

Imperial Educational Conference.

The government of Nova Scotia has appointed Professor Robert Magill, of the University of Dalhousie, as an additional representative of the Province to act in association with Dr. A. H. MacKay, Superintendent of Education, at the quadrennial Conference of the Education Departments of the Empire, to meet in London the last week in April. It is to be hoped that the other provinces of Canada will be as well represented as Nova Scotia. The educational problems of the empire are scarcely less important than the subjects that will demand attention at the Colonial Conference of premiers a few weeks later. The closer linking of our educational interests with those of the Empire should not be a matter of indifference to Canadians. It will be a stimulus to our future development to have our educational leaders meet and confer with those from various parts of the Empire. Canada needs the very best that the Empire has to give her in experience and practice, and it is wise to put ourselves in the way of obtaining whatever the conference may have to give. On the other hand, Canada, in its own educational experience, should have something worth giving to other portions of the Empire.

School Houses as Social Centres.

There are many places in which the public school house is used as a social centre, as well as for the educational, recreational and political purposes of the whole neighborhood. And why should it not be so? The public school building, used exclusively for the education of children, is not fulfilling its purpose. It should be used for the educational and social needs of the whole community, and not be open for five or six hours daily, but for eight or ten hours, or more if required. It could be made a free lecture centre, an art gallery and a library for the education of children and older people in the various communities. Its attractions should outweigh those of the saloon or moving picture theatre, and render unnecessary these and their objectionable features. Why do not our communities, our boards of school trustees, our teachers, unite their forces to make a more general and generous use of school rooms

English Literature.

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(Concluded.)

Our poets, from Spenser to Longfellow, have all journeyed far into the Elysian fields of fable; and when Byron calls Rome "the Niobe of nations" and Wordsworth longs to have sight of Proteus rising from the sea, and hear old Triton "blow his wreathed horn," they speak a language which cannot be appreciated by the student who has made no voyage of his own into that enchanted country. Milton's Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity alone contains fifteen allusions to mythologic lore, and who will say that the pupil who has never read enough to know anything of the grace and beauty of Greek and Roman polytheism can possibly feel the exquisite pathos, the simple grandeur of the following:

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale,
Edged with poplar pale,
The parting genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn,
The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In view of the facts of literature it seems a great pity that we send our young people from the high school which completes the education of many of them out into society and life with no knowledge whatever of those grand old myths about the Olympic deities and the poetic aspirations of ancient empires which still breath "the freshness of the early world." It is highly improbable that these students, unless of literary bent, will ever derive much real pleasure and benefit from poetry because it contains too much which gives them the uneasy feeling of non-comprehension. But can we add such an impractical subject as mythology to the already crowded curriculum of our schools? Certainly not. But where will you find the child from six to twelve years at least who is not caught by a fairy-tale, and where can we find fairy-tales so justly famed, so wonderful as these? If this universal love of the unusual in children and the quickness of their memory for what interests them could be taken advantage of by the placing of some of the most famous myths, simply and charmingly told, through the Readers, or even if the