

Of Mr. Ansley's competence and ability there cannot be a doubt; he is an old and tried servant, and we sincerely concur with him in his suggestion that the By-laws relating to the duties of his office should be at once altered, so that the spirit of the clauses may harmonise with his present duties, and leave him untrammelled in their execution.

## AN ADDRESS TO THE MECHANICS OF THE DOMINION,

*On the Necessity of Forming a Dominion Mechanics Association, for Educational and Benevolent purposes.*

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*"Heaven helps those who help themselves."*

In placing before the mechanics of the country a short address, the writer would premise his remarks with this observation, that few in the Dominion have had better opportunities of ascertaining the disadvantages the industrial classes lie under in this country, compared with the advantages of mechanics in the United States, particularly in so far as technical education is concerned. He will not go so far as to say that there has been culpable neglect on the part of the Heads of the Educational Departments of the country, but he does assert that the present system of education in our common schools in Canada, however admirable in certain respects, is totally deficient in giving instruction in those branches of Science and Technology which are so very important to the agricultural and mechanical interests of the country.

Too much attention has been given to a course of instruction which would lead step by step to a high class of education, without considering that nineteen out of twenty of the boys who are educated at the common schools of the country are either taken from them before sufficiently advanced to enter a high school, or if they do enter it, seldom remain long enough to complete their education, but leave for pursuits where such is of little practical use perhaps to learn a trade or become a farmer. The time, therefore, spent in partially learning classics or the higher mathematics is thrown away, because their studies have been too superficial and never completed, and are, naturally enough, soon forgotten, particularly when the student has to enter into a sphere of life in which such literary acquirements are never called into action. If the time spent in unnecessary and superficial education was given to a course of practical teaching in Chemistry or Technology, such as is imparted to youth in Germany and France, how much better it would be for that portion of our people who form the most numerous and important body of the community, known as the industrial classes.

During thirty years residence in Canada, and five in the United States, in which latter period the writer visited almost every manufactory of importance in the New England States, he had opportunities that fall to the lot of few to compare—which he did with an unprejudiced mind—the superior status held by American mechanics in the eyes of their countrymen over that of our mechanics by their own people, and the advantages they obtained in point of education, public libraries and benevolent institutions; also, over us—not that the

natural ability of the people is greater, for are we not nearly of the same race and of the same blood?—but because they are more united, and have long since seen the necessity of Technical Education. The facilities afforded by the intelligence of the nation for practical instruction raised up the industrial classes until they became a potent power; their representatives have a voice in Congress; they are foremost in every movement tending to diffuse education, to improve their manufactures, and perfect machinery by skill and invention. The mechanics of the United States, native born, stand high in the social class; men of the highest eminence in talent and wealth in the country have risen from their ranks. To their industry, skill and inventive genius, our neighbours, to a great extent, owe their wealth and power, and have become a great nation.

With these incontrovertible facts before our eyes, and from the certain knowledge that such great results could only have culminated from a national pride and unity among the industrial classes themselves, working together in one compact body in all matters connected with their own interests,—what is there to prevent the industrial classes of this Dominion of Canada, also, from working in unity for their own benefit, without respect to creed, politics or nationality? Nothing is wanting but *unanimity*; nothing is necessary but an effort among themselves to throw off their past apathy, and enter into a Dominion Mechanics' Association, for the promotion of their interests by insisting upon a thorough change in the education in our public schools, in which the great bulk of the mechanics are only taught to read, write and do arithmetic, and learn a smattering of subjects, forgotten as soon as committed to memory, while practical technical teaching is absolutely ignored.

As a united body, and seeking only for assistance from which great practical results would follow, the Government of the country, no matter what its politics, would be bound to give consideration to any deputation backed by such a numerous and important body of men; but, although it is but just and politic that our Government should give assistance for the promotion of technical education, the mechanics themselves must take the initiative; in all matters the first move must be made by themselves, and through their deputies they must point out what they require, and it will no doubt receive attention; but the main part of the work must, after all, be performed by themselves. "Heaven helps those who help themselves." They must put their shoulder to the wheel and lift themselves out of the rut.

We have had our experience of Mechanics' Institutes, partly assisted by grants from Government, and in what have they resulted? Either they have fallen through from want of support, or they have become mere reading rooms for merchants, clerks, and professional men. We have our Board of Arts, supported by an annual grant from Government, and what does it bring forth? We are told that it is silently working good—very silently, assuredly, for it will be long ere its voice is heard on the highest tops. In neither the Institutes or in the Board of Arts is that kind of practical teaching given which will ever be of much benefit to students.

What we require in such institutions, and in our public schools, is practical teachers; we require that teachers for the future shall be so trained at Normal Schools as to be competent to practically teach Science and Technology, and that parents should have the choice of hav-