

growth. The seed that we plant in the earth, are we responsible for its growth and perfection? No; our duty is to nourish it, to watch and to wait.

Some of the means to place the pupils in sympathy with their environment.—One great means is to make them accustomed to work, and, I was going to say, plenty of it. But there is an impression among us down by the sea, and I think I have heard it whispered in other parts of Canada, that there are too many subjects taught in the schools; that the teacher is a task-master, and is laying heavy tasks and grievous to be borne on the boys and girls. No, that is not a fact. There may be some lesson-hearers who are hard task-masters, who are undermining the constitutions and stultifying the intellects of the boys and girls by a system of cram and useless memorizing. But teachers are not doing their work that way. They are teaching their pupils to think and to work; and such tasks are too inspiring to be burdens. When you enter a school and see the impress of thought and earnestness on the faces before you, that is an index of the quality of the work that is being done there. And what a source of inspiration that is, is it not? to make every face before you bear the impress of honest effort, of mental activity. Is there any effort to maintain a proper discipline there? No. Was there any effort to secure it at first? Ah, yes, great efforts, efforts that only those twin friends of ours—defeat and discouragement—could help us to maintain and persevere in. That is the kind of discipline that goeth not out except by work and faith. If you have faith that you can do the hardest thing in the world and then set to work to accomplish it, you will remove mountains—of ignorance, disorder, inattention. Now, what is this hardest work? It is teaching the average boy and girl to think—the *average* boy and girl. Let us not be deceived into imagining we are doing this if we are leading along the half dozen or so of bright pupils who would think if left to themselves, or at least who would think in a mediocre way sufficient to satisfy the schoolmaster. Do not the vacant looks of the majority appeal to us to come over and help *them*? How long shall we resist the appeal? How many teachers are there yet jostling and swaying in the crowds along the plains at the foot of the mountain? It is the first step that costs, and they have not taken that step to climb to the tableland above, across which is moving that orderly procession of thinkers and workers, their thoughts and work keeping pace with their orderly march and preparing them to scale the greater heights beyond. Now, what, I repeat, can we do, not only for the average boy and girl, but for those of the lowest capacity,—for the idle, the indifferent, the shirks? Some of them, nay, all of them, perhaps, will do anything ex-