

this magazine during the past four years, on the necessity of technical education being taught in our public schools, we have particularly called upon the working mechanics to arouse themselves from their lethargy and take an interest in the support of these Institutes, which is not only their right but their duty, and the reason why we have made a distinction of grades among certain members of the community, to whom mechanism is more or less essential, is to show that all such are, to some extent, interested in the support of Mechanics' Institutes, and that no feeling of jealousy should arise if a prominent part in them is taken by any one of the above classes.

It has never been our desire, in advocating that mechanics should take the most prominent position in Institutes—which by their very title infer their object—that the benefit of such Institutes should not be equally conferred upon all such as desired to participate in the privilege of receiving instruction in the evening classes, or by lectures; in fact, the non-mechanical class, could by their support and attendance, give great impetus to these institutions. The main point of our argument has been that the mechanics themselves should take greater interest in them, and assert that position to which they are entitled, if not for their own sakes, at least for the children of those who have families. These institutions, therefore, to be a success, should be open not only to the classes before mentioned, but to every member of a community; but not controlled by the majority, should that majority consist of non-mechanics. We insist, as a matter most essential to their success, that those matters which purely and simply appertain to the foregoing classes, should be under the control and management of a representative of each class, and that part of the affairs relating to general literature, might be governed by representatives from those members who were non-mechanics.

To ensure success, however, to Mechanics' Institutes, unanimity among all the members is absolutely essential. They, in fact, should be considered as purely schools of technical instruction and for literary culture. No petty jealousies should be allowed to obtrude to discompose the laudable object for which these institutes are supposed to be created.

The first object to be obtained, therefore, in connection with them should be to endeavour to give technical instruction to those young mechanics whose education had been neglected, or, whose school life had been too short. In dealing with such, we must bear in mind that, from a deficiency in their education, many will grow indifferent from pure neglect, and taste for culture of the mind, if not lost, at least vitiated; and, therefore, not until the evidence of the value of education has forced itself upon the mind by a youth seeing himself outstripped by his juniors, will he begin to realize its value and lament his ignorance. To this class particular attention should be given; the better educated do not require it.

It has been a general complaint by working mechanics, and justly too, that too much money is expended by the Institutes on works of really no practical use to them; this mistake could be easily obviated if the purchase of certain classes of books were limited by rules.

The best way in which Mechanics' Institutes could be made schools of technical instruction, would be for each Institute to have a limited number of classes of real practical utility to that portion of their community

needing technical instruction, and not to attempt too high a flight on higher subjects. We consider that the teaching of writing, arithmetic, English grammar, composition, book-keeping, geometry and penmanship, are subjects in which every boy, who has entered a public school at 8 years of age, ought to be well advanced in at 14 and that these studies particularly appertain to the Department of Education.

But as few of our common schools profess to teach drawing and designing, as relating especially to agricultural and textile fabrics; chemistry, and mineralogy, as relating to our mineral wealth, &c.; the principles and practice of mechanics, &c.—then, if it were possible for Mechanics' Institutes, instead of endeavouring to teach a multiplicity of subjects in their evening classes, to devote their attention purely to the practical education of those neglected in our schools, but yet of the utmost importance to the country, they would really deserve the thanks and support, not only of the Government, but of the whole community. And, if the better educated class of school teachers, who are competent to teach pure science, could be induced to give, at least elementary lectures to the Institutes on science as applied to mechanics; astronomy, electricity, sound, sight, heat, &c., and illustrate their subjects by a few instructive and attractive experiments, it would be the means of making these studies delightful and instructive, and create a taste for study and a yearning after further knowledge. Such lectures have always been found to promote discipline, and to all such lectures the children of public schools, of an age to understand them, should have free access. It would afford an opportunity to bring all classes more closely in union, and create an early taste for scientific study. Such lectures should not, however, be expected to be given gratuitously, and it would be well if the Government would provide apparatus for the purpose, as a necessary adjunct to educational culture.

We have great hopes that now the Institutes are placed under the Educational Department it will have the means of affording more useful co-operation than heretofore.

The propriety of giving prizes to members of Mechanics' Institutes has been discussed by scientific bodies both in Great Britain and this country, as to how far the distribution of prizes has been of service, and the feeling at such discussions has not been as favourable as might have been expected. The great objection has been that too often judges are selected who are quite unqualified for the office, and when we see the crude and untutored exhibition of artistic taste exhibited so often by prominent members of society, it is no wonder that when such men are selected as judges, no matter how conscientiously they may have decided, how very unfair such decisions must be. Doubtless prizes are an incentive to industry and talent, but the success of the system must depend upon the competence and uprightness of the judges. We are not an advocate, however, of giving prizes of money or books; medals of merit that could be worn as a badge, if of ever so little intrinsic value, are more appreciated than a small sum of money—it is something to wear, keep, and be proud of in days thereafter.

There is another class of education that could be taught to both sexes in every town and village in the Dominion, and would prove of great advantage to many an artisan's family in the time of need, and that is the teaching of Home Industry. There is nothing that tends