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SOME THOUGHTS UPON EDUCATION AND NATIONAL
PROSPERITY.*

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BEFORE entering upon the point intended specially to be discussed, viz., the *kind* of education best suited to this country, it may be well to notice a few considerations calculated to bring out the importance of the subject. The history of the world gives unbroken testimony to the fact, that a nation to be prosperous and great must be characterized by intellectual culture and vigour. A glance at the great masters of empire in the ancient world and the modern will illustrate and confirm this position. Look at Babylon, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and India. Each of these in turn was conspicuous for culture and force of a certain kind, but defective both in extent and in degree, and each in turn succumbed to some younger and more vigorous nation.

In modern times a marked contrast is apparent between such lands as Spain, rich but unprogressive, mainly for want of right education, and Holland, poor in natural resources, but intelligent, self-reliant, and thrifty. In the east, India and China have come down to modern times under the sheer weight of material wealth and numerical forces, but have promptly owned the greater vigour of the more enlightened nations of the west, though these are their inferiors in material resources. See how in 1857, a handful of these intelligent and self-reliant "Isles-men of the West," held the British possessions in India against the teeming millions of the native races. One of the most sagacious and liberal of French political philosophers, Montalembert, looking on with admiring wonder at the achievements of such men as Havelock, Nicholson, Peel, Wilson, and Neill, forgets national

* This paper was recently read before the Teachers' Association of the County of Ontario, and is now published by request.