

## Educational Notes

(By Spectator)

We British Columbians are surely a wise and understanding people, and to us it is given to look upon our simple-minded neighbours to the South with condescension and pity. Brother Jonathan says in his simplicity, "My children shall not look upon the wine when it is red; my children shall grow up a sober people." We British Columbians have chosen the

more excellent way. We go to the polls, and as free-born citizens choose our wisest to represent us, to speak for us, to act for us, in our historic Witan, our assembly of the wise men at Victoria. And what is their highest wisdom, their rendering of "Get wisdom, get understanding?" It is this: "Patronize liquor if you want more funds for education, if you want more funds for hospitals: the more money you spend on strong drink as private citizens, the more money will flow into the public treasury: practice drinking until you can drink enough, and we may be able to abolish taxation altogether."

Meanwhile thousands and ten thousands of our own simple-minded people push their way across the barrier to the South, that they too may be reckoned with the simple-minded sons of Jonathan. Shall we not rejoice in their going; shall we not speed them on their way, these children of Canada, blind to their own highest interests, these deserters from the odly Land where Old King Alcohol holds eminent domain, these faint-hearted refugees from country, home and duty?

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Mr. Herbert Gray, the "Henry Drummond of this generation," calls attention to two evils of present day college life; first distraction, or dissipation of vitality by touching lightly a multitude of things; second, a soft docility of mind, a mind undisciplined, ready to be amused, to listen listlessly, to reject nothing but that which is hard. He goes on to say that men and women who for four years think chiefly about dances, athletics, societies and gossip are not the citizens our country needs.

Happily there is a saving remnant, possibly in college halls; certainly outside of these cloisters of learning. Extramural courses leading to university degrees, are now provided by numbers of the foremost universities of the continent. The extramural student must almost of necessity deny himself the pleasures of distraction, the dissipation of vitality by touching lightly a multitude of things. His pursuit of athletics must be in moderation, not in excess; dances, societies and gossip must for the most part be forgotten; he who would reach the goal and win the prize must learn "to scorn delights and live laborious days," aye, and laborious nights as well.

Again, one who is forced to wrestle by himself with the subjects of a university course, with the deep things of the mind, is not likely to retain for any length of time "a soft docility of mind, a mind undisciplined." Toughness of mental fibre will be developed by the daily mental effort and labor necessary in such a student, if he is to succeed, just as surely as the soft palm and dainty tapering fingers are lost to the man who for six days in the week wields pick and shovel, so that in the sweat of his brow he may eat his daily bread.

In these days in Vancouver we hear much of city-planning and of the proposed civic centre. City-planning in Vancouver is forty years overdue; but, better late than never. Much good work can still be done. Real estate offices are by no means an institution outworn; the vacant lot is still with us; the grass-grown street allowance still tempts the vagrant goat.

The civic centre; where shall it be? The Central School grounds are, in the minds of many, the site most suitable for a noble city hall. The choice may be ideal; but two things must be remembered. In the first place the Central School grounds are not the property of the Municipality of Vancouver, nor yet of the Vancouver School Board. These grounds are the property of the Province of British Columbia.

In the second place, granting that the provincial government is ready to surrender to the city its right, title, and interest in and to the Central School grounds and buildings, we must not forget to ask ourselves what is to be done with the seven or eight hundred children in attendance at this school. Before crowding these little ones out of the home that has sheltered them so long, we must prepare for them classrooms, as many and as commodious, as those now in use, and playgrounds just as extensive. In addition these must be very near the present site.

To move the school to the Cambie street block, facing the drill hall, is a solution not altogether satisfactory. We have already, for grownups weary and worn in body and mind, far too little breathing and playing space in the middle of the city, and it would be a thousand pities and a civic calamity to surrender thoughtlessly any part of the little we have. A civic centre by all means: by all means a noble city hall, a museum, an art gallery, a public library. But, now



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