

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

FROM A BUSINESS STANDPOINT.

No Government by its action can control the industrial enterprises of nations.

The question of individual force is that which is inherent in a people, and for this no substitute can be found, and if the people of older lands are numerically greater than we are, it behooves us to increase the force of the individual by a system of training and culture that will atone for the smallness of our numbers by increasing the force of the unit. How this can be most efficiently done is a problem that is exciting universal attention, and while no solution has yet been presented, it is very generally agreed that some change in our educational system is necessary to produce the desired result. The aim of our educational system, as at present constituted, has not been to turn out good, all-round men, for tradesmen or merchants, but rather to follow out a classical course, with the inevitable result of over-crowding the so-called learned professions. I believe it to be the duty of every nation to give every citizen an education that will not only make him a better citizen, but will assist him to achieve the highest possible success, and in these days of keen competition the citizen must be equipped for life by having been trained to some method that will have a direct bearing on problems that will meet him in life's battle. We need leaders as fully trained for the factory, for the counting-house, for the business rotunda, as for the academical chair.

Education should comprehend two principles—Culture and Capability. The first is the approach, mentally and morally, to the ideal man; the last should mean the power of performing the highest possible service. Has this always been realized as the aim of our present system? I think not. I myself can remember when in this Canada of ours education was largely a caste distinction and intended only for the wealthy. This was before the establishment of our system of free schools, and the true dignity of human labor was not then recognized; but better days have dawned, and now the more widely the distribution of the product of labor the more inspiring to the operative is the thought that the result of his skill in design and completion is destined to awaken in some unknown recipient a thrill of pleasure as the reward of his activities. A system of education cannot be built up in a few years, nor can any system successful elsewhere be adopted in its entirety.