

## EDUCATION VS. LEARNING.

Mr. Parkin, Principal of Upper Canada College, in his speech at the University College banquet, said: "You think that you in Canada have the best educational system in the world. I tell you, gentlemen, that you have not the best educational system in the world." As examples of better systems, Mr. Parkin cited those of England and Italy, and said that what we lacked in Canada was "culture." "Culture" is a difficult word for anyone to define, but especially so for one who has received his education wholly in Canada, where, we hear on such high authority, all that the word "culture" indicates is not properly understood. But even a Canadian can see some defects in our methods of educating. Some of these, which exist even in the University of Toronto, the keystone as it is called, of the Provincial system, will here be considered.

Toronto University does not hall-mark a man, as Oxford does and the Scotch universities are said to do. Many of her alumni are not to be distinguished from men who have spent all their lives in business in a country town. This, of course, cannot be said of all, for probably the elite of the youth of Ontario come up to the University. But what I contend is that a training here has but little effect upon a man one way or another. It is generally true that if he comes here to Toronto University a boor, he generally goes away a boor, and if he comes here a gentleman, he goes away a gentleman. He neither gains nor suffers in his manners during his four years' stay at the Provincial seat of higher learning. "Learning" is here used advisedly, for the University can hardly be said to be a seat of higher education, since it is learning, not education which we here acquire. No man can be said to be educated or cultured whose grammar is defective, yet there are University graduates, now nearly connected with their *alma mater*, who cannot say many words without murdering the Queen's English, and there are many students of whom the same statement may be truly made. These graduates may be and doubtless are very learned, but they are not educated or cultured. It may be said that a man's manners are of little consequence, that he is neither a better nor a worse man because he does not know how to behave himself in whatever company he may be thrown, though this, of course, does not constitute the whole of manners, which is something much more clearly recognized than defined. When William of Wykeham built New College, Oxford, that was not his theory, for he put up over its gates, and over those of Winchester School, the words: "Manners makyth man." If this is true, and if it is also true that Toronto University does not give men manners, it may logically be argued that Toronto University does not make men. In that case there is something radically wrong. The fault seems to me to lie to some extent with the system, and also to a less extent with the men—both the students and the teaching staff.

In the system there are two most obvious defects—one connected with the curriculum, and the other with a large number of students who have, by the accident of sex, and through no fault of their own, a bad effect upon the rest. But with them I have no desire to enter upon a quarrel. For these reasons this topic will be left untouched.

The curriculum prescribes too much work. After January most of the undergraduates grudge every evening which is not spent upon examination work. After February this applies equally to the afternoons, while the mornings are always spent at lectures or in the Library. Thus for five months out of the eight which constitute the college year a man has no time to take thought for anything beyond the books he is required to read before May. Not only he has no time to pass away in discussing interesting subjects with his fellow-students, but he cannot spare a single hour to read any book other than those prescribed. Now no man is examined in even a tithe of the subjects

taught at the University, *nor* upon a tithe of the books set down in the curriculum; these subjects and these books form not one-hundredth part of the world's wisdom, yet for five-eighths of his college course a man must do nothing but read in this infinitely small department of knowledge.

The question arises, "Is it for this that we come up to the University?" It is the old question, "Do we want learning, or an education?"

To a small section of the undergraduates who intend to become teachers, learning is doubtless the primary object; but even in regard to them it is questionable whether this system does not involve a loss of human sympathy which will tend to unfit them for their work in the world.

But what of the very much larger number who have no intention of adopting teaching as their life work, but have in view simply an education, or aim perhaps at one of the liberal professions—for instance, law? It must be evident that these men do not take a university course simply to get a more or less inaccurate knowledge of the Theory of Value or the French and German dictionaries by going daily from the lecture rooms to the Library, from the Library to their studies at home and thence to bed.

It may be said, and with truth, that in some courses enough work is set down for eight months to occupy profitably two years of study. By doing some of this work partially and superficially one may obtain specialist standing in some department, but it is not specialist standing for which we come up to the University. We come to get an education, to acquire manners, to gain some small knowledge of men and of the world; and if with these we may secure a smattering of learning, *tant mieux*. But there is so much work prescribed, and it is so generally the fashion to devote oneself to it, that the narrow specialist standing is the almost universal result.

The second great source of weakness in the present system is the want of personal, individual interest on the part of the teaching staff in the men and of the men themselves in their fellows. The professors care little whether undergraduates attend their lectures or not, beyond the natural desire to see them succeed as students. The success or failure of these students as men is, to them, a matter of small or no importance.

It may not be, and probably is not, possible to introduce into Toronto the tutorial system of the English universities; but some small approach to it would be of inestimable benefit both to students and teachers. Had some such system been in vogue two years ago, the people of Ontario would not have been scandalized by the spectacle of Toronto University students in open rebellion against their duly appointed masters. At Oxford the undergraduates are invited by their tutors to breakfasts, where they meet the most prominent men in England. These men enjoyed talking to the students, thus finding out the trend of thought in the University, and the sort of men she is turning out. There was a professor in Toronto not so long ago—"but that," as Mr. Kipling says, "is another story." To-day there is no vital interest between men and professors. The undergraduates never discuss professors as men, but only as relatively good and bad teachers; and when the professors do discuss individual undergraduates, it is as to their capacity for obtaining marks at the May examinations, and never as men from whom something may be expected after they leave the University.

The same want of personal interest exists, though perhaps to a less degree, as between the undergraduates themselves, and is again partly attributable to the want of time, caused by the immense amount of work prescribed. But it cannot be so altogether.

Mr. Parkin told us in his lecture on Oxford, that after his first speech at the "Union," half a dozen men whom he had never seen before gave him their cards and invited