

selfishness and wealthy meanness. There are some unpopular duties connected with all public situations—duties from which selfish sympathy shrinks, but which honest patriotism performs—duties which often commence under the opposition and abuse of many, but issue in the satisfaction of success and amid the gratitude and applause of all. In regard to large central school houses in cities, towns, and villages, after the noble examples of the Boards of Trustees in Hamilton, London, Brantford, Brockville and Chatham, &c., it is remarked in the last Annual School Report for the State of Massachusetts—"In small cities and towns it may often be found more economical to bring all grades of schools into one building, than to be at the expense of purchasing several sites and erecting as many houses."

16. The remarks of some persons convey the idea that School Trustees are despots, trampling upon the rights and sacrificing the interests of the communities in which they live. Such remarks are as foolish as their imputations are unjust. The interests and burdens of Trustees are identical with those of their neighbours. The fact of their having been elected Trustees, is an avowal by their constituents that they are the most proper persons to be entrusted with their educational interests. If Trustees in any instance neglect or betray those interests, they can be superseded, on the expiration of their term of office, like all other unfaithful representatives of the people; and while in office, they have a right to the forbearance and support which the importance and difficulties of the office demand. Unlike most other public officers, Trustees work without pay; they may sometimes err; and who does not? But if there is any one class of public officers entitled to more respect, more confidence and support than others, it is Trustees of Public Schools,—the elected guardians of the youth of the land, the responsible depositaries of their most vital interests. And if there is any one class of public officers in the selection of whom the people should be more careful than in the selection of others, it is School Trustees. The welfare of youth, and the future progress and greatness of Canada require, that the best, the most intelligent, the most enterprising, public-spirited, progressive men in the land should be elected School Trustees.

EDUCATION FOR AN AGRICULTURAL PEOPLE.

BY E. NOTT.

In all countries, and especially our own, the agricultural people is the people. Magnify as we may, each other interest—commercial, manufacturing—they form but small fractions of the mass—themselves proceeding from and intimately bound to the agricultural population and receiving their character from it. Increase our commerce and manufactures as we must, they can never employ a tythe of the community. Our increasing millions must be chiefly agricultural, forming the nation and governing the nation. Yes, governing the nation. In all countries, and especially our own, weight is as numbers. The agricultural population do and will, directly or indirectly govern the country. The farmers will regulate or distract manufactures or commerce—will secure or disturb our civil policy. If they originate no governmental acts, when they do but act or decline acting upon propositions of good or evil, their decision forms the issue of every proposal. If the breath, whether of patriotism or factions, whether of wisdom or folly, proceeds from some other region, it blows in vain until it moves the level surface of society. On its agitation or quiet, must depend the result. Whether good or bad are now prevalent among us, the agriculturists have welcomed; whether they have been missed, they have rejected, whether it is to be feared or hoped for, awaits their decision. In proportion, therefore, as we discover the just principle of education for an agricultural people, do we prepare for the welfare of the whole mass.

Of course the first direction is, that education should be such as to guide and aid labour to the best account; such as at once to make agriculture more easy and more productive. I am sure that the general impression of society on this subject, as well as almost universal practice, is very defective. Agriculture needs and admits an appropriate education, which may be gained without teachers and without any schools; but is more likely to be begun and after-

wards well pursued in proportion as it should be aided by teachers and schools. Let the rudiments of agriculture be taught; let the proper books for gaining further knowledge, be pointed out. Let the connexion of mechanical and chemical philosophy with the labours of the field, be understood. Let the prejudice against "book learning" be discarded, and our rural population would rise rapidly to better method, and to a more comfortable state of life; while a proper study as their own profession, would greatly improve their faculties and make them more and more capable of all other knowledge.

But a proper education regards more the securing wealth and health and life and limb, than the mere supply of the animal necessities, even the making life as agreeable as possible. That is not deserving the name of education which provides only for a livelihood a boon secured by mere instinct to the meanest animal. Education of man must provide for the well being of man—for the refined enjoyment of man—for the higher senses of the body and for all the faculties of the mind. This is true not only in the higher classes—against which if we had them by hereditary descent, I have nothing to say; but it is true of the working classes. The working man is not educated properly as a working man—unless he is trained to the enjoyments of a man.

I need not dwell at large upon what is perfectly obvious, the pleasures which an improved and improving mind will find in reading and in conversation and in those reflections which belong only to improved and improving minds. They are but savages themselves who claim that savage is as happy as civilized life, and that the well informed and studious are no happier than the boor in his chosen ignorance. The happiness of improved and improving minds is within the reach of the agricultural population, and that is not a proper education for them which does not furnish them this happiness. Reading, reflection, conversation, such as belong to improved and improving minds, are the peculiar boon of the country. The absence of variety, of objects to stimulate curiosity, leaves the mind free to read the works of the wise and the good of all nations and all times, given to the farmer as they are in his own mother tongue—his accustomed solicitude and quiet give scope to his own reflections upon this growing knowledge.

But when I speak of an education, to make rural life as agreeable as possible, while I require suitable reading, reflection, conversation, I am desirous to insist on one particular more likely to be left out of view; I mean that agricultural education should prepare the people for their own peculiar enjoyments, to take delight in rural life, and especially in their own rural home.

As to the general delight in rural life, it can hardly fail to follow, from that study of agriculture for the purposes which we have already commended. I am not afraid to say, that there is no employment of man so likely to grow in one's affections, as he endeavours to learn to carry it on to the best advantage, as agriculture. Other employments are regarded more for their profits; but this, from step to step, as one tries to improve it, more and more interests and delights the mind, while its results are ever furnishing the finest pictures to the eye.

But I am yet more desirous to see cherished a special fondness for one's home,—for the endearing scene, its rocks, its rivers and hills and vales, its orchards and groves, as they were to the eye of childhood, and as they will remain to the eye of old age, and for that new and improving scenery with which industry and taste will adorn the cottager's acre, and the wealthy landlord's domain. To regard field and forest and hills and valleys and rocks and rill and rivers; to be capable of investing the home of labour or of wealth with new and changing beauties, to delight in gardening, husbandry and tree planting, to love with a cherished fondness the ancient and growing beauties of a home; to acquire the capacity of leaving it with reluctance even at the call of necessity and duty, and the consequent power of making another home the source of similar enjoyment. These, though missed sadly in our rural districts, are most important objects of rural education.

Let the love of nature and of home and of country revive every where and bless our eastern lands, and establish families and communities in beloved homes even to the farthest west. Thus shall our country assume in the progress of its rural civilization the outward form of Paradise, which can never be given to brick and mortar of the city; thus become the quiet garden of a peaceful and virtuous population.