

THE O. A. C. REVIEW.

This principle is by no means new. With a birth long before the christian era, it still exists with undiminished strength. Not only with its methods. Through all these centuries the study of the classics and abstract mathematics has been cherished, as affording the best, if not only, means of developing the mental powers. The fruits of this system have certainly been great, as shown in the works of such as Milton and Newton, Gladstone and Thomson.

But a new era has begun, and new methods prevail. The study of nature, in the widest sense of the term, is now receiving that attention which compensates in a measure for its neglect in the past. Here is presented for investigation a field far exceeding in extent and grandeur all others combined. Rightly pursued the results are more fruitful, both mentally and materially, than any obtained in the past.

But in any study, how shall the best results be obtained? From a mere memorizing of facts? Shall the student be content to rely entirely upon the labors of others, and make no effort to search for himself?

Intelligence consists not only in knowing, but also in knowing how. A real and adequate knowledge of things can only be obtained in the presence of the things themselves, where the infinite variety of forms and conditions invites the closest observation. But observation alone will not develop mental power; reason must be cultivated as well. The exercise of any faculty promotes its development; hence the student cannot be too strongly urged to use his own powers, to rely as far as possible upon his individual efforts.

Unfortunately more work is crowded into many courses than can be properly pursued. This, with the injurious system of competition for prizes and medals induces the practice of cramming for examination, instead of laying a sound foundation for future intellectual attainment.

It is not the amount of knowledge a man may possess, but the use he can make of it, that determines the nature of his education. He might know every detail of veterinary science and be no surgeon, for lack of understanding in applying it. He might be able to repeat the name of a thousand bugs or more, and know but little of insect life. He might have at his finger's end every rule of rhetoric, or a whole volume of poetry, and still be unable to present an original thought.

There is one point which I would specially emphasize, and for which there is urgent need in the too frequent practice of dealing with the whole class as one. On no account should the student lose his own individuality. The types of intellect are as various as the forms of faces. Then let each person pursue with special zeal that line of work with which his mind is most in harmony. In that he should receive every encouragement to investigate for himself. We need less competition, but more thoroughness; less of the *what*, but more of the *why*.

"The works of God are fair for naught,
Unless our eyes, in seeing,
See hidden in the thing the thought
That animates its being."

COLLEGE GRADUATES.

From the day a boy enters college as a freshman, with all the veridancy of a rural childhood still upon him, until he leaves the hallowed precincts of his Alma Mater, his one constant thought, his loftiest ambition is to stand before a distinguished audience on commencement day, and receive his diploma from the hands of a Cabinet Minister, or some other equally distinguished gentleman.

During his first year he looks up to the Senior as one placed on an exalted throne, high above him. One who ranks in his mind far ahead of tutor or professor, and he would readily give many years of his life to become a member of the graduating class. But alas, the truth confronts him, that "lowliness is young ambitions ladder," and he must pick his steps and go slowly, before he can reach this beau ideal pinnacle of fame.

As time goes on he sees the upper classes in their turn ascend the rostrum and receive their parchments, and he knows his time is drawing near.

Convocation day at length arrives, and our gallant freshman of former years, marches up the aisle and receives his diploma, amid the loud cheering of his class-mates and fellow-students. He likewise receives a few words of encouragement from his professors,

and some prominent individual who has been called upon to make the presentation, loudly praises his merits and lauds his lofty ambitions. Slowly and with flushed face he passed down to his seat, thus closing the last chapter in his college career.

Commencement is over, and like one in a dream he seeks his room and gathering together his worldly goods, returns to the home of his father. Here he rests and the world hears of him no more. Why? Because he has "attained the upmost round," and now that he has been educated, his imagination leads him to suppose that he knows more than all the country round, and so he is now content to settle down and pass into obscurity.

How often do we hear the question asked, "What has become of that bright boy—who graduated in the class S—?" And too often comes the answer, "He has gone back home and settled down," or "No one has heard of him since graduation." His college associates, one by one pass from his memory and finally the old institution herself is lost sight of, her place being rapidly filled with the "busy cares of men."

Is this right? Do we owe nothing to the institution that gave us our education? To the old class rooms where we have so often assembled, and the debating hall where we discuss questions of seeming moment, where we have mingled with students from all parts of the globe, and by association, gained new ideas and methods which continually help us in our every day life? For all this we should at least keep up with the working and changes of the old school, correspond with the professors and students, and in every way show our appreciation of that education, which we received within her walls.

The above picture may be somewhat overdrawn and the character depicted therein, beyond the proper limits, but the point I wish to emphasize is none the less apparent, viz:—That on the day a boy receives his degree, that day his practical education should commence, and it is now more than at any subsequent time that he requires all his wits and genius to assist him in obtaining that distinction among his fellow men, which his talents and his Alma Mater have eminently fitted him for. Above all he should bear in mind that any success he may meet with in after life, is due in a great measure to the careful instruction imparted to him by his former professors.

Happily this dormant spirit is not found in all graduates, for there are some, who being born to rule, will make their presence felt in any community. But the question which naturally arises with such individuals is, to what use can I put my talents that they will yield me one hundred fold.

Not to confuse the readers of our humble REVIEW, we will speak to the point, and keep our minds fixed on our own Alma Mater, the O. A. C. Many farmers and others in the Province of Ontario, find fault with the course of instruction, maintaining that it has a strong tendency to divert the minds of the students from practical agriculture as a profession. Is the supposition correct? Partially so, mostly not. The boy who enters the college—and there have been many such—with a proper appreciation of the independent life which the farmer leads, and who at the same time is cognizant of the fact that much hard labor must be expended on every Canadian farm, will select from his course of studies, that which is practical and can be applied at home, and when he graduates will return to his father's homestead and apply such methods. He will thus be a better farmer by putting system into all his work, and by the use of labor-saving machines, which he has learned to manipulate while at college. Soon he will take the lead in his profession and be honored and esteemed by his less fortunate neighbors.

On the other hand, a boy who will not exert himself to obtain information, and expects his teachers to educate him without his assistance, would never have made a good farmer, and a poor farmer is worse than none, for he not only destroys his own farm and lets it go to weeds and waste, but like one decayed potato in a bushel, he soon taints all those with whom he comes in contact.

Such are the boys by which the standing of the college is judged, and because they themselves had not ambition or brains enough to graduate, they spend their time spreading reports among their neighbors, running down the college and her professors. As "empty vessels make most sound," so a few such ex-students can do more to injure the reputation of an institution, than many hard-working, industrious individuals, can counteract by a simple show of their work.