

established beyond cavil the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon in the world of letters, as well as in arms, in art, and song. And when it is considered that these men as well as many others whom we might mention, have wrung from the world the homage, now voluntarily paid, in the face of all but insuperable difficulties, we wonder why, here, where fewer difficulties exist, literature still languishes, and none can be found with the courage and the talent to wreath around the virgin brow of our young Dominion the laurels of literary fame.

Besides the causes already hinted at, might we not find another cause. While admitting the higher character of our system of Public Schools, both as centres of instruction and media of information to the young mind, is there not after all an almost entire absence of everything like literary culture? Our Reading Books, till we come to the 5th Reader, are almost as destitute of literary beauty, as the Sahara desert is of verdure. What more prosaic—more detestably tame could be easily imagined than the first two hundred pages of the 4th Reader. To the young mind it has but little interest, and as a means of developing taste it is entirely useless. On the contrary, where something like the budding of taste naturally existed, the effect of such composition would be to blight and destroy.

But while these deficiencies in our school books are to be deplored and should very soon be corrected, there is also a want of literary taste in many of our teachers. Their mind is as barren as the text book, and in no instance can they supplement in thought or word, the ideas on the page before their class. From one year's end to the other, the school-room is as prosaic as routine can make it, and with no thought that rises higher than the merest common place the teacher's daily labors are begun and ended. With such a spring time how can we expect a harvest? Without any effort to cultivate the imagination or excite the emotions—

without an effort to refine the taste or excite into activity the dormant powers of the scholar, how can we expect the aspirations to rise above the daily humdrum of this busy life? Is it natural that the mind should develop in a course directly the reverse of what its educating influences may be? If not, then the dearth of literary taste and culture which prevails, must have a cause, and there is no doubt but the guilt, if guilt we should call it, is chargeable in many cases to our system of education.

To remedy this what should teachers do? First, we would say, let them cultivate a literary taste in themselves. Let them read daily the best writers of the age. We do not wish that they should busy themselves in dreamy sentimentality—that they should quote poetry as their scholars repeat the multiplication table, or read novels till their imagination becomes excited and they forget they are mere creatures of clay. This is not what we mean, but we do mean that they should refine their own tastes by contact with the thoughts of the great high-priests of literature, and so form the lessons of the day, or in addition to the lessons, they should be able to kindle the emotions of their pupils with coals burnt off the altar of refinement and culture. This is no mere theory. The writer of this article can well remember the pleasure experienced when a boy of thirteen, from the analysis of some of the finer quotations in the old text books, made by a teacher, whose own soul was warmed by contact with the writings of the poets and *literateurs* of the day. And now, after a lapse of many years, the thoughts then implanted are fresh and beautiful as ever. What has been done can be done. The teacher who loves the beautiful himself can surely find time to call the attention of his pupils to what gives pleasure to every cultivated mind, and thus beget that love for literature, which affords rest as well recreation, and which can be made a source of moral elevation as well as a spur to liter-