

tion. It is no easy thing to deal with the problems of mind, and especially of the youthful mind. It is exceedingly difficult to adopt plans suited for the education in the same school room of a group of forty or fifty scholars or students of different antecedents, varied home training and different aims in life. Moreover, it is a thing requiring experience as to how best to communicate knowledge and to produce the greatest results of training. There is probably no field where errors and shortcomings are more common than in the training of youth.

#### TOO NARROW A VIEW.

All of us are apt to take too narrow a view of what education is. The phrase already quoted, "a good English education" has now a pretty well accepted meaning, and signifies the modicum of knowledge and training required by a boy of say fourteen years of age enabling him to write a good hand, read and spell English fairly well, make calculations of an ordinary kind, work out problems of interest, measurements and the like, with some acquaintance with general geography and school history. But is that enough with which to launch ninety-five per cent of the future governing body of Canada upon the voyage of life? Our provincial school laws all recognize that more time than that is required to fit the mind of the young for their life work. Sixteen is stated as the limit of school age, and every pupil in Canadian schools should remain at least that long at school. Is a mere boy at the age of fourteen, with his crude conceptions of life, his developing body and frivolous disposition fit to be taken from the guidance of earnest teachers, his education checked, and his whole attention to be confined to the hard requirements of the office, the store, or the workman's bench? Is it right that the future elector, citizen, member of society, or perhaps leader of men is to have no wider knowledge than that, is to know nothing of poetical, historical, scientific or general literature—the rich store treasured up in our English tongue? Are the two or three years when his mind is best fitted for receiving lasting impressions of value, when his ambition to know and do is beginning to be stirred, and when the habits of study of his previous schoolboy days are just at the point of becoming fixed, to be ruthlessly snatched from him and his aspirations all destroyed?

#### SELF-COMPLACENCY FATAL.

Another very serious evil in education is the tendency of all educators

to become self-complacent and indolent. As men become older they lose their disposition to examine and adopt new plans. They become wedded to the systems and views of their earlier manhood. The youth is full of the enthusiasm of enquiry; the older man, as Wordsworth says, "Perceives it die away, And fade into the light of common day."

The great majority of educators fail to keep up with the progress of the time. Some of them read the tomes of past generations of centuries—and there is nothing wrong in that—but they fail to find out what the throbbing, restless, unsettled world of to-day demands. The educator as he grows older, tends toward repose. His views are settled, his habits fixed, his lectures written, his mind inclines to seek escape from new investigations. Not that he is an indolent man, not that he is lacking in the sense of responsibility, not that he is careless as to the highest good of his scholars or students, but his mental attitude is one that tends toward restfulness. How well I'ope satirizes such educational conservatism!

"Placed at the door of learning, youth  
to guide,  
We never suffer it to stand too wide.  
To ask, to guess, to know as they com-  
mence,  
As fancy opens the quick springs of  
sense,  
We ply the memory, we load the brain,  
Blind rebel wit, and double chain on  
chain,  
Confine the thought, to exercise the  
breath;  
And keep them in the pale of words till  
death."

Teaching, that does not require constant mental strain and effort is not worthy of the name. It will be of no avail to let the mind rest on a successful university career on the perfection of a normal school training, on the number or excellence of the books we may have read years ago, on the reputation we may have acquired in the beginning of our teacher's life, or the success with which we attain the ideal of a generation ago; all will be unavailing; the Nemesis of a present, living, pulsating, clamorous age will dog the heels of such educational self-complacency.

#### LACK OF ADAPTATION.

What teachers in our schools, school trustees, the advisory board and university authorities all need is alertness, a watchfulness and a willingness to let the dead past bury its dead, and to act in the living present. Not that we are to neglect the past, not that we are to be so foolish as to