

enlighten and arouse the people, and excite public sentiment in favor of Education?"

The chief papers discussing these general topics were followed by brief "talks" or "discussions" on the same lines, from certain selected speakers to whom proof sheets of the larger essays had been sent.

2. The afternoon sessions were devoted to what was technically called "departmental work." That is to say, the Association met in separate sections to consider practical questions and matters of detail more minutely than was possible at the general sessions. The latter were held in the Central Music Hall, a spacious and well appointed auditorium; for the former, halls, theatres, church vestries, and opera houses were utilized, according to convenience of location.

I attended as many of these "department" meetings as I could consistently with the physical maxim, "a body cannot be * * *," and was much interested in all that I saw and heard. It was here that the expert and the specialist had fullest swing, and this fact needed to be borne in mind by one who, like myself, has to keep an eye for all sides of the educational problem. Listening to the enthusiastic exposition of the kindergarten system, you would for the moment be led to regard no human being outside of babydom as of much account, while the enthusiastic advocate of manual training declaims under a seeming conviction that, as educational instrumentalities, the blackboard and dictionary are but poor affairs as compared with the auger and the turning-lathe. But on reflection one is soon led to see that in the wide world there is room for all these experts and specialists—*extremists*, if you will—and that there is work for them to do in contributing to that salutary equilibrium of force which in some ages of the world has been sadly lacking.

Most of the papers presented at the regular sessions were exceedingly able productions, though one or two fell conspicuously below the general level. Dr. Angell and General Francis Walker, Presidents respectively of the University of Michigan and of the Boston Institute of Technology, most creditably represented the higher institutions of learning, and eloquently deplored the lack of harmonious connection too often existing between the American College and the American Public School.

The discussions that moved directly along the line of public education, and considered its pending problems, were in a marked degree free from dogmatism. While defects were pointed out and dangers recognized, their general tone was confident and hopeful. As the great gathering came to an end, and the thousands of teachers turned their faces eastward,

westward, northward, southward, it was felt that the noble cause, under whose banner they had met, was stronger than ever in their hearts and in the hearts of the people.

I have been in too much of a hurry to be brief, and so have not left myself space to do more than mention the admirably planned and admirably executed educational exhibit that formed, I suppose I may say, an integral part of the Association. The personal courtesies received from the President, Mr. Sheldon, editor of the well-known *New England Journal of Education*; the Secretary, Professor Canfield, of Kansas, who has intimate personal friends in my own city of Halifax, and other members of the Association, can never be forgotten.

D. A.

CURIOSITIES AND MONSTROSITIES IN SCHOOLS.

My avocations have led me to see much of schools. It may be interesting and instructive to teachers if I give a few examples of the many things I have thus seen and heard. The experiences which I shall record will not extend backwards beyond the educational renaissance of which we are wont to boast: the "dark ages" are therefore excluded.

A few years ago I visited a Normal School, and was present at a class exercise in English grammar, and another in geography, each of an hour's length. In both cases the teacher—or professor, if you prefer—held a book in his hand and asked questions from it, just as pedagogues did when you and I were boys. The pupil-teachers answered the questions that the teacher put to them from the elementary works from which the lessons had been assigned. I thought as I saw and heard, that the conservative element would still preserve the world from dangerous revolutions.

I once visited a collegiate institution and was, by invitation, present at a lecture, so called, in history. The exercise was of this kind: Some few paragraphs had been assigned as a lesson to be studied. Questions were asked by the professor (?), as in the case before instanced, and occupied fifteen minutes. The remainder of the hour was spent by the college officer in reading to the class from a new book he had just received on some branch or other of history. I thought—well, it is no matter what I thought. The world consists of two classes: the first achieve greatness; on the second greatness is thrust! In one way or other you or I may yet be a professor! There are "chapters of accidents," and "the most unlikely things always happen."

I visited one of the common schools of the country, supported in part from the public treasury. On the