

Governor of the province, offered the sum of \$5,000, provided an equal amount were raised, to establish a manual training school in connection with Mount Allison University. The amount has been raised and a well equipped institution at Sackville will soon be doing effective work there. The same public-spirited citizen is helping to establish a manual training school at Riverside, Albert county. Thus the scheme inaugurated by Sir Wm. Macdonald, aided by public and private liberality, will soon be felt in the enrichment of our educational course.

Better English.

BY ELEANOR ROBINSON.

"Write something about the holidays," said a teacher who was asked to suggest a subject for this column. And indeed the holidays are foremost in our minds. The month of June is one of weariness and disappointment to the conscientious teacher. How different from our dreams of last September are the realities of today! But the holidays bring rest from school room cares. Will they not also bring strength and wisdom, that we may begin the next year's work with new reason for hope and courage? Let us consider how we may prepare in the holidays to teach English better next year than we have ever done before. I suppose the ideal that a good teacher of this subject keeps before her is to send the children out from school loving good reading, and knowing where to find it, and writing and speaking their own language clearly and intelligently.

As to the first of these points we must know good books ourselves, and love them, if we would bring our pupils to do the same; and what opportunities the holidays offer for cultivating our book friends! During the school year the teacher spends most of her waking hours with those who are beneath her in mental power and attainments. Let her look to it that she spends her holidays among her superiors. Educational meetings and summer schools offer excellent opportunities, but those who cannot avail themselves of these may yet find improving society in books. Never mind planning out a set course. Read for enjoyment, and do not think, as we are all inclined to do, that the best there is is too high and hard for your delight and recreation. It is a good plan to read each vacation one of the great books of the world, *e. g.*, one of the great epics, as the "Iliad," or "Paradise Lost,"

or to familiarize yourself with one of our great novelists, as George Eliot.

I should be almost ashamed to offer such simple suggestions if I had not been convinced that the great drawback to most of our teachers is their lack of general reading.

But to another point — the correct speaking of English. Setting aside the question of grammatical errors, is English spoken as distinctly and correctly as it should be in our schools? If not, what are our characteristic mistakes or defects? Here is where the travels, be they ever so limited, that we take in our holidays, may serve us. If we go across our southern border, or even to different parts of our own country, and keep our ears open, it may profit us. We are all ready to notice, and perhaps to laugh at, what strikes us as peculiar in another's pronunciation or phraseology, but are we as apt to learn anything from these variations? Do we not all incline to think our own way in anything the orthodox one? A St. John girl, visiting in Maine, was startled to hear someone say, "I liked to hear that little English girl talk; she talks so differently from us." "Why," exclaimed the little Canadian, "I knew you talked differently from us, but I didn't know we talked differently from you."

We are apt to resent any criticism, however friendly, on our ways of speaking, yet we have our peculiarities and provincialisms as well as other people.

"What are they?" you ask. I will name some that have come under my notice, and during the holidays you will perhaps add to them.

"Canadians have pleasanter voices than our people," said a New England teacher to me once, "but they swallow the ends of their words."

Rudyard Kipling writes, "It was delicious to hear the *long, lazy, Canadian drawl* in South Africa."

I think few people whose attention has been called to these criticisms, will deny the truth of them. The adjective "lazy" fits only too well. My experience is that the difficulty lies in getting the children to open their mouths, and so to make clearly distinguished vowel sounds. There is a constant slurring of all the unaccented vowels into short *u*; *e. g.*, they rarely distinguish between *accept* and *except*. This is very noticeable in singing. Even in our large city churches we hear *mer-suffel* for *merciful*, *blessud*, *Trinuty*, and so on. Another fault is the slurring of final letters, *es-*