

Educational Thought.

It is announced that arrangements have been made by which the Guelph Agricultural College becomes affiliated with Toronto University, and degrees will be granted to the students who pass the necessary examination in a curriculum provided by Toronto. If this arrangement can be carried out without detriment to the free and thoroughly practical and experimental character of the education imparted at Guelph, it may prove highly beneficial to the province. Whatever tends in any way to enhance the dignity of agriculture, horticulture, and related pursuits, in the eyes of the young people of Canada, and to induce a larger number to devote themselves to such pursuits, will do much good. These occupations are, in our view, at least equally honorable with the professions of law and medicine, and equally worthy of being taken under the wing of the University.

"I HAVE taught my note-book through and do not know what to do next," said a teacher to a superintendent who was visiting the school. An exchange, mentioning the incident, draws a picture which, it says, is from real life, of the teacher standing before the class day after day, going through her note-book, and giving lesson after lesson just as they had been given in the Normal School in which she was trained, imitating as well as she could the very looks and gestures of her favorite teacher. We should be sorry to believe there are many amongst our readers who can make no better use of methods given them as illustrations. Sample methods and lessons are excellent as illustrations, but when used as models for exact imitation they become snares and clogs. Every teacher worthy the vocation will have his or her own methods and will never let them become stereotyped.

THE annual convention of the Ontario Teachers' Association is to be held in the Public Hall of the Education Department, Toronto, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, August 14th, 15th, and 16th. The programme of exercises promises a meeting of more than ordinary interest. The subjects chosen for the papers and addresses in the different sections are living, practical questions, while the names of the various speakers and writers afford ample guarantee that the treatment will be thoughtful and scholarly. We have been glad to note in the reports of the Teachers' Associations some evidences of increasing interest in the provincial meeting, and some indications of a purpose to make it more thoroughly representative than hitherto. There should be a very full attendance, not only of delegates, but of all interested in educational work. Certificates entitling the holders to return tickets at reduced rates will be issued to all who wish to attend. These certificates may be obtained, *previous to the commencement of the journey*, from the Secretary, Robert W. Doan, 216 Carleton street, Toronto.

AN interesting point came up for discussion in connection with Mr. Powell's paper on

"Surface Measure," at the West Bruce Teachers' Association. We do not know whether many of our readers will agree with the view ascribed to one of Mr. Powell's critics, that it is not necessary that a pupil should understand everything he is required to learn. That view was very common thirty or forty years ago. For our own part we quite concur with Mr. Powell. Requiring a child to commit to memory what he cannot understand, is very like giving him food which he is unable to digest. Of course the analogy fails if pressed too far, inasmuch as the child may afterwards understand and assimilate the mental pabulum. But the objections to such a method of teaching are, to our mind, overwhelming. It deprives the pupil of the pleasure of learning, which is the natural stimulus to mental exertion and its best reward. It makes his lesson a dry and irksome task. It fosters an unintelligent mental habit, which must greatly retard development. Worst of all, from the educationist's point of view, there is absolutely no education in the process, save of the one faculty of memory. But surely the work of the teacher is to educate, not to cram.

THE Teachers' Guild of Great Britain and Ireland seems to be quite successful in its operation. The Fourth Annual Meeting was held a few weeks since under the presidency of Rev. Canon Percival, in the Westminster Town Hall, London. The *Christian World* thus summarizes the proceedings:

Dr. Percival, in opening, said the progress of the Guild since its registration in 1885 had been such as to justify their hopes of its becoming an influential and permanent institution. They aimed at improving the status of the teacher and the efficiency of the teaching staff; these were national objects, and to achieve them their very first business was to organize. Sir Philip Magnus moved the adoption of the report, which referred in very satisfied terms to the results of the year's working, and recorded a present membership of about 2,700, the proportion of men among the new members being much larger than in former years. He spoke of the Technical Instruction Bill now before Parliament as in nearly every respect desirable and of importance to their Guild, as bearing upon the interests of teachers by the new and more intimate connection it would establish between primary and secondary education; it would certainly provide for higher and scientific training by giving increased power to the School Boards or some other local bodies to assist these objects out of the rates. Miss Emily Davies, in seconding, strongly advocated thrift on the part of teachers; she urged them to begin saving as early as possible, and to secure an annuity to begin, say, at the age of fifty. There should be a more equitable distribution of endowments between the boys' and girls schools, and then women's salaries might be made more adequate in many cases than at present. There was not an excess, she maintained, in the supply of really properly-trained teachers. The Very Rev. Dr. Graham urged the necessity of teachers being submitted both to a test of knowledge, and to a test of ability to impart the knowledge. Mrs. Bryant, D.Sc., regretted the indiscriminate crowding into the profession of persons unfitted in every way for it.

To be forever seeing when your boy yields to a temptation, and never discovering when he resists one, is the surest way to promote the faults, and discourage the virtues.—*Lyman Abbott.*

WHAT our schools should aim to accomplish is not to store the memory with numerous facts about this or that subject, but to develop the reasoning powers; to train the pupil to think; to stimulate to independence of thought; in short to make him a thinking rational human being, that he may understand and successfully develop *himself* and so fit himself for a useful member of society.—*Supt. F. C. Morse, Portsmouth, N.H.*

THE notion that education—book knowledge and the discipline of the school—is useful mainly to those who practice a "liberal profession," is an old one, a relic of the class time when class, like caste, built division walls in society. Mr. Horace Mann, probably as good authority as can be quoted, says, that "throughout the whole range of mechanical industry the well educated operative did more work, did it better, wasted less, used his allotted portion of machinery to more advantage and more profit, earned more money, commanded more confidence, rose faster, rose higher, from lower to the more advanced positions of employment, than did the uneducated operative." This summary was not merely the opinion of Mr. Mann, but was the result of careful statistical compilation and accurate observation.—*Exchange.*

I HAVE been watching the careers of young men by the thousand in this busy city for over thirty years, and I find that the chief difference between the successful and the failures lies in the single element of *staying power*. Permanent success is oftener won by holding on than by sudden dash, however brilliant. The easily discouraged who are pushed back by a straw, are all the time dropping to the rear—to perish or be carried along on the stretcher of Charity. They who understand and practice Abraham Lincoln's homely maxim of "pegging away," have achieved the solidest success. It was the honest boast of an eminent New Yorker that the first dollar he ever earned was for hammering down paving-stones in the street, and that went to the captain of the sloop who brought him a penniless youth to the city. Oliver Wendell Holmes' couplet describes in a rather coarse and carnal fashion what is vital Christian grace:—

"Stick to your aim; the mongrel's hold may slip,
But crowbars can't unloose the mastiff's grip.

—*Rev. Dr. L. T. Cuyler, in N. Y. Independent.*

LECTURING in Nicholson street United Presbyterian church, Edinburgh, on "The Philosophy of Education," Professor Blackie said that the usual idea of education implied that children were empty and wanted filling, but that they were no more empty than the seed that was put into the ground. Education did not consist in giving people knowledge, but in drawing out the full and complete men. * * * The first thing they had to do in educating children was to let them observe, and not put their books and miserable grammars before them. In the present age books had taken the place of men. If in education they did not make better men, and more harmonious men, they missed the mark. Without that, the more knowing and cleverer they were the more they were like the devil. After quoting and endorsing what Goethe said of moral culture, Professor Blackie contended that there should be in every school a biography of great men belonging to the country. Another great feature in moral culture was song. It was a great mistake to look upon music as an amusement or recreation. Songs stirred the whole man; they did not merely drill the brain, but they made the blood warm. They could cherish no bad passion when under the influence of song. Jealousy, spite, envy, grumbling, all disappeared when a man sang a good song. The æsthetic in man's nature should be cultivated, and the school-room walls ought to be covered with very beautiful forms. They should put beautiful things before the children and let them look at and feed upon them.