

indeed been incorporated in the scheme of Cornell University, which provides "for instruction in such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanical arts, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life;" and at its inception the experiment was tried of combining profitable mechanical industries with the pursuit of learning. The aim, at least, was a generous one; devised in the same spirit which here, in other ways, aims at making intellectual wealth available to the gifted aspirant of every rank. Let us not discourage the idea that in the world's future, and above all, in this centre of freedom and industry, the good time is coming; though, doubtless, for us of the elder generation at least,

"Far on in summers that we shall not see,"

when intellectual capacity shall not be thought incompatible with mechanical toil; when another Burns, dowered with all that culture can lend to genius, may "wake to ecstasy the living lyre" while following the plough; another Watt or Stephenson, trained in the mysteries of statics and dynamics, may revolutionize the economic service of mechanical forces; another Hugh Miller, rich in all the latest revelations of science, may interpret more fully to other generations the testimony of the rocks. Meanwhile we may look forward, without any dread of the fancied evils of "over-education," to a widely-diffused culture, broad and thorough; with its few eminent scholars and specialists rising as far above the general standard as the most cultured of our own day excel the masses. For, after all, the highest education is but a relative thing. To the author of the "Principia" all that he had achieved seemed but the work of a child when compared with the vast ocean of truth still unexplored; while to the rustic admirers of Goldsmith's "Village Schoolmaster":

"Still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew."

The pastoral valleys of ancient Greece and of modern Switzerland, the fens of Holland, and the rugged soil and ungenial climate of Scotland tell what mental culture can accomplish when placed within reach of all. We need be in no fear that Canadian Bacons and Newtons, Porsons and Whewells, will multiply unduly; and for the rest, we may safely leave the chances of an excessive crop of lawyers, doctors or teachers to the same law of supply and demand which regulates the industry of the manufacturer and the produce of the farm. But of this we may feel assured that in the grand struggle of the nations in the coming time the most widely-educated people will wrest the prize from its rivals on every field where the value of practical science, and the power which knowledge confers, are brought into play. For after all what is science, knowledge, *scientia*, but the whole accumulated experience of the past?"

Special.

PRIZES AND SCHOLARSHIPS,

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(A paper read before the Ontario Teachers' Association).
(Continued from last issue).

Prizes, therefore, as at present used, when intended as an incentive to diligence, fail to accomplish their purpose. Like giving scholarships in order to aid needy students, they miscarry—fall short of their intended object, and should be abandoned for something more generally beneficial.

2. But even supposing every student to be reached by the incentive of prizes, I should still question the wisdom of the practice. The motives thus offered are not the best; indeed they are unworthy the high aims of devoted teachers and tend to lessen the self-respect of students. In the race for prizes, teachers catch the spirit of the contest, and soon become little more than professional trainers for the final trial of strength. I doubt if either

teacher or students, under these circumstances, can quietly enter the realm of higher thought. Our schools and colleges ought to be depositories of generous and noble ideals. The highest forms of success should be aimed at, and appropriate motives appealed to in order to its attainment.

The ideal set before prize-winners is not the best. The material nature of the contest is not truly elevating. Our students will find enough materialism when they leave school and college. Our civilization is full of temptations to low material success, attained only by aiming at low and material standards of life.

The satisfaction of winning scholarships is not unalloyed. Paying one's fair share for educational benefits received ought to be the privilege of the poor as well as the duty of the rich; and the high-minded sons of humble parentage cannot rid themselves of this thought on receiving scholarships, even though conscious of having won them fairly. At its best, a cash prize comes to such a man as an awkward kindness and any material reward as a questionable compliment. The inconveniences of poverty are not more prejudicial to intellectual pursuits than the spirit engendered in exciting contests for cash prizes. Observe, I do not say that needy students ought not to be assisted, but that scholarships obtained in competitive examinations are not the best form in which such assistance can be given.

Emulation is a natural principle and plays an important part among the secondary motives that actuate us in our most laudable pursuits. Our duty as teachers is not to ignore it, but wisely to guide and control it. "It exists," says Willm, "as a natural disposition in every assembly of men, pursuing simultaneously the same occupation; it exists independently of all outward rewards and has nothing in common with the hope of material advantage." Not necessarily, perhaps; but the natural principle, like any other, may be abused, and soon degenerate into unhealthy rivalry, when a few prizes are offered to many competitors. A self-seeking ungenerous spirit is almost sure to assert itself; as Shakespeare puts it:

"For emulation hath a thousand sons,
That one by one pursue: if you give way,
Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,
Like to an entered tide they all rush by,
And leave you hindmost."

Self-emulation—surpassing one's self—is a laudable motive—the highest form of competition in all cases, under wise direction, resulting in good to those that are exercised thereby. In obedience to this principle of action,

We rise by things that are 'neath our feet;
By what we have mastered of good or gain;
By the pride deposed and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

The present mode of awarding prizes makes the success of a few, or of one, possible only on the failure of many others—comparable, certainly, to some forms of what passes for success in business life; but I think we shall find a nobler form of competition—one that may safely be recommended, and from which are eliminated the selfish ambitions so prominent in prevailing methods—one in which

Men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

Can we not rise a step or two in the scale of motive without being regarded as transcendental? Higher than the hope of tangible reward, or the desire to excel others, is the desire to win the approbation of parents or teachers; and highest of all, the wish to improve because it is right.

Fitch, speaking of what he terms "an elaborate system of bribery, by which we (in England) try to stimulate ambition and to foster excellence," relates that a recent traveller in England, Dr. Wiese, late director of public instruction in Prussia, says of this: "Of all the contrasts which the English mode of thinking and action shows, none has appeared to me so striking and contradictory as the fact that a nation which has so great and sacred a sense of duty makes no use of that idea in the school education of the young. It has rather allowed it to become the custom, and it is an evil custom, to regard the prospect of reward and honor as the chief impulse to industry and exertion," prizes and medals being given not only for progress in learning but also for good conduct.

The same may soon be said of Ontario unless radical changes are effected in this business of prize-giving.

Now, what benefit do prizes confer upon our colleges? We have considered the question of increasing the number of students. Can