

## A Petty Fuss About the Normal School

I. After many years of desire on the part of our people for a Normal School for the training of our Teachers, such an institution—serving all denominations—has become a reality and for the past few years has been working amid many difficulties in a large room contained in the School Building and rented for the purpose.

Now that it has been born, the adulterated and malcontent—a coterie of persons whom none can please, and such as afflict most communities—are howling because the country has provided a decent home for the important work. They claim that the country could not afford to erect such a building. Whether the country could afford it or not, much larger sums of money have been spent on things of vastly less importance to the welfare of the country than an educational headquarters. Let me, for example, cite the branch railways, one of which has had to be gathered up since. Appropriate buildings must be erected for other public purposes; to wit, the Colonial Building, Court House, Post Office, Museum, etc., and decent furniture and carpeted floors provided for the occupants, but for that most important of public services—education—a shack must be built and bare floors, rough benches, and barren yards must suffice, while the administrators and teachers must be content with starvation salaries, lower in their average than the average earnings of any other class of workers. Why this abject and mean spirit towards education?

The country cannot afford to erect a decent building for a Normal School! How can intelligent people, be they editors, ex-teachers or what not, make such a claim and be sincere? A little thought upon the subject should lead them to the contrary judgment. The country cannot afford, as a matter of fact, to do without much better educational machinery than it has so far, in its ignorance and carelessness, provided. Had we erected our Normal School when Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and little Prince Edward Island built theirs; had we years ago made provision for some measure of higher learning and technical knowledge, we should be today in a much more prosperous position than we are in every sense of the word, our industries would have been further developed, our people would have been more enlightened, our forests would be receiving the attention that our care for the future demands. The value of our fisheries would be enhanced, and such concerns as the Humber operating company would not have been constrained to look outside of our borders for skilled engineers and captains of labour.

II. I agree with Mr. Jardine, who writes recently in the Daily News that our people are naturally of a most intelligent type, but succeeding governments have failed (and have sinned in the failing) to provide for them the opportunities that should be theirs. History is the story of the struggle of the people—the masses—towards freedom and right and, let me add, truth. Every step upward for them has been secured at great cost—freedom of blood. The upper, so-called upper and privileged classes (with conspicuous and noble exceptions) have always oppressed those below them and resisted their efforts towards the light. During the past one hundred years, the right of the masses to light, to education, has been won step by step, but at every step gained some blue blood has prophesied blue ruin for the country as a result.

History often repeats itself. The Normal School is for the good, first of all, of the poor of this our country. The rich and the well-to-do can afford to send their children elsewhere for their education; the poor must be contented with that which their own country provides for them. The poor, then, call to their distress for the Normal School, and there are to be found among the privileged classes a coterie to say: "The country cannot afford a decent building for a Normal School." Just as in the minds of such people a slum and a den in a slum are good enough for the worker, so a shed would be good enough for a Normal School. Why provide for them a thing of beauty, why provide decent ventilation, why provide a comfortable chair, why provide sanitary offices, why plant a tree to decorate the barren yard—anything is good enough for the swine, anything suitable for those who are to be their teachers!

We poor folk are heartily sick of this attitude on the part of some of those who consider themselves superior. By painful steps we are gradually coming to our own and are living in hopes that, if we of this generation are compelled to live amid scenes unlovely, our children may enjoy a habitation—however humble, yet beautiful, and in a street which the community helps to keep at least wholesome.

In England labour is winning its way into the light of the sun. The present Prime Minister of England, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, is representative of Labour and, if space can be spared, Mr. Editor, I beg you to find room for some thoughts that he expressed lately in addressing the Architecture Club. I commend the words of Mr. MacDonald to the coterie of soreheads that are at present fitting around the office of the Daily News, screeching: "Damn the Normal School."

In part Mr. MacDonald spoke as follows: "A House Is Clothing. In the choice of his house he had no free will. Every decent, respectable, God-fearing man declined to buy ready-made clothes. Was it not, therefore, a much greater sin to live in a ready-made house? For, after all, a house was clothing. Yet if he could not take advantage of free will in his pictures, rooms, door, or house, there was one thing he could do: he could enjoy the streets of the town in which he lived."

"That was where architecture came in as a great social art. He believed in some way or other that he was responsible for the National Gallery; and he was very proud of it; but a thing they were very apt to forget was that for every hundred people who took delight in that gallery, a million people saw the public buildings that were on our streets. On a pure mathematical basis, it was far more important that the Government should see that its public buildings were beautiful than that it should see that there was a choice collection of old and new masters properly housed."

"There were some places in London, he added, that he had passed for the last thirty years, and had never had a kind word for them or a decent thought. He did not like them, and he hoped architects would form an association that would adopt some revolutionary methods and give him the pleasure of getting up one morning and finding that they were not. Alluding to the Committee on Ancient Monuments and Buildings, which his predecessor had set up, the Prime Minister said that he thought he would be doing good service by supplementing that Committee with another."

"I am turning it over in my mind, he added, whether I should not appoint a committee of artists and architects, men, and perhaps women, of good chaste eye, who can appreciate a beautiful thing when they see it, and I should charge that committee, not with the power of creating something fresh, but from the annual estimates voted by Parliament I should give them a good store of dynamite, and allow them to use their discretion in employing it to clear a way for creations which would give people more pleasure, and which would benefit the community more than happens at the present time. The great question is, What can the Government do for architecture?"

"I am one of those people who hate bureaucracy. I am in favour of getting my letters opened, my pencils sharpened by bureaucracy. That is its job. That is its proper task. But when you come to matters of architecture and such things, bureaucracy is out of place. A young man who has become a bureaucrat has become prematurely aged. An artist who becomes a bureaucrat becomes a cog in the machine."

The Cup of Idea and the Lip of Accomplishment. "How can the Government help art and architecture? Perhaps the only possible way just now is that it should be the patron, leaving the architect, free and spontaneous, to do his untrammelled best, and even then there are many slips between the cup of idea and the lip of accomplishment. Nevertheless, when we look on the old

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TORREADOR JEFF BATTLES WITH A SPANISH BULL



—By Bud Fisher.

In this country which would make men and women of good taste ashamed to take a stranger to look at and say "That is a public building!" "I don't want, he said, with emphasis, public buildings to be more expensive, great, huge, gaudy, vulgar things; I want them to impress us by their immensity; I want them to impress us by their chastity, by their spiritual correctness, and if you can do that you may design plain walls, but it will make no difference, the effect will be the same. It will mean that the citizens of our country are proud of the spirit of our country as embodied in the erections and houses of our country."

### From Cape Race

Special to Evening Telegram  
CAPE RACE, to-day.  
Wind north, fresh, weather fine. The steamer Canadian Sapper passed west yesterday afternoon. The steamer Yankton passed in at daylight today. Several unknown steamers passed east and west during this a.m. Bar. 29.40; Ther. 56.

Big International Relay Race, for cup donated by Hon. J. P. Hand, Bermuda, at the Haig Sports.—June 21, 11