

Education for Our Daughters.

An address delivered by A. W. Sawyer, D. D., at the Anniversary of Acadia Seminary, June 5, 1899.

III.

REFLECTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.

(This portion of the address was abbreviated in delivery on account of the lateness of the hour).

This historical review awakens some reflections and suggestions to which I wish to call attention:

1. It appears that no distinct attempt to raise funds for the education of young women has ever been made by our people. With one or two apparent exceptions this object has always been treated as incidental to some other, and in public estimation some more important, object. Until 1878 it was left to be cared for by the hearts and purses of individuals whose success or failure was a matter of comparative indifference to the general public. When the new College was built the plans included a Seminary. But of the money contributed the College received much the larger share. The only really distinct movement in the interest of the Seminary was made some eight or nine years ago when pledges were taken reaching through a term of years to provide for the interest on the probable expense of enlarging the building. The readiness with which a number of individuals responded to this appeal showed that there was a growing interest in this special object. But the people as a whole had no share in the movement. We ought to acknowledge with thankfulness that the recent "Forward Movement" recognizes the claim of the Seminary to a fixed proportion of the amount that may be received. But still we must remember that of this amount one-third is assigned to the Seminary and two-thirds to the College, and this in face of the fact that there are as many girls in the country as boys, and their claims to a proper education in equity, to say nothing of prudential considerations, is as good as that of the boys. It would be eminently conducive to the health of the whole body if we could awaken a more general interest in this object and make such an addition to its funds as would be worthy of the purpose and manifest character of our Seminary.

2. It is deserving of notice that in only a few instances has a sum as large as five hundred dollars been given by one person to help forward the education of our young women. When funds were solicited for rebuilding the College a gentleman resident in Wolfville subscribed one thousand dollars on condition that a Seminary building should be erected. But this went to the common fund. When the addition was made to the building the chairman of the building committee gave two thousand dollars in aid of the work. A bequest of one thousand dollars provides for the payment of three annual prizes, and a gift of two hundred pounds sterling has founded two competitive scholarships. So far as my recollections reach no other large gift has ever been made distinctly for the Seminary. We are confident that the record of the next twenty years must have a list of more numerous benefactions for this important department of our educational system.

3. Another fact that deserves mention is that the women in our churches have never united in any definite effort for the development of a first-class Ladies' Seminary. During the last twenty-five years there have been organized societies of women in aid of missions in distant lands east and west, Women's Temperance Unions designed to concentrate interest and labor on a variety of objects, Young People's Unions, Orders of King's Daughters devoted to various purposes related to social and domestic life, but the remarkable fact is that in this period especially distinguished by the formation of societies of women for various purposes, there has been no systematic co-operation of mothers to promote the higher education of their daughters. I have pondered over this fact often and long and as yet am not able to interpret it. If the daughters of this generation are educated as they should be under right influences and with right ideals, nearly every good that is sought by these various organizations will have come to the next generation as a matter of course.

I hasten to say that there is one body to which the remarks made above do not apply. The Alumnae Association of the Seminary for their fidelity, zeal and noble purpose in efforts to increase its usefulness are deserving of sincere commendation. Perhaps the spirit and example of the members of this Association may be the stimulus by which the women in our congregations shall be aroused to sympathetic co-operation.

4. Notwithstanding all the discouragements in the case the expansion of interest in the education of young women has been more marked than in any other department. To be convinced of this we need only to call to mind the repeated attempts to establish such schools and their brief existence before 1860, the history of Grande Pre Seminary between '60 and '70, the growth of the female department in connection with Horton Academy between '70 and '80, the ample grounds, comfortable departments and admirable appliances now possessed by Acadia Seminary, its courses of study adapted to the im-

proved standards of the present time and the widely extended sense of the need of such a school shown by the patronage that comes from all parts of these Provinces. For all this we may well be thankful and take courage, for it shows that such a school meets a need the sense of which has become actual and widespread. The history of this growth is itself a ground of obligation to prosecute the work with enlarged plans and increasing devotion.

5. As if unable to apprehend the meaning of these facts of the past and present, occasionally one is heard to say that with our excellent system of public schools the Seminary is not needed, or its chief purpose should be to train students in music and other aesthetic arts. We admit that the cultivation of these arts is desirable on various accounts. But experience has shown that for the truest appreciation of their merits some general culture is necessary. The best results are reached when these studies are not, at least in the early stages, regarded as ends in themselves, but agencies in the processes of a broader education. Even the great conservatories of music and institutes of art are coming to demand of their pupils a higher degree of literary culture and much general knowledge as a condition of advancement to an honorable standing in these institutions. Besides it should be remembered that only a small proportion of young men and women have natural aptitudes that promise any great eminence in these arts. Some degree of proficiency in them is sought by a majority of students because it may give an added grace and charm to matured character and become a source of pure and ennobling enjoyment amidst the toils of later years. The school that recognizes this relation and use of these studies and provides for sound and inspiring instruction in the lower grades of practice is doing all that can be reasonably asked of it and at the same time is preparing the few whose talents give promise that prolonged study may lead to marked distinction and whose time and means will permit it, to pursue these arts amidst conditions specially created as necessary for the attainment of success in the higher grades.

If we claim that the Seminary offers special advantages in respect to the ordinary branches of a general education, we do not intend to discount in the least degree the credit that is due to our public schools. They deserve commendation for what they do, but they cannot do what their limitations forbid. They are creatures of their localities. They do not undertake any supervision of their pupils beyond class hours and the school grounds. They admit of no elasticity in their courses to suit the needs and purposes of students who wish combinations of studies preparatory for some variety of future employments. It is quite possible that it would be greatly to the advantage of a young man and a young woman if they could pursue the advanced courses of study in new scenes and subject to new influences. The comparative success or failure of an educational course may depend on freeing the student from customary associations. The disciplinary effect that comes upon the member of a community whose business is study and whose periods of recreation and rest are wisely arranged with regard to the physical and intellectual well-being of the student is above price. Acquaintance with representatives from various sections tends to the cultivation of respect for people beyond one's home. Association with the numbers thus brought together awakens healthful competition and quickens natural abilities. Learning to live with others, to bear with a becoming spirit the infelicities of social life and share in a proper manner in its obligations as well as its pleasures, has quite as important bearing on one's future usefulness and happiness as knowledge of some sciences. Among these representatives of separated localities friendships and intimacies will be formed that will be counted among the precious treasures of the heart as the years go by. In these respects a school like our Seminary may confidently ask that the privileges it offers may be compared with the privileges offered by the public high-schools and academies.

Indeed, the history of the school, and that of similar schools, is a sufficient answer to the objection that they are not needed. They exist because they answer a demand. As the subject comes to be more thoroughly studied the need will be more widely felt and the number of those seeking advantages of the school will be greatly increased. Such an institution costs something. But with the increasing numbers and wealth in our churches it ought not to be difficult to provide all that is needed for its efficiency and success. That the charges on the pupil may be kept at a low rate, the building should be free from debt and some endowment supplied. An appeal for such an object can hardly be called an appeal to benevolence, for all we do on this line is done for ourselves. Every contribution to this object is so much invested for the improvement of our own people and for fitting them better to meet the social and moral obligations that are accumulating so seriously in these days. To offset the increase of wealth is taken as the standard by which the prosperity of a people should be measured. Wealth has its noble uses, but it often entails degradation on its possessor. A man's life, and a people's life, consisteth not in the abundance of the things possessed. The true life of a people consists in something intangible and that has never been listed at the stock exchange. It is for the dissemination and appropriation of these truer riches that we plead. Because we are firmly convinced that Acadia Seminary is an appointed agency for promoting this higher and better life of our people, we have endeavored to set forth once more its claims on your sympathies, patronage and liberal benefactions.

British Columbia Baptist Convention.

The third annual meeting of the B. C. Convention met from 6th of July to the 12th with the Zion Baptist church, Vancouver, of which Rev. I. G. Matthews is pastor. The number of delegates, the unanimity of the proceeding, and the spirit pervading all, puts to silence all the doubts about the practicability of British Columbia starting a Convention for the further development of the cause of God. Pastor Stackhouse, now of Rossland, so well-known to all MESSENGER AND VISITOR readers, was chosen president, Bro. Wm. Marchant, whose name you sometimes see, but whom you want to meet to appreciate, vice-president. The annual sermon by Pastor Vansackle was full of enthusiasm and encouragement.

Friday afternoon session was given to Home Mission report—the report of the Convention. In it Superintendent Coombs mentioned among other things the following: Churches had been organized at Saanich, Kamloops, Greenwood. The pastors and missionaries in charge of the churches had increased about one-third during the year. The names may be interesting, Stephens and Hinson, of Vancouver; Rose of Nelson; Saunders, of Saanich; Hastings, of Immanuel church, Victoria; Williamson, of Chemainus. There is yet room for others. Four churches had become self-supporting, which added to the two others shows a good ratio of increase. Last year the churches contributed \$744 for Home Mission; this year \$1440—nearly double. Great pleasure is taken in this showing, it is largely due to the labors of our tireless Superintendent Coombs. It is a notable fact that every church contributed and some groups of isolated Christians, without any pastoral labor, sent forward money unasked. The amount foots up about one dollar per member. Nearly all the churches show increase in membership and in every phase of the work report development. Debts are being removed, buildings enlarged and new ones under construction. New Westminster is now laying foundations for a new structure having been unhouseed by the fire last fall. The report in outlining the needs of the work indicates churches to be built, pastors needed, new fields to be explored and opened, and calls for the actual forces in men and money to carry out the suggestions. It is in the visions of some of the leaders to expect \$5000 from the churches next year. It is needed, and all that our friends in the East can give. Deep gratitude is felt for the blessing attending the past year, and such progress indicates decidedly that the B. C. Baptists are at the dawn of a glorious day of service and reward. The work is widening on every hand. Shall we be able to follow all the way.

Foreign Missions are not forgotten, but the promise of \$700 for that work, if not fulfilled, was attempted. W. M. Societies and churches contributed to that work, sending their gifts to the Ontario Board.

On Friday evening a platform meeting was held when Rev. J. E. Coombs, Mr. Gaunce, Superintendent Vining of Manitoba, and Pastor Hinson gave stirring Home Mission addresses. With such a quartette the meeting was a grand success; and when Pastor Hinson's name and speech comes last you will understand that there has been a climax in force and spiritual power.

On Saturday morning O. J. Pineo, M. A., presented the report on Education. The report will enter into the annals of the history of this province. It outlined the need of an institution for higher education, and in a supplement suggested a curriculum for a school beginning with correspondence and developing until a resident College could be founded. The discussion of this report indicated plainly the intense interest taken in it. As there is no College in British Columbia the first in the field with a good staff of teachers and a good location will surely serve a very important purpose. Impetus was given to the work by John Slinggett, a deacon of Saanich church, offering twenty acres of land overlooking Saanich Arm as a site. This is 12 miles from the capital of the province and in close connection by rail. The Education Board elected Bro. Pineo president and gave into his hands the work of initiatory steps. Next year we expect that the site will be chosen and actual work begun.

The reports on B. Y. P. U. and Temperance presented the phases of these departments in a vigorous manner, but along the usual lines Sunday was given to the usual preaching services and an especial Sunday School at Zion church led by Bro. A. B. McNeil of the Calvary Baptist church.

The report of the Publication Board suggested the publication of a monthly paper by the Convention. After a full discussion of cost and management it was resolved to attempt it, and the manner in which a few became responsible for \$200, 400 or 500 subscribers also advertising, the paper already seems a fact. Bro. Hinson has been asked to take the management, should he do so, backed by all the pastors, one of the best of workers will begin its monthly rounds soon. Shall we not see large quotations from it in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR.

It is very evident that it has been a year of beginnings. Look back seventy-five years and you will read the same occurrences in the Baptist annals of the provinces by the Atlantic. Think of your inheritance now and lend us the most sympathetic aid possible. So often we hear the remark, "British Columbia is making history very rapidly," may it be ours under our God's directions to "make history" in line with this purpose, and the spirit of Jesus Christ.

H. H. SAUNDERS.

Saanich, B. C., July 13.