

# Ontario Normal College Monthly.

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## Ontario Normal College Monthly

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GRANTED (1) that teaching is to-day a profession, not a trade, (2) that the true teacher does indirectly promote social harmony through principles which inculcate early in the children's hearts the sentiments of the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God, thereby assisting greatly in the solution of the problems which affect to-day the peace and prosperity of a large proportion of humanity; (3) that the teacher is one of the chief factors in moulding national life by means of his influence on individuals.

What should be the teacher's ideal, first in reference to himself and secondly with reference to his pupils?

The history of religions and the biographies of educational reformers reveal clearly the importance and the effects of ideals. Every individual has an ideal of some kind whether he is conscious of that fact or not. It is generally expressed in terms of what he hopes to attain in religion and knowledge. The elements of that ideal may have been gathered from various sources—books, persons, or from Divine inspiration. The ideal of the child is supplanted by the higher or lower ideal of the adult as determined by environment. If our environment controls us our ideal will

be lowered, but if we control our environment our ideal will gradually become more perfect. We cannot escape an ideal of some kind. The importance of having a high ideal lies in the fact that our potentialities are only limited by that ideal. No religious enthusiast, no educational reformer ever rose in practice higher than his ideal. As a matter of fact he never as a rule quite attained his ideal. The effect of an ideal lies in its reflex influence on the individual whereby he is moulded into conformity with its elements. As you change the heart and strengthen the will of an individual you gradually change his ideal. This shows what part of the educational process is of most importance and of most influence in moulding character.

Can any considerations be of more importance than these to any teacher or to any individual? We would naturally expect the most successful teachers (properly so called) to possess the noblest motive and the highest ideal possible. Since an ideal is of such supreme importance, where can the highest be found. There is only one source known to the children of men—*Christ*. He is the perfect model as to

(1) Motive—unselfish love.

(2) Ideal—perfect as God is perfect.

(3) Educational principles based on human nature.

Do we desire the highest ideal in