

there is no doubt that a complete exploration of this section of country would prove pregnant with advantages to the province and interest to the lovers of what is curious and instructive.

Socially and morally this county stands high. The people are industrious, sober and intelligent. The most uninviting premises we witnessed during our stay in this county were the *court house and gaol*. From their appearance, and the grounds around them, one would be

inclined to conclude that the people do not delight in litigation,—not a bad sign of prosperity.

The school houses present the appearance of taste; and from the published reports it is evident education is on the increase. The teachers are said to continue a greater number of years in one school than they do in some other sections of the country—which is a good sign of progress in this department.

PRACTICABILITY OF SELF-EDUCATION.

THAT Self-education is practicable, must appear from various sources. So evident, indeed, is this fact that the purpose of this chapter is illustration rather than argument. According to the view just exhibited, it assumes the character of a self-evident truth, and as such demands investigation but not proof. The following are the principal sources relied upon for supporting the position here taken.

1. *The nature of education.* Education is the effect of mental industry directed to the acquisition of science.—Now we must admit that self-education is practicable, or deny that the mind is capable of thinking without the aid of a teacher.

4. *Faculties of the mind.* These are natural endowments, brought to perfection, like our physical powers, without the aid of human culture, and operating intuitively with unimprovable exactness. Such faculties place education within the reach of all, and make the customary facilities for learning matters of mere convenience, which may safely be dispensed with whenever circumstances require. Powers of this instinctive and pre-existent character cannot exist with mental vassalage except upon the condition of voluntary acquiescence on the part of their possessor.

2. *Condition under which all original scientific pursuits are prosecuted.* I speak not now of acquisitions made at school, for in these institutions neither student nor teachers often aim at originality. But there are other if not higher intellectual researches constantly devolved upon the mind under circumstances which do not admit of the aids of supervision. Not to mention that we are

ushered into a world where much of our success even in common affairs depends upon our own unaided powers of observation, it is obvious that every scientific improvement must be the effect of self-directed energy. That which is not known cannot be taught; therefore, if we have anything new in science, it will be the result of original and independent efforts. Could all be satisfied with things as they now are, and yield themselves to one unvarying course of instruction, then the mind might always be guided by authority, and the schools would become the chief dispensers of knowledge. But this cannot be. Science must advance beyond its present position, and every step of its progress will be the triumph of individual genius over the didactic art. Our schools do not originate science, and the different branches taught in them are contributions from the intellectual wealth of the solitary student. Instruction is confined to principles already established, and pupilage ceases where invention begins. Hence it follows that self-education is as practicable as the search for truth, and every science is a monument of its success.

4. *Incompetency of schools to furnish the requisite knowledge.* That literary and scientific institutions can teach what they profess to teach, we have no doubt; that much of what they teach is profound and useful, it would be folly to deny. Still there are departments of knowledge in which they are obviously unable to afford instruction, because the attainments of those who would be pupils are far in advance of those who must be teachers. What college or university could have instructed Copernicus