it bestow!—the real, the noblest power of a great and prosperous and happy people. And how widely would it diffuse that power among all classes of society, with all its unnumbered and inconceivable blessings! And yet its attainment is perfectly within our reach. It requires no elaborate statutes, or complicated machinery, but is involved in the voluntary corporate application of a simple principle, which, like the law of attraction in the material universe, acts upon the whole intellectual world of the body politic, imparting to each mental body a momentum, not according to the accident of conventional rank, but according to the inherent property of merit.

Since meditating these views, we have found, for the first time in the course of our reading, the substance of them embodied in a late *Oration on the Public Education of the People*, by the Rev. THEODORE PARKER, of Boston; and we will conclude by extracting his lucid exposition and vivid illustrations of this subject:—

“To accomplish the public education of the children of the People we need three classes of institutions: free Common Schools, free High Schools, and free Colleges. Let me say a word on each.

“The design of the Common School is to take children at the proper age from their mothers, and give them the most indispensable development, intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious,—to furnish them with as much positive, useful knowledge as they can master, and, at the same time, teach them the three great scholastic helps or tools of education—the art to read, to write, and calculate.

“We need also public High Schools, to take children where the Common Schools leave them, and carry them further on. Some States have done somethings towards establishing such institutions: they are common in New England. Some have established Normal Schools, special High Schools for the particular and professional education of public Teachers. Without these, it is plain there would not be a supply of competent educators for the public service.

“Then we need free Colleges, conducted by public officers, and paid for by the public purse. Without these the scheme is not perfect. The idea which lies at the basis of the public education of the People in a popular government, is this: every man, on condition of doing his duty, has a right to the means of education, as much as a right, on the same condition, to the means of defence from a public enemy in time of war, or from starvation in time of plenty and of peace.

If all are free, Common Schools, High Schools, and Colleges, boys and girls of common ability and common love of learning, will get a common education: those of greater ability, a more extended education, and those of the highest powers, the best culture which the race can now furnish, and the State afford. Hitherto no nation has established a public College, wholly at the public cost, where the children of the poor and the rich, could enjoy together the great national gift of superior education. To do this is certainly not consistent with the idea of a privileged aristocracy, but it is indispensable to the complete realization of a popular government.

“The Common Schools giving their pupils the power of reading, writing, and calculating, developing his faculties and furnishing him with much elementary knowledge, put him in communication with all that is written in a common form, in the English tongue: its treasures lie level to his eye and hand. The High School and the College, teaching him also other languages, afford him access to the treasures contained there: teaching him the mathematics and furnishing him with the discipline of Science, they enable him to understand all that has hitherto been recorded in the compendious forms of Philosophy, and thus place the child of large ability in connection with all the spiritual treasures of the world. In the mean time, for all these pupils, there is the material and the human world about them, the world of consciousness within. They can study both and add what they may to the treasures of human discovery or invention.

“It seems to me that it is the duty of the State to place the means of this education within the reach of all children of superior ability,—a duty that follows from the very idea of popular government, not to speak of the idea of Christianity. It is not less the interest of the State to do so, for then, youths, well born, with good abilities, will not be hindered from getting a breeding proportionate to their birth, and from occupying the stations which are adequately filled only by men of superior native abilities, enriched by culture, and developed to their highest power. Then the work of such stations will fall to the lot of such men, and of course be done. Eminent ability,—talent or genius,—should have eminent education, and so serve the nation in its eminent kind: for when God makes a million-minded man, as once or twice in an age, or a myriad-minded man, as he does now and then, it is plain that this gift also is to be accounted precious and used for the advantage of all.”

NORMAL SCHOOL INSTRUCTION IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES.

By referring to an article on the sixty-eighth page, headed “Chemistry applied to Agriculture taught in Common Schools,” it will be seen that the same steps have recently been taken by the authorities of the N. Y. State Normal School to make the Common School system subservient to the interests of agriculture as have been adopted in Upper Canada during the last two years, and the use of the same Catechism of Agricultural Chemistry and Geology has been recommended with which the Students of our Normal School have from time to time been supplied. This coincidence of proceeding, in a matter of so great practical importance, is a gratifying circumstance, and is confirmatory of the judiciousness of the course which has been almost simultaneously adopted in both countries. We hope the article to which we have referred will be attentively read, and the object of it duly regarded by Teachers who have attended our Provincial Normal School.

We have pleasure also in referring to the Rules (inserted on page 75) which have been lately adopted by the Board of Education in Boston for the future Regulation of the Normal Schools in the State of Massachusetts. Recollecting that the “term” mentioned in these Rules, is a period of three months, it will be seen how similar are the regulations relating to the Normal Schools in Massachusetts to those according to which the Normal School for Upper Canada has been conducted, in regard to the term of receiving candidates, the conditions of continuing them in the School, and the course of studies pursued; with the exceptions, that “moral and intellectual philosophy” has not yet been taught in our Normal School, and agricultural chemistry seems to have been but very partially introduced into the New England Normal Schools. The progress of all these Schools, from their commencement, like that of our own, has been most gratifying; and they are now regarded not only as an important, but vital part of the public school system.

Office and Salary of the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education.—The Boston Common School Journal says—

“The Secretary of the Board of Education (Rev. Dr. Sears) has been made *State Librarian* also. We cannot see the use of this change. The Secretary needed an office, and as no other seemed available, the Library Room was given to him, and the care of the Library superadded to his duties. There seems to be no connection between his proper duties and the care of the Library, and there is reason to fear that the innovation is not an improvement.

“The Salary of the Secretary is raised to 1,600 dollars, in addition to his travelling expenses, and he receives 500 dollars more from the estate of the late Edmund Dwight, (who added that amount annually to the salary allowed by the Legislature to Mr. Mann, and bequeathed the same annual sum to his successor in order to secure the due efficiency of the office.) We do not think this is too much for a competent Secretary, but, as he has an Assistant, and, if he do his best, he can do no more than his predecessor did, it seems rather ungracious in the Legislature of this great State, when only \$1,500 was allowed to Mr. Mann, without an Assistant, and without allowance for travelling expenses, to vote him a remuneration of only \$2,000, when it was ascertained by an inquiry instituted by themselves, against his will, that he had expended more than twice that sum for the State.”