

the rugged school of the vagabond world is a better one for a boy, whose hands want training to earn for him his daily bread, than the public school stimulants of pseudo-refined shop-keeping and city-clerking life. Of course, the school is not intended to be a workshop in which a lad is to learn the vocation by which he is to live. But our educational system will fail of its legitimate work if, while applying the mental discipline of ordinary school studies, it fails to direct their aim and purpose towards those practical ends which the mass of school children in this country want placing before them. In contributing to this, no unimportant aid can be given by efficient, well-adapted, and attractive text-books. It is a calamity when books aim at a practical end and are but poorly adapted to their purpose. No greater obligation, then, rests upon authors and publishers of school books than to see that they shall be pre-eminently good. Shortcomings in them are peculiarly mischievous. The captivating effect of literary skill in their construction should, also, be borne in mind. It is as important as the attractiveness to the eye of a bright, open, and inviting page. The pity is that so few are masters of the art of literary composition combined with simple and lucid narrative power. Let the would-be authors of our school text-books exercise the gift, if they have it, and in such works as Kingsley's "Town Geology," and Huxley's "Physiology," or "Physiography," they will find admirable models for their study. Superior, perhaps, to any of these, however,—and this is saying much,—is Clodd's Manual on "The

Childhood of the World"; and for style and matter, though not in the direction of a text-book, teachers will find exceeding profit in the perusal of Ascott Hope's "A Book about Dominies." To the vivid interest in concrete facts manifested by the pupil, nothing is more effective in retaining the attention, while impressing the lesson, than an engaging and attractive style, and too much importance cannot be paid to this. A word may be added, too, as to the mechanical excellence of our educational manuals. Hitherto, the native text-book has had a seemingly undivestable colonial look. Cheap paper, poor print, and worse binding, have been the features of their manufacture. We have now, of course, improved upon this, but there is still room for a greater advance. Particularly now, when illustrations have become so much a feature of our text-books, is there necessity for care, taste, and good material, in their mechanical and manual production. In the Educational exhibit, at the recent Paris Exposition, there was but one thing wanting to crown the achievement of Canada in the cause of education, viz.: native school books of the excellence and adaptedness which characterized the exhibit in educational apparatus and the mechanical equipments of the school. Literary successes, of course, are gained more slowly than material ones. But they may yet be ours, in addition to those already won, if professional culture and experience and literary taste and judgment are encouraged among us as matters of desirable Canadian possession.