

solid platform which is raised upon that good foundation, we invite the ministers of religion, of all denominations—the *de facto* spiritual guides of the people of the country—to take their stand along with us. That, so far from hampering or impeding them in the exercise of their sacred functions, we ask and we beg them to take the children—the lambs of the flock which are committed to their care—aside, and to lead them to those pastures and streams where they will find, as they believe it, the food of life and the waters of consolation. (Applause.) Permit me in conclusion, to say, both as an humble Christian man, and as the head of the Civil Government of the Province, that it gives me unfeigned pleasure to perceive that the youth of this country, of all denominations, who are destined in their maturer years to meet in the discharge of the duties of civil life upon terms of perfect civil and religious equality—I say it gives me pleasure to hear and to know that they are receiving an education which is fitted so well to qualify them for the discharge of those important duties, and that while their hearts are yet tender, and their affections green and young, they are associated under conditions which are likely to promote among them the growth of those truly Christian graces—mutual respect, forbearance and charity. (Loud applause.)

"The position of the building is well chosen, being surrounded with cultivated ground sufficiently extensive to be usefully employed in illustrating the lectures given on Vegetable Physiology and Agricultural Chemistry.* The rooms are all very lofty, airy, and scrupulously clean; a notice at the entrance warns you, 'The dirty practice of spitting not allowed in this building;' and, as far as the eye could discern, the notice is rigidly obeyed. I was told that a specific had been found to cure the filthy habit. I mention it for the benefit of hotel keepers and railway conductors, in all places where such a relic of barbarism may still find a welcome. On a certain occasion the lecturer, having received undeniable proof that one of the students had violated the before-mentioned regulation, stopped in the middle of one of his sublimest flights, repeated sonorously the notice, called the culprit by name, informed him that his endeavour to dissipate his filth into infinity by the sole of his shoe was useless, and ordered him forthwith to take his handkerchief out and wipe it up clean. Disobedience was expulsion: with crimson cheek he expiated his offence by obedience to the order, and doubtless through the hushed silence in which he completed his labour he became a confirmed anti-expectoratorist.

"Great attention is very properly paid to cleanliness, inasmuch as if these young men, who are destined to teach others, acquire filthy habits, they naturally encourage the same vice in their pupils, and thus may be almost said to nationalize it. All the tables and stools are fitted like those in the schools of the United States, which is an immense improvement on the one long desk and long form to match, which predominate all but universally at home. The instruction given is essentially by lecture and questioning, and I was particularly struck with the quiet, modulated tones in which the answers were given, and which clearly proved how much pains were taken upon this apparently trifling but really very important point.† You heard no harsh declamation grating on your ear, and, on the other hand, you were not lulled to sleep by dreary, dull monotony.

"There are two small schools attached to the establishment, for these Normal aspirants, male and female, to practice upon, when considered sufficiently qualified. Those thus employed during my visit, seemed to succeed admirably, for I never saw more merry, cheerful faces, which I consider one of the best tests of a master's efficiency. The little girls taking a fancy for music, purchased among themselves a cottage piano, which being their own instrument, I have no doubt increased their interest in the study amazingly. The boys have a kind of gymnasium under a shed, which, when released from school, they rush to with an avidity only equalled by that which the reader may have experienced in his early days when catching sight of a pastry-cook's shop immediately after receiving his first tip.‡

"I believe that to this establishment, which was founded in 1846, belongs the honor of being The Pioneer Normal School in the Western Hemisphere. But while giving due credit to the Governor General and the government for their leading parts in its foundation, it should never be forgotten how much indebted the establishment is to the unwearied zeal and patient investigations of Dr. Ryerson, the Chief Superin-

* Some idea of the useful practical information taught in these lectures may be formed by a reference to the following, which are the chief subjects upon which the pupils are examined:—Spelling, Reading, Grammar, Composition, Geography—Mathematical, Physical and Political,—Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Mensuration and Mechanics, Book-keeping, History, Natural History, Hullah's Vocal Music, Natural Philosophy, Agricultural Chemistry, Science of Education, Art of Teaching, School Organization, &c.

† My observations at various schools in the United States, satisfied me that no attention is paid by the teachers to the tone of voice in which the boys give their answers.

‡ The females are regularly taught calisthenics, and the boys gymnastics, by a professor.

tendent of Schools in Canada. This gentleman carefully examined the various systems and internal arrangement of scholastic establishments, not only all over the States, but in every country of the Old World, selecting from each those features which seemed to produce the most comfort, the best instruction, and the greatest harmony.

"With reference to religious instruction at the Normal Schools, Dr. Ryerson has kindly furnished me with the following statement:—'A part of each Friday afternoon is set apart for this purpose, and a room allowed for the minister of each of the religious persuasions of the students, to give instruction to the members of his church, who are required to attend, as also to attend the service of such Church at least once every Sunday. Hitherto we have found no difficulty, reluctance, or neglect, in giving full effect to this system.

"To those who take an interest in education, the report of the system used in Canada, drawn up by Dr. Ryerson, and printed by order of the Legislative Assembly, will afford much pleasure and information; it is of course far too large a subject to enter upon in these pages, containing, as it does, so vast an amount of matter worthy of serious reflection.

"Some estimate of the value of the scholastic establishments of Upper Canada may be formed from the fact, that while its sphere of usefulness is rapidly extending, it has already reached the following honourable position:—The population of Upper Canada is close upon 1,000,000; the number of children between the ages of 5 and 16 is 263,000; the number of children on the rolls of common school establishments is 179,587; and the grand total of money available for these glorious purposes is £176,000. I feel conscious that I have by no means done full justice to this important subject; but the limits of a work like this render it impossible so to do. Let it suffice to say, that Canada is inferior to none of its neighboring rivals as regards the quality of instruction given, and that it is rapidly treading on the heels of the most liberal of them, as regards the amount raised for its support. The Normal School I conceive to be a model as nearly perfect as human agency has yet achieved; and the chemical and agricultural lectures there given, and practically illustrated on the small farm adjoining the building, cannot fail to produce most useful and important results in a young uncultivated country possessing the richest soil imaginable. The Governor General and the government deserve every credit for the support and encouragement they have given to education; but if I may draw a comparison without being invidious, I would repeat, that it is to the unusual zeal and energy of Dr. Ryerson, to his great powers of discriminating and selecting what he found most valuable in the countless methods he examined, and to his combination and adaptation of them, that the colony is mainly indebted for its admirable system. Well may Upper Canada be proud of her educational achievements, and in her past exertions read a hopeful earnest of a still more noble future."

III. FROM A NEW ENGLAND POINT OF VIEW.

The time has arrived when the "schoolmaster" must go "abroad" to gain instruction, as well as to impart it. The teacher who is satisfied with his own experience, and will not take the trouble to inquire what progress others are making, is in great danger of finding that he is detached from the rest of the train, and that the passengers have all gone into the "car forward."

Teachers above all other classes in the community, are favored with frequent and regular vacations, and are, therefore, the more inexcusable if they fail to become in some degree familiar with the systems and modes of instruction that are adopted in the best schools. Most of the teachers of the State are so situated that they can enjoy these advantages with only a moderate expenditure of either time or money.

Availing ourselves of a recent vacation, we went as far as Canada West, and spent several days in studying the educational system of that Province. We stopped *en passant* at Utica, with the assembled teachers of the Key-stone State, and found that the New York State Teachers' Association embraces several hundred of the best teachers in the country, with three times as much intellectual and moral power as they can bring to bear effectively in one organized body. We lingered also at Trenton Falls, near Utica, long enough to learn that it is one of the most beautiful summer retreats that an exhausted teacher could possibly desire.

A few of the impressions received during our visit to Toronto, and facts gathered there, may not be wholly destitute of interest to the readers of the "Teacher."

So much has been written and said of the Prussian system of schools, that well-informed teachers have become familiar with most of its prominent features; but a system of education, in some respects more complete and imposing than that of Prussia, has sprung up on our own borders, which appears to have attracted less general attention among us.

The present system of education for Upper Canada is identified with the name of the Rev. Egerton Ryerson, D.D., Chief Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Ryerson entered upon the duties of his office in 1844, and spent an entire year in examining the different systems of other countries, both in Europe and America. The results of these