

during the many vehement contests in which yonder old fort was lost and won, as now the French, now the English, flag waved over it.

Fortunately our meeting here to day, is for an object, at once more agreeable and christian like, than those that were wont to take place here in the stormy days of old, and I need not dwell farther upon the threshold of my subject, but proceed at once, and invite attention to a consideration of the object and aim of this Association.

Our object is to advance an interest in what has been and will be, and ever must be an essential element in all national progress and greatness. For Education is but a synonym for civilization. Statesmen and Politicians rack their brains, and write and talk and dispute in their efforts to determine what is the best form of civil Government, while it seems obvious enough to those who have duly considered the matter, that the best form, whatever it may be called, is that, or will be that, whenever we get it, prevailing in a country, where the whole people, governed and governors, are highly educated.

To govern in such a community would be an easy task, in fact the people could govern themselves without artificial impulse, or restraints. We see the Philanthopists striving to ameliorate the social condition of the world; Legislators exercising their utmost ingenuity to enact efficient laws for the repression of vice and crime. The best mode and indeed the only effective mode of advancing the one, and curbing the other, is to thoroughly educate the people, and to do this we must commence with the young.

But let us look at Education with reference rather to its individual, or personal application. After the exercises of the past days, and the varied exhibition of well trained talent that we have seen, it would be superfluous to advert again to subjects which have been so ably presented. We wish, however, to make upon this branch of the subject one remark, and we make it with a deep sense of its importance, believing that all will accept the statement, viz., That Education is a preparation for the duties of life, and the destinies of Eternity.

It is something more than the mere acquisition of facts; it is the training and development of all the faculties of our moral and intellectual being. It is making man what he ought to be, here and hereafter. That is, in a word, what his creator would have him to be.

This truth does not, we fear, sufficiently impress itself upon the minds of many who wish to be, and think that they really are, friends to Education. It cannot we think be too sincerely entertained, or too constantly kept in mind, by those who are called upon to take part in directing the machinery of our Educational system. But, especially should it permeate the entire conviction, of the whole body of Teachers. Each School in which this sentiment prevails is a power for elevating and ennobling the present and future generations. We have no idea of a really good School, taught by one who is insensible to the influence, which he must, of necessity, exert, or of a really poor School, where the Teacher is alive to the tremendous power he is called upon to exercise.

In an intelligent and christian community, the employment of a Teacher, is considered a matter of vast moment, not unlike the settlement of a Clergyman; and why is the last named act of a community so significant? It is because of the immense interest involved. So of the former, and there are many persons who consider the functions and duties of a School Teacher, no whit less onerous and solemnly obligatory, than those of a clergyman. I will not, now at least, dispute this point. In either case too high an estimate cannot be held.

Be assured, gentlemen of the Profession, that christian parents feel the magnitude of the interest they place in your hands when they entrust you with children they tenderly love. They entrust you, co-jointly indeed with themselves, with the formation of the character of those children, and the moulding and directing of all their intellectual and moral power, with which, to fix unalterably, a future—an unseen, and to us, an unknown future.

It is this conviction on the part of christian parents which leads them to enquire anxiously into the character of our Teachers; and it is this thought which ensures for the Government the sup-

port and sympathy of the people in its efforts to supply for this most important work, Teachers of the highest worth. We therefore need offer no apology for pressing this subject at a meeting like this. In doing so, we are speaking for christian parents, we are speaking for the government, and for the common interest of the land we love; and with a reference to that future to which the influence of our actions must ere long descend. It is for you, gentlemen, to administer the highest and noblest gratification to home, to give it new attractions and increased loveliness; it is for you to co-operate, with the good, the pure, and the generous patriot. Fix for a moment your eye upon some one distinguished for goodness and greatness, and remember the process by which he arrived at that exalted position.— You are, so to speak, called upon to carry every child in your School through a similar process that he may, if possible, reach the same goal.

You must therefore be what you want your pupils to be. Be assured that whether it is aimed at, or not, the class will be such an image of the Teacher, that the portraiture will strike any eye. Children are imitators, and many a fine and promising boy has made shipwreck of life, and wandered far from the right way, from imitating those who, in the days of his youth, he was led to regard as wiser and better than himself. It is said that thoughts never die, assuredly principles do not, and it may be questioned, if the influence of early example ever wholly loses its power.— Our own conviction is that influences on the *youthful mind, never die.*

So far as we have known the present Teachers in our Public Schools, we believe that they are to be valued and esteemed for the high moral and intellectual character they justly claim, and for the work they are aiming to do. We believe they are willing to work, and value the means they are using for the Education of their country, and have, therefore, a high claim upon the land, for the elevation of which they are consecrating to the cause of learning, their talent and energies.

Our attention has been directed during these days of pleasant interchange of thought, to the methods by which the principal branches of Common School Education may be best imparted. I am quite sure, that, should not all agree as to these methods—and that is not to be expected—all will be profited in knowing the various systems which have obtained value and extended experience.

Let me, however, direct especial attention to one or two branches taught in every section School, and which command the first consideration. It is to be feared that too little attention is given to reading. If not, how are we to account for the almost universal complaint, poor readers? Why is it that to read well is such a rare attainment?

Search the learned professions, and a good reader is a rare exception to a general rule, and also, as a *natural consequence*, so is what is called a good delivery in public speaking, and even in ordinary conversation; for good reading goes hand in hand with other branches of elocution. Some of the best sermons preached are spoiled, and their effect lost, through a disregard of this essential. The best thoughts of public speakers are often lost, and their indifferent ones made worse, through an utter ignorance, or disregard, of what elocution demands. The most profound, the most eloquent, the first, the best, authors in English literature, are daily and hourly persistently murdered in the reading. We have heard men in this Province, learned men, eminent in the higher branches of knowledge, bitterly lament that this part of their education had been so neglected in early life. Even conversation has little fascination from the lips of a bad elocutionist. We, many of us, pay our money for the luxury of going just to hear readings of authors, with which we are already familiar, and come away delighted that we have done so. Yet there is not a boy, or girl, who should leave any of our Public Schools, without being able to read almost as well as any of those professional readers. Every body, even very ignorant people, are charmed with good reading. The human voice—we might almost say every human voice, is capable of a high culture. It has powers which, when cultivated and developed, attract the admiration of delighted thousands. Good reading and elocution are powers that attract to the Theatre, as too often bad reading repels from the Christian Church. How much may be learned from the reply of the actor