

opinions and sentiments, hastily entertained, are not allowed to take root undisturbed and in silence, and to gain strength from mere length of tenure—that so few writers master the secret of apt and vivid expres-

sion. A man of even the highest ability can no more say, "Go to, I will make a great essay, poem, or novel," than he can say, "Go to, I will make a religion."

(*To be continued.*)

MENTAL TRAINING.

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THE address of Professor Robins, of Montreal, at the recent meeting in Toronto of the Provincial Teachers' Association, does not perhaps on the face of it appear so important as it really is. The greater part of the teacher's energies is directed to the development of the intellectual powers; but any one who has observed teachers while with their classes must have noticed how often a subject, intended to develop one faculty, has been so taught as to develop another faculty.

For what purpose do we teach Grammar? To enable the child to use his mother tongue correctly, is the usual reply; but this is a very subordinate use, and he who teaches grammar mainly for that purpose makes a serious mistake and hence misses the principal, because most important, object to be attained while drilling in this subject—the object being the development of the logical faculty, the reasoning powers.

We have seen a teacher, not a backwoods teacher either, tell a class that a certain word was a certain part of speech, for such and such authors said so, and at examination if the word was not so parsed dire results in the way of "plucking" or low marking would follow. Here all that the pupils knew was that certain doctors, profes-

sors, and authors, by some process unexplained, had arrived at a certain conclusion, and if the pupil crowded that fact into his memory sufficiently long to reproduce it on his examination paper, that would be taken as a sufficient test of his skill in logical analysis, for a test in parsing is truly such.

The comparison of passage with passage, the examination of the relation of that particular word under consideration to the other words in the sentence in order to ascertain what function it fulfils—all these processes, truly logical, were over-looked, and the pupil asked to accept the dictum of certain writers by faith and not by sight. Crutches to walk with, bladders to swim with, are just as well adapted to develop the confidence and strength of the walker or swimmer as this method of training to develop intellectual strength.

In other subjects we see the result of this same method of training. We believe in the tradition of the elders and make for ourselves popes whose infallibility we accept without question. When asked for the reason for the hope that is in us, we quote the church, the party, or the sect. What certain leaders, whether political, ecclesiastical or social, decide, that is wise enough for us, and we exhibit the confidence of the child who said