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TRUE EDUCATION.*

TEXT:—"That our sons may grow up as the young plants; and that our daughters may be as the polished corners of the temple."—Ps. cxliv. 12.

IN seeking for words to set forth the nature of human education we become aware of the largeness and complexity of the subject. Human nature is so vast, and the aspects which it presents are so numerous, that we do not easily give an account of its moral and intellectual history and discipline. Thus, we may think of the Church of Christ as the Garden of the Lord; and then the sons of the Church will be as the young plants, or, again, the Church is represented as a Temple, an habitation for God through the Spirit; and then the daughters may be thought of as the polished corners of the Temple, for beauty and ornament.

Here, then, are two widely different conceptions of the work of education, and it is hardly too much to say that the one would be incomplete without the other. If we thought of the polishing of the corner stones of the temple alone, we should be tempted to forget that the subject of education was a living conscious thinking being, whose powers had to be brought out and trained; and if

we thought only of the training of the plant, we might forget that nature needs not only development but repression and restraint.

Among all the differences of opinion which prevail on the subject of education, however, we may find a general cognition of the two principles which are set forth in the imagery here employed, namely, that education must be on the one hand a process of development, and, on the other, a method of discipline. And perhaps if we come to a right understanding of these two principles we shall at least have a starting point from which we may go forth in our work of training up the young of our country in the way they should go.

These questions greatly concern those who are responsible for the working of an institution such as that with which we are connected, and the anniversary meetings of which are now being held; and it may be useful for us, at such a time, to go back to first principles and to ask, in a somewhat general way, what are the methods of education which we can approve and justify from a consideration of the being who is to be educated, and which we are bound to pursue, if we would hope to attain to satisfactory

*A sermon preached by the Rev. Prof. William Clark, LL.D., D.C.L., at the Convocation service, held in the chapel of Trinity College, Toronto, Oct. 19, 1897.