

hearted struggle to keep abreast of the times, in which the greater number of her faculties are now unsuccessfully engaged. We trust that this awakening may come, and that our successors will aid it more powerfully and wisely than we.

PRACTICAL EDUCATION.

Up to the present the chief aim of our educators has been to train the mind, but the time is not far distant when pupils will be trained to use their hands as well. A step was taken in this direction a few years ago, when teaching of drawing was made compulsory in the public schools. The direct results of such teaching may not be so apparent as those of ordinary school work, but time will reveal them. To learn to be accurate is no small part of primary education. It is, however, to be regretted that, notwithstanding the law, drawing has not been introduced in many of the country schools, and in others, where it has gained a footing, it is so badly taught as to be almost valueless. There is cause, however, for thankfulness, considering the slowness with which the Province of Quebec advances in elementary education. We hope that the work thus begun will be followed up by an effort to promote industrial education—an education that will better fit the poorer, but most important part, of our population for their future work in the world. It is by no means a new, untried scheme, but one that has been successfully carried on for years in Switzerland, Germany and France, and is being fast introduced in Great Britain and the United States. The arguments in favor of technical education have been so well given by more competent writers that we must rest content with glancing briefly at a few, which seem to bear on ourselves and the material advancement of the Province in which we live. With the early immigrants to this Province came artisans—men who had served an apprenticeship of seven years at their respective trades. These skilled workmen found, on their arrival, that their surroundings, the requirements and nature of the material at their disposal were different from those which they had left and to which they had been accustomed. They, therefore, were obliged to adapt themselves as well as they could to their altered circumstances, but were not long in discovering that much of the training previously acquired by them would be worthless. Many of these Britons were either too old or felt too proud to learn of the French settlers, and accordingly made numberless mistakes. Hence these old pioneer craftsmen were only partially successful. This class has now, for the most part, passed away, and their places have been filled by

Canadians who boast that they have "picked up" their trade in a hap-hazard manner without being under the necessity of serving a long apprenticeship, as their fathers did. Among this class are many unworthy of the name of artisans, who are vain enough to believe that a few weeks spent in a shop are sufficient to acquire a mechanical art. These are the botches so common in this Province, whom farmers and merchants employ because they work for low wages. Judging from the manner in which the work is done they are expensive. Let us illustrate by referring to the common trade of masonry. The skillful mason in preparing the mortar to be used summons to his aid the knowledge gained through long experience in dealing with this material, and careful observation as to the effect that the several ingredients exert. It is finally made satisfactorily and used to cement the stones of the wall. To the uninitiated, or careless employer, the botch does equally well. As far as outward appearances are concerned his work compares favorably with that of the more efficient laborer; but the two will not last equally well. The well prepared mortar becomes harder and stronger with age; the badly prepared mixture will soon crumble like a piece of sun-dried clay. We do not advocate the necessity of adopting the old custom of years of apprenticeship, by which the learner often paid too high, in valuable time lost, for the instruction which was so slowly and fitfully meted out to him. Such a custom is not well suited to the wants of a new country like ours. We cannot, however, hope to have skilled mechanics unless means are provided to prepare them for these useful occupations. At present there are many difficulties in the way of the boy or young man who is desirous of learning a trade. If his home is in the country, the village blacksmith, carpenter, mason, machinist, etc., open to him the sole channels through which the necessary knowledge can come, and he will be fortunate if he secures employment with a really good tradesman, and still more so if this tradesman possesses the faculty of imparting what he knows to his apprentice. Such men do things—often well—but they cannot tell another person how to perform the same. They may be good workmen, but are bad teachers. For the most part, men possessing a limited amount of book learning, they are prone to ignore the benefits that have been bestowed on their calling and order through the researches of men who have devoted years of patient and ceaseless labour to testing and experimenting upon the materials which the mechanic uses in construction, and too often blindly follow that capricious guide—the rule of thumb. More than this, sheer practice covers but a small part of their trade,