

## \*LITERARY.\*

### EDUCATION.

FEW subjects at the present day occupy a larger share of the attention of thinking circles than education. It is well that this should be so: and indeed the results are apparent in the efforts that are made to make education as general as possible among the masses. Our native Canadian population is probably the best educated of any equally numerous people in the world. But though so much attention is given to education, a great deal of that attention, though well meaning, is very unwise and unphilosophical. We think there is manifested too largely a spirit of revolution—too much hankering after change based on insufficient grounds. This subject it shall be our duty to treat in due time in this article. Let us notice, however, that our education in Canada is essentially British in its character. Our own University is modelled after the University of Edinburgh; University College after the London University; while the calendar of Trinity seems to indicate plainly enough that its model is Cambridge. We think it only right that we should thus reverence the mother-land. Of course we should by no means sink our own individual national character in deference to any nation; but at the same time respect for the solidity of old country scholarship—and this respect certainly well grounded—is sufficiently deep here to justify the course taken by educators in this country. The spirit of this age is certainly very surprising. Not only in politics do we see the most violent anti-conservatism, but even such phenomena as a proposed total subversion of property-holding; while in religion the respect for old creeds—once so firmly held and insisted upon—is fast fading before what is called by its adherents a “larger hope,” or a “better day in Theology.” Discoveries of a most remarkable kind history shall record to the honor of this century; many philanthropic movements are on foot, which are being pushed forward with a vigour perhaps formerly unknown, at least so far as their extent is concerned. This latter characteristic of this century—for such we are inclined to call it—originates, we believe, in the fact that men never so fully and so generally recognized their true position to their fellow-men. It is no part of ours to despise the advances made in this century: such would be conservatism of a most foolish sort; but rather to make it our aim to choose the good and throw away the bad, which seems to be granting all that is due to the spirit of progress, while guarding effectually against undue innovation.

Education may be roughly divided into three divisions—intellectual, moral, and physical. It must not be supposed that we mean that these are absolutely separate; for indeed we believe that as there is a connection among the sciences, so there is a connection more or less direct among the different phases of education.

With reference to intellectual education almost all

people are agreed that it is a desirable thing to have a cultivated mind. True, many people have a very vague idea of what culture means. Yet as a rule uncultivated men do not deny the fact that the educated man has a *something* which they do not possess, and that that *something* is worthy of their respect.

The home is the starting point of intellectual education. By degrees the child grows in mental wisdom as he plays about, learns sundry elementary truths which it is of direct, practical importance that he should know; and thus, by the time he is seven or eight years of age, how different is he from the infant of two or three years! But the wisdom he has gained thus far is but a foundation for future acquisition. Imitation enters largely into his movements at this period of development, and his text book is likely the conduct of his parents. Thus Wordsworth, in his Ode on Immortality, gives us the following picture; and though the stanza is somewhat long, we are satisfied we shall be excused for quoting it *in extenso* :—

Behold the child among his new-born blisses,  
A six-years' darling of a pigmy size!  
See where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,  
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
With light upon him from his father's eyes!  
See, at his feet some little plan or chart,  
Some fragment from his dream of human life,  
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;  
A wedding or a festival,  
A mourning or a funeral;  
And this hath now his heart,  
And unto this he frames his song:  
Then will he fit his tongue  
To dialogues of business, love or strife;  
But it will not be long  
Ere this be thrown aside,  
And with new joy and pride  
The little actor cons another part;  
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"  
With all the persons down to palsied age,  
That life brings with her in her equipage;  
As if his whole vocation  
Were endless imitation.

Such, however, must be his position for a short time. Something of the realities of life are experienced when the tender child is sent off to one of our Public Schools to prepare to play the part Providence has marked out for him in life.

Simple studies occupy his attention for many a year;—he learns to read, to write, and acquires a fair knowledge of Arithmetic and Geography, besides some other elementary subjects.

His next step will be to the High School, where his studies will be more severe, and rightly so, for he is stronger minded now than before, and possibly like many others he may long to dive into greater depths of learning. In the High School he will be expected to advance further