

Scotland had to raise for the endowment of a Chair, and recently he started a scheme to raise an endowment of \$100,000, with the view of rendering the college independent and efficient. As a member of the School Association, founded for the purpose of hastening the establishment of a High School in Halifax, and altering the constitution of the Board of Commissioners of City Schools - which latter object failed - Rev. Mr. Grant took a prominent part in matters scholastic; and when the Local Government introduced a Bill to create the University of Halifax, on the model of the University of London, and to increase the grants to the denominational colleges, he was one of the chief opponents of the measure, and headed the anti-denominational college party--unsuccessfully, however, for in spite of his brilliant and forcible speeches, public opinion in the Province favoured the Government Bill. On the University of Halifax being finally established, he was appointed a Fellow, but resigned the position shortly afterwards.

As a writer, he is best known by his "Ocean to Ocean," an account of a trip across the Dominion, taken in 1872, in company with Mr. Sanford Fleming, Engineer-in-chief of the Canada Pacific Railway. The book has gone through two editions, and has been favourably reviewed by the English and Canadian press.

## Cleanings.

### AMERICAN PUBLIC EDUCATION.

It is safe, at least, to make the proposition that public schools are a curse to all the youth whom they unfit for their proper place in the world. It is the favourite theory of teachers that every man can make himself anything that he really chooses to make. They resort to this theory to rouse the ambition of their more sluggish pupils, and thus get more study out of them. I have known entire schools instructed to aim at the highest places in society, and the most exalted offices of life. I have known enthusiastic old fools who made it their principal business to go from school to school and talk such stuff to the pupils as would tend to unfit every one of humble circumstances and slender possibilities for the life that lay before him. The fact is persistently ignored in many of these schools, established emphatically for the education of the people, that the majority of the places in this world are subordinate and low places. Every boy and girl is taught to be "something" in the world, which would be very well if being "something" were being what God intended they should be; but when being "something" involves the transformation of what God intended should be a respectable shoemaker into a very indifferent and a very slow minister of the Gospel, the harmful and even the ridiculous character of the instruction becomes apparent. If we go into a school exhibition, our ears are deafened by declamations addressed to ambition. The boys have sought out from literature every stirring appeal to effort, and every extravagant promise of reward. The compositions of the girls are of the same general tone. We hear of "infinite yearning" from the lips of girls who do not know enough to make a pudding, and of being polished "after the similitude of a palace" from those who do not comprehend the commonest duties of life.

Now, I believe that a school, in order to be a good one, should be one that will fit men and women, in the best way, for the humble positions that the great mass of them must necessarily occupy in life. It is not necessary that boys and girls be taught any less than they are taught now. They should receive more practical knowledge than they do now, without a doubt, and less of that which is simply ornamental; but they cannot know too much. I do not care how much knowledge a man may have acquired in school, that school has been a curse to him if its influence has been to make him unhappy in his place, and to fill him with futile ambitions.

There must be something radically wrong in our educational system, when youths are generally unfitted for the station which they are to occupy, or are forced into professions for which they have no natural fitness. The truth is, that the stuff talked to boys and girls alike, about "aiming high," and the assurance given them indiscriminately that they can be anything that they choose to become, are essential nuisances. Our children all go to public schools; they are all taught these things; they all go out into the world with high notions, and find it impossible to content themselves with their lot. They hoped to realize in life that which had been promised them in school; but all their dreams have faded, and left them disappointed and unhappy. They envy those whom

they have been taught to consider above them, and learn to count their own lives a failure. What we greatly need in this country is the inculcation of soberer views of life. Boys and girls are bred to discontent. Everybody is after a high place, and nearly everybody fails to get one; and, failing, loses heart, temper, and content. The multitude dress beyond their means, and live beyond their necessities, to keep up a show of being what they are not. Humble employments are held in contempt, and humble powers are everywhere making high employment contemptible. Our children need to be educated to fill, in Christian humility, the subordinate offices of life which they must fill, and taught to respect humble callings, and to beautify and glorify them by lives of contented and of glad industry.

When our public schools accomplish an end so desirable as this, they will fulfil their mission—and they will not before. I seriously doubt whether one school in a hundred, public or private, comprehends its duty in this particular. They fail to inculcate the idea that the majority of the offices of life are humble; that the powers of the majority of the youth which they contain have relation to these offices; that no man is respectable when he is out of his place; and that half of the unhappiness of the world grows out of the fact that, from distorted views of life, men are in places where they do not belong. Let us have this altogether reformed.—*J. G. Holland.*

### CRAMMING.

We have studied with much care the proceedings of many of our schools and colleges, and think we have fathomed the principle that underlies their management. The aim of these excellent institutions unquestionably is to diminish population and kill off or irreparably injure the youth of the day. An unprejudiced examination of their methods, and the untiring energy with which these methods are pursued, will, we are certain, convince any candid mind that this is the special work of many of our seats of learning. The work has been carried on with unremitting zeal, and the reason that the results have not been more successful is that such great evils as young people cannot be entirely removed at once. Even the prompt and energetic measures of Pharaoh and Herod in murdering all the children under two years of age only afforded society a temporary relief. Being fully persuaded that young people have no business here, much less any right to determine what shall become of them, we should modestly suggest a system which will, we trust, prove expeditious, economical, and easy of execution; and being based upon nearly the same principles as those in use in many schools and colleges, cannot fail to be successful. Our method is beautiful in its simplicity. It is, briefly, feed the children to death.

It may be said that this is a poor economy, and that, moreover, the plan has been tried and proved a failure. That strawberry festivals have been given under the most favorable circumstances, and the population was diminished by one-tenth, is not to be questioned. Yet it is manifestly unjust to expect to accomplish in a day, or even two or three days, what is now the work of years. You cannot hope to demolish a naturally strong constitution by one festival, no matter how well managed. We maintain that the experiment has not been carried far enough. As to the expense, it is true that even the most moderate-priced food, such as milk for babes, is not as cheap as much of the instruction given to our children in the schools; but, on the other hand, if the same quantity of food were given to their bodies which is now bestowed upon their minds, in the same space of time, the result would be more speedy. One simple illustration will prove the truth of this statement. A young girl writes home from school that she had been ill for two weeks, but that by studying night and day she had been able to catch up with her class. Three days after the school had closed the young lady died of brain fever. Now, it is clear to the most supercilious observer that if the girl had been constantly fed, day and night, she could hardly have lived two weeks. This seems to us to prove conclusively the superiority of our plan to those now in use.

We are convinced that if book-cramming were abandoned for food-cramming, shortness of life among the youth could be secured with more certainty. If the book-cramming system be, as it undoubtedly is, so widely popular, why should not food-cramming become even more so? The arguments for both are almost identical. First, it is necessary to eat. Children should be taught to eat. Having been taught they should be made to eat, as some