

THE SUMMER SCHOOL.

THE SECOND WEEK'S PROGRAMME.

The Learned and Eloquent Lectures Given by Rev. Brother Azarias, of the De La Salle Institute, New York—Some Striking Historical Facts in the Educational Epochs of the World.

The programme for the second week was as follows:—

Educational Epochs, Five Lectures by Brother Azarias, De La Salle Institute, New York city.

Monday, July 24, Episcopal, Cathedral and Cloistral Schools.

Tuesday, July 25, The Palatine School.

Wednesday, July 26, The University.

Thursday, July 27, The Rural School.

Friday, July 28, The Modern Christian School.

Studies Among Famous Authors, Five Lectures by Richard Malcolm Johnston, Baltimore, Md.

Monday, July 24, Sir Thomas More.

Tuesday, July 25, Alexander Pope.

Wednesday, July 26, Thomas Moore.

Thursday, July 27, Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Friday, July 28, Alfred (Lord) Tennyson.

We present our readers with the following condensed abstract of the lectures of the distinguished educator, Brother Azarias, who lectured before the largest audiences thus far of the Summer School:

The impression exists and is occasionally reproduced in books on pedagogical studies, that there was very little education in the Middle Ages, that the schools were few, that the teachers were uncultured, and that there was an absence of all method in imparting knowledge. The statement is wholly and absolutely false. Schools were numerous, the courses of study were mapped out, and certain methods were observed in imparting instruction. The main object of the present course will be to bring this fact home to the members of the Catholic Summer School. We find the Cloistral schools flourishing in the first half of the fourth century. The doors of this monastery were open to boys as well as to men. Lessons were given three times a day. None were permitted to remain in the monastery who had not learned to read, and who did not know certain portions of the scriptures. St. Benedict was the founder and organizer of monastic life and the monastic schools in the West. During his life-time he took into his monastery the sons of the Roman nobility and educated them. These children were trained up to their fifteenth year with the youths whose parents had consecrated them to the service of God. At that age they made choice either to remain and enter the novitiate, or to withdraw into the world. St. Basil even anticipated modern times in another respect. Much is spoken and written at present concerning manual training and the formation of trade schools. Now, it so happens that Basil regulated for a certain number of trades to be learned and practised. Children should begin to learn some one or other as soon as they were able. The ninth century set in darkness. The tenth opened up an era of warfare and bloodshed and ravagings, and on the ruins began the building up of a new order of things. With the eleventh century came a brighter dawn. Lanfranc (1045-1089) carried to Bec the learning of Italy. His school became famous, and was thronged with youths from all parts of Europe. He taught without fee; such offerings as were made went towards the building of this monastery. Before he became known in England as a great statesman, he had won the esteem of bishops, and even the Pope, whose studies he directed. Anselm (1034-1109) continued with no less brilliant results the work that Lanfranc had carried on, and the monks of Bec became famous for their scholarship and proficiency in philosophy. The court school of the Merovingian and Carolingian kings of France is known as the Merovingians it established the school which is known as the chapel—so called from the *Capella* of St. Martin of Tours. Apollonius, who was the first chaplain under Clovis (481-511) may be regarded as the Father of the Palatine chapel. Henceforth this school becomes the centre whence radiates the light of learning in France. From the time of Clothaire II., the school assumes a more regular form, and its character, its studies, English. History occupied a large place in the course; under this heading was

its men, and its influence can be better outlined. Clothaire made St. Betharius head of the school, and custodian of the relics. Betharius was loved, esteemed and venerated as an angel from heaven. We are told that he caused minds and hearts to flourish by wise studies, and nourished the souls of the youth confided to him with paternal care. What were the studies pursued? There were grammar, dialectics, and rhetoric; there were the more special studies of Roman law, national customs and traditions, models of Gallo-Roman eloquence, and even of the Gallo-Frankish literature. The vernacular tongues were already attracting attention, and we find the rhetoricians distinguishing between the artificialness of Greek, the circum-spect measure of Latin, the splendor of the Gallic tongue, and the pomp of the included a study of the great national epics. Christian dogma and Christian philosophy also found their place. In a word, it was a school of superior studies. Then came Charlemagne, under whom the school became renowned. Alcuin was the great light of the school under Charlemagne. He brought with him the best literary traditions of England, as handed down from the Venerable Bede, through Egbert of York. The school continued under Louis Debonnaire, and under Charles the Bald it again became famous. About the year 842 we find it entirely in the hands of Irishmen, among whom was Scotus Erigena.

Bologna and Paris are the oldest universities. The origin of each is buried in the mists of the past. Bologna became famous as a school of law; students flocked thither from all parts; in the course of time it possessed an autonomy of its own. Pope and emperor endowed it with certain rights and privileges, and forthwith it loomed up as a great university. So it was with the university of Paris. For half a century before it became recognized as such, we find it to have been an intellectual centre, made famous by the brilliant teachings of William of Campeaux, Abelard, and Peter Lombard. The masters became organized into a scholastic guild. But contrary to the prevalent opinion, the university can be traced to no one school, or no combination of as its source.

Out of no little turmoil and excitement did the university develop under the fostering care of Church and State. The privileges conceded her by Pontiff and King were the vital principle of her existence. "A university without privileges," says the rector, Du Boulay, "is a body without a soul." Looking back upon the growth of the university of Paris we find her cradled in the sanctuary of Notre Dame, then nourished into full development as an organism, independent of the State, with her own autonomy, and empowered to make her own laws. She drew her vitality from the Holy See. The same holds true of Oxford and Cambridge. As science is free as truth, even so were these mediæval universities secure from all control. This complete liberty was the secret of their success. Scholars and masters enjoyed immunity from civil jurisdiction, and were answerable for their behavior only to fellow-members. In this respect, the university of Paris stood alone, a power great and unique in the world, ranking in prestige and influence with the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire.

Two religious orders that had sprung into existence about the same time with the universities soon became identified with them a deep and an abiding influence. There were the Franciscans and the Dominicans. Erase from the records of Paris and Oxford the names of the learned men furnished by these orders and you extinguish the greatest lights, the most dazzling glories of mediæval thought. There remains a void that nothing can supply. Had these men not lived and labored, the whole trend of modern thought would run differently. The Dominicans were the first religious order admitted to membership in the university of Paris and with time became the leaders of thought. For nearly a century, the Franciscans guided the destinies of Oxford. They were at first regarded as intruders by the universities, and long and bitter was the warfare waged against them. But their influence was for good. More regularly organized than the university itself, these religious schools had a staying influence upon her students, her professors, and her courses of study.

Time was when men were convinced that in Europe there was no system of

primary education till the period of the Reformation. They could see nothing prior to that but an ignorant people deprived of all educational facilities for their children. They are mistaken. Recent researches carried on throughout the various countries of Europe, especially throughout France, have revealed to us a widespread system of education. The results of these researches may be likened to the discovery of a new world.

In the eighth century, we find a bishop of Modena, when investing one of his priests with an important parish in the city, exhorting him to be diligent in keeping school and educating the children. In the ninth century, every bishop in making the visitation of his parish was wont to ask whether the pastor has with him a cleric who can teach school and assist him during divine service. In the eleventh century, Gualbert of Nogent speaks of rural schools as of general custom. In the thirteenth century out of a population of 90,000 in Florence, we find 12,000 children attending the schools. A statute of the diocese of Rouen, issued in the year 1230, reads: "Let the clergy frequently exhort their parishioners to be careful and exacting in sending their children to school." It need no longer surprise us that a recent writer after investigating the subject should say: "According to a great number of traditions, school was as much frequented, if not more so, formerly, than it is to-day." Another eminent historian writes of the fourteenth century: "It is a grave mistake to imagine that there were no primary schools. Mention is made of rural schools in all the documents—even in those in which we would least expect to find mentioned—and we can scarcely doubt that during the most stormy period of the fourteenth century most villages had their masters, teaching children reading, writing, and some arithmetic."

The schoolmaster up to the fifteenth century was generally a young ecclesiastic or a cleric who dwelt with the pastor, helped him to sing the divine offices, aided him in many ways, and generally acted as sacristain. But it must not be imagined that because of the offices which the schoolmaster filled around the church, he was not held in honor. Such offices were not considered in any sense degrading. In those ages of Faith it was thought an honor to be employed in the lowliest work connected with the church. The schoolmaster was held in highest esteem after the pastor. He was the counsellor of families, the confidant of secrets; when a letter was to be written, a document to be drawn up, men and women had recourse to him.

The school books of mediæval days were few. The child had a first book containing the alphabet and his prayer in Latin. The next book placed in his hands was the book of psalms and offices for Sundays and festivals. He was invariably taught to read Latin before he had learned to read in the vernacular. In England the custom was changed during the sixteenth century. In France this was considered the natural method, inasmuch as the Latin tongue was the foundation of the French. To this was added a code of politeness. Advanced pupils were further taught to read charts and manuscripts. When the students could decipher old registers and duty parchments often set down in writing

difficult to read, his education was considered complete. Teachers have been rejected or dismissed because they could not decipher the deeds, charts, and documents of a township. Penmanship was taught in the rural school; but as the schoolmaster was frequently the scribe of the village, and as he found in the employment of his pen an additional source of income, he was very slow in making his scholars as proficient in a craft in which they might afterwards supplant him.

The rural school declined, and elementary education in France reached its lowest degree of confusion during the first half of the seventeenth century. The numerous wars of this period left little time and less inclination for the cultivation of peaceful pursuits. The eyes of the natural custodians of society were so dimmed by the dazzling brilliancy of the court of the Grand Monarch, they could no longer perceive the evils festering at their own doors.

Men having at heart the good of society sought in the re-establishment of the school on a Christian basis the best means of social renovation. Such a man was Peter Fourier (1565-1640), a far-seeing priest who anticipated more than one of our modern social improvements. In 1597 he attempted to organize a religious teaching order for boys, but the four young men whom he had brought together for the purpose abandoned him. However, he was more successful in organizing religious teachers for girls. Providence blessed and fructified his labors in this direction beyond his greatest hopes. He lived to see all Lorraine peopled by the Congregation of Notre Dame, which still remains a monument and a witness to his zeal and enlightened views. He gave the sisterhood rules and constitutions, which were first printed in 1640.

In 1681 John Baptiste de la Salle organized the Brothers of the Christian Schools, and gave them the method of teaching which Peter Fourier had touched but did not realize, which Comenius, and De Nesmond, and Charles Demia had glimmerings of, and which has revolutionized modern primary education. That method is known as the simultaneous method. It consists in having all the pupils of the same capacity, and none others, being placed under the same teacher, with the same book, all following the same lesson. The introduction of this system has been likened to the discovery of a new world. Glancing over the pages of the admirable manual of school-management which Blessed de la Salle prepared, we find scattered through them this principle inspiring all the rules of wisdom and prudence in which the book abounds. But the method has not only been embodied in a book; it has been embodied in a living organism that has preserved its traditions with the greatest fidelity, and that still applies them the world over. Because we all of us have been trained according to this method, and see it practised in nearly all our public and many of our private schools, and have ceased to find it a subject of wonder, we may be inclined to undervalue its importance. Not so was it regarded in the days of La Salle. Men travelled a long distance to see a hundred children taught as one.

The handbook of method prepared by La Salle has all the directness and simplicity of genius. Matthew Arnold said of it: "Later works on the same subject have little improved the precepts, while they entirely lack the unction." Blessed de la Salle may be considered the founder of the modern Christian school. He not only gave it its methods, but he established normal schools in which teachers learned to apply those methods.

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