

worth having done for them all that can be done to make them efficient. Some urge that these institutions should be discontinued or sustained by a tax or tuition fee upon pupils. To discontinue them, would at once remove all public means for higher class education—for an education above that of the common schools. To provide for that support by a tax, would make them too expensive, and therefore defeat the purpose for which they were intended. They ought certainly to be efficient, and should accomplish the design of the government to provide, to a certain extent, for advanced education. It might, in the main, be desirable to limit their number; for a few, duly equipped, well sustained, and managed in strict conformity with the original design, would no doubt meet the necessity of the case. Whenever this is decided upon, no expense should be spared on the part of the people to make them centres of high instruction for the youth of intelligent communities.

Our common schools in Nova Scotia are established upon a safe and sound principle. What remains to be done is to devise what will most conduce to their improvement whilst in practical operation. What will promote this general efficiency? What is the constituent of most importance in our common schools? Unhesitatingly I affirm, the *Teacher*. Have a school house as commodious, as costly, and as attractive as you will, fit it up and furnish it with all that is valuable as an institution of learning, unless you have a *Teacher*—not a school master or a master of a school, but a *Teacher*—your preparations for a school will be found to have been futile. And what constitutes a teacher? The elements are *health, moral character, amiability of disposition, education, love of profession*. Let a teacher have a fair combination of these elements, and if his school be in a wigwam, it will be a school, and a good one, in the well understood and accepted meaning of this term—a good school.

Immeasurably above all else, it is the teacher who makes the school, and what an immense deal is found to be comprised in that allegation, when we reflect for a moment, upon the extent to which the school makes the man or woman. To the teacher's care are entrusted, we may say, the lives of multitudes of children, at the age, when their every waking moment makes its impression upon their plastic and susceptible minds—plastic and susceptible indeed to receive, but nevertheless to retain those impressions indelibly through life. A parent may by a momentary act transmit his wealth, but education cannot be transmitted—the pupil obtains that by his own efforts aided by the teacher. You—the teachers—are their aids, the educators, the drawers-out, the assistants, in the mental development of your young charge. It is your privilege and your duty to trace and train their talents, and if you love your profession you will do so. The evidence of those talents speak from the bright eye of the boy or girl with whom you are in daily contact; it beams from the expanded brow and is found hidden in the frequent questions of childish curiosity and inquisitiveness. Learn then to trace the lineaments of genius where it has its home, for the childish interrogatory will often disclose to the ready ear of the thoughtful preceptor, the indwelling, latent power. The childish inquiry is genius asking favor and demands a helping hand. Upon the peril of offending the Giver of those rich endowments, the teacher withholds his aid, or becomes heedless to the voice of the youthful intellect seeking its own development. You cannot form too high an estimate of the work your country has entrusted to your hands, and when you accept the office of a teacher, you accept responsibilities second in weight to those of no secular work that falls to the lot of man.

Other essentials to the school which is intended to be in every way successful are, of course, suitable buildings, with corresponding fittings and apparatus. In addition to these, I must mention *Trustees* who will do their duty, and that duty is no passive one. It involves activity, intelligence, and good faith. The parents of the pupils also, can, by almost innumerable acts contribute to the success or non-success of the school, at which their children attend.

To all we would say, the public schools, as the means of educating the mass of the population do not appeal to the tax payer, as if they were asking public charity, or a gift from bounty, and a ready word to defend them. It is the spirit of the age—of that civilization, by whose means, and through whose power alone

property is made really valuable—that says to the rate payer, the public schools are your surest means for raising the value of your investment, for making secure, as well as valuable, your possessions. Guard them and watch over them—for your own sakes perpetuate them.

When the time of active life shall have past, and from the confines of that world where all shall give an account of an earthly stewardship, it will not be among the least pleasing reminiscences of life, that in fostering and perpetuating a system by which the blessing of a sound education shall descend to generations yet to come, you aided to unfold the glorious purposes and plans of Him, who is all knowledge, and the fear of whose name is the beginning of wisdom.

I may now make a few remarks on a matter incidental to our general subject, I allude to *female education*. Our common schools are open alike to the sexes, and I am of opinion that our colleges and academies also ought to be, and in a few years, I think will be, open to females. Contrary to a long prevalent opinion, which, I trust, is now going out of date, or quite gone, the most highly cultivated intellect is requisite to train a child in his early years. It is most unsafe for the moral and intellectual, as well as for the physiological welfare of a young child, to trust it to the keeping of ignorant and uncultivated persons. Here is at once a reason why mothers should have the best education that the country can afford, for mothers must have charge, some of them the exclusive charge, of the earlier years of their children—an ignorant woman in such a position is a sad object to contemplate. There is besides a philosophical reason why women should have the highest mental culture. Intellectual faculties are believed to be transmitted more from the mother than from the father; the probability or even possibility of this being the fact, suggests a potent argument for educating—that is, developing—the female intellect to the highest possible degree. The opening of our colleges and academies to females, when it does take place, is sure to give a great *impetus* to the general educational interests of the country, for although an educated father may sometimes neglect the education of his children, we may be sure that an educated mother never will.

EDUCATION IN JAPAN.

THE Japanese people have begun a new civilization, on the principle that "education is the basis of all." Waking up from the lethargy of ages, the "Land of the Rising Sun" asks for the unshorn beams of the sun of knowledge. Seeking and desiring light for the thirty-five millions of her people, Dai Nipon has given new significance to her proud name. A glance at the old education and a sketch of the new, may not be uninteresting.

In order to get even a faint idea of Japanese culture and education, we must glance backward through many centuries. Japan received from China her alphabets, her literature, her science, and indeed almost her entire literary property and her civilization. One of the most interesting and sometimes the most difficult studies to a resident in Japan, is to distinguish between the pure Japanese and the China expressions and customs. Certain Japanese purists, who desire to disclaim as much as possible their indebtedness to China, assert that Japan anciently possessed a language and literature of her own. An alphabet called the *Kami* or god-letters, they assert, was formerly used by the ancient sages, which was given and taught them by the gods. It is also asserted that many of the ancient burial-stones in the temple-yards, in the sacred city of Maico, contain inscriptions in this character. This alphabet has two forms, one consisting entirely of straight lines, and small circles, the other of curved lines, and evidently used as the script or running hand. The writer has seen this alphabet printed in a Japanese book, which is written to disprove the popular idea concerning the "god-letters," and to show that they were brought from Corea at a comparatively late date, several centuries after the Christian era, and that the story of their having any sacred character is a fabrication. We have looked carefully in many ancient temples