

handled in the most mechanical manner. The teaching of none of those subjects bears out the expectation of a practical training, at first indulged in by the friends of art and of education. Nor is the subjective side served any the better. Among the pupils of our Secondary Schools, as in the public at large, artistic conceptions involving the sense of eye sight are conspicuous by their absence. The subtle tenderness of exquisite form and colour, the solidity or refinement of modelling, the novelty or simplicity of composition, the personal note and its universal appeal which pervades every work of art, is more meaningless than Hebrew to our pupils or the public, while the symbolism of a white waterfall with its praying-robe of mist, or a mountain clothed in clouds, is more striking and more intelligible on this paper in black type than in nature itself or in the finest works of our artists. A little of the artistic spirit does filter in through music, and of late years by means of improved methods of teaching the arts of English literature, but the arts involving eyesight, the most practical and impressive to the youthful mind, are emasculated or ignored.

What then shall be done? Shall we confess at once that our means have been inadequate, our weapons insufficient and cleanly sweep away this pretence of a rudimentary education in art? Or shall we say that these subjects prescribed by the education department have a certain amount of usefulness in themselves, while any real artistic training is entirely beyond the scope of our Secondary Schools and remote from the necessities of the people of Ontario? This latter alternative, however insulting to our intelligence and our capabilities, is one maintained by many so called practical men. It is said that the products of art are luxuries to be enjoyed by the rich and idle. That we are at present in a stone-breaking age and that

it is unwise to divert any energy from the rougher and more productive occupations. That the older lands are well able to supply us with such refinements, while we return their value in raw materials or the labour of coarse and unskilled hands. Such a solution needs only to be stated to be rejected by every courageous Canadian, and represents no part of the ideal of the bright pupils of our High Schools and Collegiate Institutes. They are looking for better things and it ought to be possible to bring to these young souls something of the grandeur and delight of an art which has been the sustenance and hope of many of the noblest sons of men.

That some way may be found to accomplish this desirable end must be the wish of every true friend of education. There is wanted some movement similar to that which has lately revolutionized the teaching of English. As the dry bones of grammar and the rules of rhetoric were forsaken for a direct communion with the living language in its best examples, so must the cold details of the grammar of art be subordinated to the works of art themselves. As it is by reading and studying the poets that we become acquainted with the spirit of poetry, so it will be by the careful survey and study of pictures that we will ever comprehend pictorial art or the nature it represents. The material means for carrying this out the last twenty years with their splendid development in photography and process printing have laid already at our hands. Our pupils may become intimately acquainted with the finest masters. And just as many a pupil who will never make a poet may appreciate and enjoy the highest and the best productions of poetry, so many a pupil who will never learn to draw, and who would never make an artist, may be taught to feel and