

# OUR OWN FIRESIDE.

## EDUCATIONAL

### Individuality in Teachers.

The ideal school system would be one in which every teacher should have full liberty of action. Individuality would have free play. Each would regulate his own hours, choose his own text-books, use his own appliances, and work out his own ideas and methods. But such an ideal system postulates a host of impossible conditions, amongst them an ideal army of teachers, every man and woman of whom should be not only devoted heart and soul to the profession, but also qualified by culture, experience and personal character to be a law unto himself, and a model for other educators.—J. E. W. in *School Journal*, Jan. 12 '85.

### Women as Teachers.

There can be little doubt that teaching will always rank among the highest branches of employment for women, however useful other branches may be, just as intellectual work must always be classed above manual; for, in spite of increased facilities for study, it does not seem likely that any large number of women will ever make their living by entering the medical or legal professions.—From *Work and Leisure*.

### Public Schools.

We are often told that English public schools are both the outgrowth and the parent of the English character. The battle of Waterloo was won in the playing-fields of Eton, and Tom Brown is the fittest lad to tame the wilderness of Tennessee. By public schools are of course meant public boarding-schools. A public school, according to the English model, is located in a rural district, and surrounded by plenty of open fields. The central buildings are encircled by a number of picturesque villas, in which the masters receive boarders. The education given in these establishments, although supposed to be classical, is mainly "naturalistic." It follows the teaching of Montaigne, Locke, and Rousseau, and aims at training the body and the character rather than the intellect. Those who vaunt the superiority of our system scarcely realize how very modern it is.—OSCAR BROWNING in *Pall Mall Gazette*.

### Character.

I should be very glad to define what character is if I could. Not only is that impossible, but in these days of criticism one must be extremely careful about definitions. It is not passive goodness, or a constant tendency to abstain from wrong action. Conduct in such a case is merely negative. Rather it results from a positive force in one, prompting him to seek the right and do it, come what may. It gives one the keenest sense to distinguish between honor and dishonor, between selfishness and unselfishness, between right and wrong. It is not mere religious sentiment, for one may possess much of this and yet never rise to that height of living to which character belongs. And although there may be much of real character in a man whose religious nature has not yet been awakened, it is unquestionable, that when his heart is once fired by a supreme love of God, and by a burning desire to follow the steps of Christ, his character becomes much more intense and ardent than ever it had been before, much more potent for true living and good conduct than otherwise it could possibly be. Thus much can I say without touching theological differences, which I am studiously striving to avoid.—EDITOR JOHN E. BRYANT, in *Educational Weekly*, Jan. 22 '85.

WORMS often cause serious illness. The cure is Dr. Low's Worm Syrup. It destroys and expels Worms effectually.

### School Journals.

The educational world in Ontario is not likely, we apprehend, to suffer from the lack of press organs whose mission it is to speak for the teaching profession. There are now in the field, in this Province, two weeklies, *The School Journal* and *The Educational Weekly*, and two monthlies, *The Canada Educational Monthly* and *The School Supplement*. Of these the oldest is the *Canada School Journal*, formerly a monthly but quite recently changed to a weekly under the same name. The nearest in age to the *School Journal* is the *Canada Educational Monthly* now in its seventh year. The more recent ventures are the *School Supplement*, a monthly started last year, and the *Educational Weekly* the first number of which has just been published. It may be interesting to our readers to know that the *School Journal* is edited by Professor Wells late of Woodstock Baptist College, the *School Supplement* by Mr. Eaton late of Pickering College and the *Educational Weekly* by Mr. Bryant a well known Whitby man and late Principal of Galt Collegiate Institute. The *Canada Educational Monthly* since the departure of Mr. G. Mercer Adam, its founder, has been edited by our former townsman Mr. G. H. Robinson. Mr. Robinson we hear has just resigned the editorship of the *Monthly* to devote his whole time and energies to the new denominational weekly *The Presbyterian Review*. It has not transpired who is to be his successor in the editorial chair of *The Monthly*. All these School Journals are ably edited and are indispensable to the teaching profession. The general reader, too, will find very much in them that is interesting and profitable.

### Woman at the School Board.

We are glad to notice that women in this Province are beginning to take an active interest in educational affairs. Mrs. J. R. Smith has been elected a school trustee in Brussels, Ont. If it is desirable that women should engage in public affairs there is no field better suited to them than the school board. The success of ladies in the London School Board fully justifies their election in this country.

### Truth and Science.

Scientific education is a training in mental integrity. All along the history of civilization men have imagined what ought to be, and then have tried to prove it true. This is the very spirit of metaphysical philosophy. When the imagination is not disciplined by unrelenting facts, it invents falsehood, and, when error has thus been invented the heavens and the earth are ransacked for its proof. Most of the literature of the past is a vast assemblage of arguments in support of error. In science nothing can be permanently accepted but that which is true, and whatever is accepted as true is challenged again and again. It is an axiom in science that no truth can be so sacred that it may not be questioned. When that which has been accepted as true has the least doubt thrown upon it, scientific men at once re-examine the subject. No opinion is sacred. "It ought to be" is never heard in scientific circles. "It seems to be" and "we think it is" is the modest language of scientific literature.

In science all apparently conflicting facts are marshaled, all doubts are weighed, all sources of error are examined, and the most refined determination is given with the "probable error." A guard is set upon the bias of enthusiasm, the bias of previous statement, and the bias of hoped-for discovery, that they may not lead astray. So, while scientific research is a training in observation and reasoning, it is also a training in integrity.—From "Scientific Education," by J. W. POWELL, in *Popular Science Monthly* for February.

### Brain in Boys.

Every boy is not fit to be sent to college, because it is not every one for whom a college education is beneficial. Properly applied, a college training is a sort of polish that adheres only to material of fine grain. Culture does not adorn every nature, and except with the wealthy, for whom we are not concerned, the expensiveness of a college course should plainly indicate an expectation of some substantial return. Money should not be wasted in turning basswood into clockwork machinery. "You can't fill any cup beyond what it will hold," says James Payn, "and the little cups are exceedingly numerous." There is a homely proverb ascribed to a homely queen to the effect that a silk purse cannot be manufactured out of a pig's ear. When the article is unquestionably of the pig's ear type, then a rich man may spend a fortune if he chooses endeavoring to make something superfine out of it, but the sensible man will devote it to other uses. The professional man, the artist, or the scientist must have some of the elements of success in such professions—there must be some groundwork of ability to rest upon before he enters into an elaborate course of study fitting him therefor.—D. A. O'SULLIVAN, M.A., in January *Educational Monthly*.

### Notes.

To follow the education of the child, is a new training for the parents, who live over again the experience of their youth.

It has been discovered that a Michigan teacher, by a misunderstanding of an anatomical model used in a public school, taught his hundreds of pupils that the heart was the liver, and vice versa.

The midwinter (February) *Century* contains an article by Dr. W. George Beers, of Montreal, on "Canada as a Winter Resort," profusely illustrated by Henry Sandham, with views of tobogganing, curling, racing on snowshoes, etc. The Montreal carnival gives this paper an especial timeliness.

THE GREAT CARNIVAL.—Thousands upon thousands of people from all parts of the continent are going to the Montreal Carnival at the end of January. We hear the *Montreal Daily Star* is bringing out a magnificent Carnival number, something that will eclipse in artistic merit and absorbing interest every illustrated paper heretofore issued in this country. It will have the attack on the ice-palace and defence by the Garrison in all its magnificent pomp and brilliancy; the tobogganing fete in its true natural beauty; the Ice-Condora after the Egyptian models, inaugurated with electric and pyrotechnic illuminations; the mammoth ice lion (British); the great sleigh drive, embracing thousands of superb equipages, and probably the grandest thing of the kind of modern times; the fancy dress entertainments, true to nature; and a magnificent inset-plate of the ice-palace in tints—a fine picture for framing. It will be remembered that there was a tremendous furore over the last year's Carnival number of the *Montreal Star*, the issue running up near a quarter of a million. It is said this year's number will be far ahead of last. The artists are Bengough, Julian, Harris and Haber. The writers, George Murray, John Reade, Dr. Beers, "Adirondack" Murray, and W. H. Turner. *Grip* sends for production in the Carnival *Star* a double page which is said to be the most side-splitting cartoon ever published in this country. Fifteen cents in stamps sent to the publishers, Graham & Co., Montreal, will secure a copy of what is said to be the greatest illustrated paper ever issued in this country.

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