

an honest conviction of duty has been the moving power. It has sustained his footsteps through the trials and troubles of many years' warfare. It weaves its golden thread through his term of presidency and flashes forth in all its brilliancy when he steps down to preserve the constitution he has established. Ambition formed no factor here—the path of duty led up to an earthly pinnacle. This hero pursued his course steadily. Visions of his country's glorious future shut out of his mind all aspirations after personal greatness and he died the ideal of many, the hero of all. He had walked in the footsteps of this divine guide; and view the close of his life's toil, how unlike ambition's devotees! Think over those last years of honor and contentment, while he, having finished his work, waited his call home. Then pass before our minds the closing scenes in the life's struggle of some when ambition ruled. See Cæsar bleeding at the base of Pompey's statue; Wolsey (?) walking crowned with shame and dishonor to the scaffold, and Napoleon pining with grief and remorse on lonely St. Helena's isle. But the social list would not be complete without a consideration of official duties. This division may not affect as large a class as the others, but, to those it does affect its demands are even more arbitrary. If we regard duty as a sacred obligation in our private relations surely when we make it doubly binding, when we accept positions of responsibility and trust, we will make it our first consideration to perform these duties faithfully, and conscientiously. And here as teachers we have a two-fold responsibility resting upon us in our social and official relations to pupils and parents. Not only will neglect of official duties be a weakening of our moral forces, a stain upon our integrity, a lasting injury and loss to our pupils, but positive wrong to the noble work in which we are engaged. The world every day has enough examples of those who, occupying positions of responsibility and emolument, take advantage of the privileges of their positions to consult their ease and personal interests; who fill their tills with coins from the public treasury, and neglect the very duties which alone would entitle them to the remuneration they pocket without any adequate return, without our profession adding to the ranks. If we consider it criminal for those in high positions, remember that the insignificance of our duties in comparison will not pardon our neglect, but rather condemn us. Some consider neglect of duty, so long as they still manage to draw their pay, as rather a clever device. What an inferior position they give this sentiment of duty! Where are their principles, their love of truth, their abhorrence of dishonesty? But leaving moral principles and looking at it from a strictly business point of view, neglect of duty will lead to failure and ruin. Our successful business men, bravest warriors, best generals, cleverest professors and greatest statesmen, all will testify to the fact that perseverance alone will win the day.

After omission of duty comes the commission of sin. In duty's path lie all the virtues; once outside its course the poor victim is besieged with the vices and started on the downward road. Others there are who though faithful in the ordinary course of business flee at the approach of danger. For the rebuke of such point to brave John Maynard who singed and burned at the wheel. Ask them to watch that captain on the sinking vessel issue every order, give each command, and, still at his post, sink with the ruined wreck. Life is short; death is certain; it comes to all; then let our earnest prayer be that it may find us faithful at the wheel.

Then our religious duties—the love, reverence, and devotion we owe to Him who created and preserves us, who has implanted in our natures this strong sense—are a rudder to steer us over the rough and uncertain ocean of life, and guide us into the harbor of rest when the toils are over. As the sun and all the planets that revolve around it travel on through space, so man with all the attendant duties of his temporal life, moves onward to life eternal. We want,

as never was wanted before, our forefathers' strong convictions of truth and duty to grapple with modern positivism, naturalism and agnosticism. Mankind to-day needs the spirit which inspired the Apostle Paul to assert and stand by right even to death; the steadfastness of the host of martyrs who endured all the tortures of the rack and horrors of the stake for right and duty. Would we model our lives after the life of Him who is perfect, who left his glory above, came to earth, endured the cross and shame to do his Father's will, then we must follow in this pathway, this heavenly voice must be our guide. May we, thoroughly convinced of the grandeur and sublimity of this sentiment in the human soul, exclaim with Wordsworth in his "Ode to duty,"

I myself commend unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh, let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise, the spirit of self sacrifice,
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy bondman let me live.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM OF ONTARIO.

BY DAVID ALLISON, LL.D., HALIFAX, N. S.

In an article under the above heading, written by his Lordship the Bishop of Niagara, and published in the *Globe* of February 9th, I find the following statements and expressions of opinion:—

"I was a Superintendent of common schools for the Township of Thorne, when such officers were first appointed, more than thirty years ago, and I can testify that the pupils in our common schools of those days could spell, read, write, cipher, and understood geography better than they do now. It is true they had not so many different things to study as they now have; they had by no means so many 'ologies to study as they now have. But they had more time to study those things which are good and necessary for them. They were not so crammed with a dozen subjects as they now are, but what they learned they learned well, and did not forget in a week; and the common school education of those days did not cost the people of the country one-fifth of what it now costs them, taking into account the Minister of Education, with his handsome salary, the county inspectors, the well remunerated school teachers, very expensive buildings, the very costly books, apparatus, maps, etc., required now.

"The whole tendency, in short, of the educational system in vogue in the States—the same thing is true of that in Ontario—is to develop institutions essentially aristocratic, in which are sacrificed to a great extent the interests of the many, for the sake of unnaturally and unjustifiably "coaching forward" the few. An illustration of this truth was given a few years ago in one of our large thriving towns. A butcher's apprentice had served out his time, and his master wanted to supply his place, advertised for a fortnight before his advertisement was answered. About the same time a third-class teacher was required in one of the numerous schools of the town, and an advertisement brought out 59 applicants in two days. Now this difficulty of finding a lad to learn this respectable and profitable business was not that there were no lads in the town and in the surrounding country who were not by nature and constitution fitted for this business, but they had been spoiled for it, they had had their heads filled with too many 'ologies and their minds filled with the idea that manual labor was degrading, and that they should aim at something higher than to be a butcher.

"Should we, then, foster a system at an enormous expense to the country, which not only, on your confession, does not impart the education which the country wants, but actually unfits the sons of the artisans of our towns and cities, and the sons of the farmers, too, as I hope to show in another letter, for walking in their fathers' honorable steps, but fills them with the idea of living easy lives by becoming professional men, or, if they cannot become such, by becoming merchants, with the pretty certain prospect of following the 99 out of every 100 of their predecessors by going into bankruptcy and pulling their parents down into want and misery too? I have materials, consisting of public documents, articles from the United States, showing what have been the fruits of the system in that country, and shall be glad to follow up this letter with one or more on the same subject, thanking you for your courtesy in giving me the use of your columns."