

We had hoped that nothing would have arisen to require us to speak thus plainly of a journal that might have been at one time a very useful periodical; but the charges made against the TEACHER, as well as the

unreasonable lecture read to Inspectors, has compelled us, in self defence, to open a discussion which may close we care not when.

## ATTEMPTING TOO MUCH.

"Do you not attempt too much in your Programme of Studies for Public Schools?" This is a question which has been frequently asked of late, and which we are bound to answer in the affirmative. Our Public Schools are not High Schools. Their design is simply elementary. To aim at anything more is to destroy them altogether. We are aware that hitherto there seemed to be the necessity, in the absence of High Schools, of making our Public Schools something more than elementary, but if this necessity at all existed it has ceased now. The increase of High Schools, the material prosperity of our people, and the facilities for establishing additional High Schools, render nugatory any necessity of this kind that may have previously existed.

Coming down to the design of our Public School system, we find that what it is really expected to accomplish is to furnish us with the facilities for acquiring the first elements of education. The child who has yet to learn his A, B, C's is supposed to be sent there. There he is to be initiated into the mysteries of Orthography, Etymology, Figures, Geography, and such other branches as would give him a fair knowledge of the means by which he might press his enquiries further, and make the acquaintance of the great world around him. He is not expected, however, to acquire the knowledge so useful in after life in our Public Schools, as much as he is expected to possess himself of the keys by which

those stores of knowledge might be opened. The course is merely a preparatory one—a system of training by which the mind is fitted to observe, and to examine, and to store up only that which is necessary as the basis of further study.

Setting out with this idea, we are to confine our Public Schools to those subjects indispensable to the successful prosecution of learning in other and more advanced educational institutions. We must not forget that we are but laying the foundation, and that to attempt to erect a superstructure would be a useless waste of labor and time. To lay this foundation well should be our sole aim.

Looking at our Public Schools as they are now conducted it is evident we are attempting far more than mere elementary work. Indeed, could the "Programme of Studies," laid down by the Council of Public Instruction, be fully carried out, our Public Schools might almost be called *Colleges*, so comprehensive is the course and so varied are the subjects which it embraces. Besides the ordinary rudimentary branches, such as Reading, Spelling, Arithmetic, Writing, Grammar, Geography, and Composition, we have Ancient, Modern, Canadian and English History, Christian Morals, Civil Government, Human Physiology, Natural History, Natural Physiology, Agricultural Chemistry, Botany, Agriculture, Algebra, Geometry, Mensuration and Book Keeping. Here we have a curriculum for