



Agriculture in Ontario Schools.

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S PLANS FOR ITS INTRODUCTION.

Teachers, trustees and others concerned in the advancement of our schools, will be interested in Circulars 13, 13a and 13b, just issued by the Ontario Department of Education; in them the intentions and plans of the Department regarding the teaching of agriculture are fully set forth. It is hoped that everybody in Ontario who is interested in any way in the work of the schools may become acquainted with the scheme and that a strong public sentiment may favor the general adoption of the work.

Circular 13 gives the revised regulations governing the distribution of grants. School boards are encouraged by liberal grants to undertake the work. Where the work is carried out under a teacher holding a certificate in agriculture, an initial grant of \$50.00 and subsequent annual grants of \$30.00 can be earned; but no board will receive more than it expends on the work. Where the work is carried out under an uncertificated teacher, the grant is \$12.00 when practical work in the school grounds is made part of the course, and \$8.00 when the practical work by the children is carried on in home gardens. The special grants to teachers range from \$8.00 to \$30.00.

The plan is to have one hour a week throughout the year given to the study, which shall be of a practical character and related closely to local interests. A small garden on the school grounds will be used for simple experiments as well as vegetable and flower plots. The growing of shrubs, vines, window boxes and hanging baskets to beautify the school and its surroundings will be considered part of the work also.

A survey of the work done in Ontario during 1911 is included in the circular. This shows that school gardens for which grants were given increased from fifteen in 1910 to thirty-three in 1911, and that \$2,320.00 was paid out in special grants. Besides there were over sixty other schools reporting work in school gardening. A very large increase is already assured for this year.

Circular 13a shows how the Agricultural College lends itself as a teacher-training school in this cause. The work of the ten weeks' spring term and the four weeks' summer school in July are fully outlined. No fees are charged for instruction in these courses which lead to a certificate in agriculture. The attendance last July reached two hundred. A larger attendance is expected this year and preference is given to successful teachers of experience. Applications should be made early.

Circular 13b is issued as a practical guide to pupils in gardening. The intention is to have it used as a supplementary school reader. Pupils carrying on the work will add to its pages with accounts of their own experiences. Schools will be furnished free with a sufficient number of copies for the use of their classes.

Other publications are under preparation for the schools. In the course of a few weeks the Department will send out to all the schools the first two of a series of agricultural lesson charts; one dealing with alfalfa and the other with the advantages of early seeding. Accompanying these there will be pupils' circulars supplementing the information given on the wall chart. Moreover, supplies of seed will be furnished the schools free for small practical studies to be carried out in conjunction with the chart in small plots in the school grounds. All schools may thus readily engage in the work. It is hoped that teachers may

be encouraged by trustees and parents to take it up.

Other charts, bulletins and supplies will be forthcoming from time to time. It will be easily possible for every rural school in Ontario to give its pupils valuable instruction in the principles of agriculture. The support of every one having the welfare of our schools at heart is solicited.

Copies of the circulars are sent to all the schools for the use of teachers. Other persons desiring copies of these publications or particulars regarding the distribution of seeds to the schools, may apply to the Director of Elementary Agricultural Education, Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, Canada.

The Roundabout Club

Literary Society Study No. IV.

(Continued.)

To-day we give you two of the best essays upon the poetical selections which appeared in our issue of February 22nd.

We were much pleased with the general tone of the work upon these selections. Almost invariably our students evinced a keen sense of the beauty, the music, the "poetry" of the finer among these fragments. The stanzas from Browning (III.) proved to be favorites, also the inspiring challenge from Dante Gabriel Rossetti (No. IX.). We were glad to see that one at least was impressed with the charm of that beautiful little poem beginning, "Blows the wind to-day" (No. V.), the point of which may be better understood when it is known that Robert Louis Stevenson wrote the stanzas when ill in Hawaii, in reply to a dedication of a book to him by a fellow writer amid the "hills of home," Scotland.

A number those No. VII., possibly because of previous familiarity with this poem, but we were surprised to find that all passed over the other fine fragment from Wordsworth, No. II.

Perhaps without realizing why they did so, several followed, at least in part, the plan which we had in mind when setting the selections, viz., that they be taken in pairs for contrast, I. and II., III. and IV., V. and VI., VII. and VIII., IX. and X.

The bit of doggerel (No. VIII.) was, without exception, either passed over with the contempt that it deserved, or made the butt of a caustic observation. May we "fess up"? We were wicked enough to slip the extract in with the express purpose of seeing if any of our students would be lacking enough in poetic perception to consider it seriously. It was a great satisfaction to find that they all rang true, that not a single one was caught by the mean little bait.

NOTES ON SELECTIONS III., IX., X., VIII.

Impressionistic work allures because, built into the bulwarks of its simplicity are the gates of suggestiveness, each opening into avenues of endearing variety. It is this power of affording scope for the personality of each and every individual which constitutes the charm of all such work; for into it each can weave his own fancies, his own peculiar whims and longings, with full and satisfied belief in the suitability of the ensuing pattern. Of this type of work no better examples could be found than Browning's companion picture-poems: Meeting at Night and Parting at Morning.

In the opening lines note the simple

sketched outlines: the gray sea, the long black land, the yellow half-moon. Presto. With but three movements of his pencil he has depicted a whole scene; yet what one of us does not see that sea in every detail, with the effect of the moon on the waves and the infinite variety of the night land forms, each expressed in terms of our own personality? Further note that these lines give the decisive effect of a viewpoint: hence, an observer. Note also where that observer is, and how fast he travels, the impression of the speed being gathered from the swiftly-changed viewpoint. One moment and he sees the long, black land—an effect only to be obtained from a distance—and the next he quenches "its speed" the slushy sand."

Questions at once arise: Why this swift motion? Will it be continued in the succeeding stanza? What other means are used to emphasize the swift movement besides the general impressionistic effect and the moving viewpoint?

Answering the last query first, it is evident that the sharp, quick march of the metre in "And the startled little waves that leap in fiery ringlets from their sleep," produces the effect of rapid motion in contrast with the meditative movement of the first lines. This slow swing is also noticeable toward the last of the verse, and the last throb of movement as the boat runs up on the beach is shown by the quick run of the words: "And quench its speed"; the sudden break as the boat's nose strikes the beach by the break in the metre after "speed." In the words "pushing" and "slushy" the sound of the boat on the sandy beach is imitated.

The metre of the second stanza gives the same effect of swift motion, but here the motion becomes subsidiary to the more evident eagerness: "Then a mile . . . three fields . . ." and we see the wanderer, measuring the distance just as you and I in our eagerness have measured it.

But what is the special purpose of this swift movement? What did the poet seek to express by those bold outlines of grey sea and long, black land seen by the half-moon? What is the motive of this brief yet effective and comprehensive sketch? Here is the sea-line, the skyline, the moon-path, the night-enshrouded form, the eager tap, the lighted candle, the meeting half seen—half suggested through the glimmer? Is not the whole story told from the standpoint that, as in leisure, the mind becomes photographic so with purpose it becomes impressionistic and the more tense and appealing the purpose, the more do the details blur as the great outlines slip by. Applying this idea, we may assume that in the mind of the wayfarer there exists an intensity of purpose.

It is true that the time is night and the blurring the natural consequence. That, however, seems no sufficient explanation for this bold outline treatment, for if it were, why did Browning use the same effect in the departure in morning's full blaze:

"Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
The sun looked over the mountain's rim,
And straight was a path of gold for him
And the need of a world of men for me."

Therefore, it is safe to say that in combination with the evident picturesqueness of such a setting, there was in the author's mind a purpose, none the less potent if undefined,—that purpose was to convey to us the eagerness which impelled the traveller.

Herein is the genius of Browning, the

genius of every true artist, the power of which the old Roman poet spoke; so that, though each of us is stirred by the effect, the means, the art is veiled.

These two verses are also excellent examples of Browning's dramatic genius. Here, in place of his usual dramatic monologue in words, we have a dramatic monologue in events, and the whole effect of the poem is that of a swift, sure and telling sketch, perfect because it says so little and suggests so much.

It was, also, characteristic of the cheering, human outlook of Browning's nature that he brought his actor home at night, with the day's work behind him, and sent him forth in the morning on a given mission. He might have pictured him as speeding out, ever out and out to the grey sea, "unto the furthest flood-brim," but what would that have signified to us? What sense of unfulfilled longing and of annulment of kin would such a setting bring to us? But if instead we see the long, black land, what does that signify? What cheering element at once arises from the poet's characterization to challenge our senses? So does Browning ever give expression to his own heartfelt outlook. His was no half-lit genius which sent one with naked soul through the staring night; his, the spirit of the morning departure toward "the need of a world of men."

Contrast with what might be termed the incomplete completeness of this vivid tone-sketch, the complete incompleteness of: "And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond, still leagues beyond those leagues there is more sea." In the former the force of emotion is depicted; in the latter, the power of thought, and as the first is effective because it adequately embodies the emotion, so is the latter effective because it adequately embodies the thought. The appeal of the first is through simplicity of physical background; the appeal of the latter through simplicity of intellectual background.

If Selection IX. be a thought effectively expressed, wherein does that effectiveness lie?

Oftentimes if the thought be simple the explanation may, without beclouding the thought, tend to bulkiness; but the more subtle the thought the more simple must the explanation be. Here, therefore, we have a most subtle thought expressed in terms intelligible to a young mind. Therein is its charm, its effectiveness and merit.

But not only must the explanation be simple, but its simplicity must depend either upon its brevity and the use of simple words, or, more generally, upon some outstanding, dominating similarity between the idea presented and the figure by which it is presented. Here the figure of the boundless ocean beautifully expresses the boundless extent of human progress under God's plan. Though only the figure is presented, yet it throws into the limelight the thought which it embodies; that is, while the comparison, the figure of the boundless sea is given and the application to the thought omitted, yet by the omission the thought is made all the clearer.

The selection is a rebuke for the complacency of the self-satisfied soul—complacency arising from lack of perspective, and this mind-perspective is supplied by comparison with natural perspective. When we turn to the section of "In Memoriam," where Tennyson says: "My own dim life should teach me this, That life shall live for evermore," we see that the poet begins by acknowledging the boundlessness of life and soliloquizes as to what would be, if, leagues beyond leagues, there were not sea; then (in that case) he says: "Twere hardly worth my while to choose of things all