

truest indexes of character, and which have most effect in forming character. There is much reason to fear that there are hundreds of schools or classes in which this process of deterioration is going on day after day through the agency of the self-reporting system in careless or inefficient hands. We hear much, certainly not too much, in these days about moral training, or its absence, in the schools. Here is a practical sphere in which the teacher who is sincere in wishing to impart such training may begin at once. Let him set at work, with all his might, to create a public sentiment in his class which will scorn cheating and lying and equivocation, and all such petty meanesses. To plant such a principle in the young mind, to nourish it, water it, prune it, watch its development from day to day, is truly a noble, an imperishable work. How many are doing it? "Oh! but," we can fancy one and another saying out in indignation, "I use the self-reporting system, and I won't believe my boys and girls deceive me. I know I can trust them." We hope so. But don't be too sure. It would be a very serious thing should you be mistaken. Just test them to-morrow—that can do no harm,—and let us know the result.

THE speech of Dr. Nelles at the recent convocation of Toronto University was an eloquent vindication of the claims of the higher institutions of learning upon the sympathies of the people. He dwelt forcibly upon the relation of sound teaching and the wide diffusion of knowledge to the spread of religion, to the fostering of literature, and to the beneficent results of the physical sciences. Witness the following:

"Those results are all about us; all about us in our homes, our hospitals, our sanitary regulations, our journeys by land and sea, our agricultural improvements and our great enterprises of manufacturing and commerce. Those forms of higher learning are like the streams which rise far up the cold mountain side, but soon find their way down the valleys and over the plains, carrying fertility and beauty across the vast continent. The clouds that float in the sky may seem cold and distant and all remote from human comfort, but if the clouds be full of rain they empty themselves upon the earth, they pervade the soil, and they come again in 'the splendor of the grass and the glory of the flower'; they come again in the bloom of the garden and the fruit of the orchard and the corn of the field."

"But apart from all original researches and new discoveries, it is no small matter to put the ingenuous youth of the land in possession of forms of knowledge already accumulated, no small matter to teach them the application of great truths to the health, comfort and refinement of common life; to unbury, so to speak, these treasures of the libraries and the laboratories as we unbury the coal beds and turn them into heat and light and motive power for the world; and it is no small matter to raise the average of popular intelligence and to increase the number of those who are competent to discuss and decide upon the great social and political questions that must from time to time come before a free and progressive people like ours. Let us then unite in proclaiming to the people at large, whether rich or poor, cultivated or uncultivated, capitalists or operatives, workingmen or workingwomen, the immense practical value of these higher seminaries of learning, value not to the few but to the many, and the necessity of large, increasingly large endowments to build them up, make them strong and efficient, so as to vie with the most famous universities in the Old and New World."

All this is true as it is eloquent, and comes with excellent grace from one whose appeal is to the voluntary principle—the

liberality of the public. In defence of an increased taxation of the whole people, the reasoning might seem less cogent, and the prospective returns to the poor, hard-working tax-payer somewhat too remote for present consolation.

PRESIDENT WILSON ON OVER-EDUCATION.

Dr. Wilson's Convocation address was in many respects admirable. We wish we had space to reproduce it in full. We may refer hereafter to other points dwelt upon. In this number we must confine ourselves to the following extracts which deal with a phase of the question of higher education to which we have often referred. We wish the views so well and forcibly presented could be impressed upon the mind of every educator in the Dominion:

"And here I am tempted to allude to an old cry which seems at present to be reiterated with more than usual zeal, that we are over-educating the people, and tempting the rising generation to forsake the desk the forge and the plough, for the learned professions. There lies at the foundation of this the mischievous error which confounds mental and moral culture with professional training. The aim of all true education is mental breadth, moral elevation, and such a mastery of the great truths that furnish the best antidote to sloth and ignorance as shall awaken the dormant intellect and kindle it into living power. Of all the educational solecisms of our day this cry of over education seems to me one of the most foolish; as though the hope of Canada's agricultural future depended, like that of Egypt with its degraded felahs, or of Cuba with its prædial negroes, on the ignorance of the tillers of the soil. Over-educated! Why, it is a common thing for the sons of Lothian farmers to take their place among the students of the University of Edinburgh, and there master the sciences which they are afterwards to turn to practical account. Perhaps a little more training of a like kind for the Irish farmer might not be wholly unavailable in the present perplexing crisis, for which at any rate over-education is certainly not at fault. Doubtless the thews of the sturdy backwoodsman have sufficed to fell our virgin forest and let in the sunlight on its first clearings, but our annual provincial displays give the best proof that the aspirations of the Canadian farmer reach towards something higher. With our well organized school system, we are, in fact, prone to over-estimate results. Admirable as those are, there is still abundant room for the elevation of the whole standard of popular education. When the rich treasure-house of knowledge has been thrown open to all, the relative difference will still remain between the gifted and highly cultured few and the well-educated commonalty; while among the latter knowledge will reveal its economic worth in every branch of industry. Nor can it be doubted that in the great social revolution, on which the nations are now entering, traceable as it is, in no slight degree, to the industrial resources of our new world's virgin soil—the victory will be won, as in the past, by intellectual supremacy. The great centres of industry, the workshops of the world, have not been found heretofore, nor are they now, estranged from the seats of learning. Metaphysics, indeed, will not much help the agriculturist; nor can the Georgics of Virgil be specially commended to his study, though they are the work of a Mantuan farmer. But science and scholarship have widened their bounds, and include knowledge for every class. Coleridge and the sanguine poets of the Lake school dreamt in their bright youth of a home in our new world, where the tilling of the soil and the culture of the mind should prove in no degree incompatible; and many a sanguine dreamer has since yielded to the same seductive fancy. This idea has