

And so at no time can we positively affirm that the wants of the age do not demand some modification of the stereotyped instruments of education. The ancient classics themselves, about whose utility so hot a controversy now rages, were brought in on the crest of a great revolutionary wave, and whatever be their merits as educational instruments now, none can doubt that they aided in accomplishing one of the grandest forward moments ever made in the intellectual life of man. After considering in detail the appeals made in behalf of technical instruction in connection with common school work, the Speaker closed up this part of his subject as follows :--

"If the demand made upon us be that in our public schools the youth should receive just as fair a start towards the special study of, say, agricultural science as towards the study of any of the so-called non-productive professions, it is an eminently reasonable demand. It is to be urged that even yet in our curriculum the studies which have relation to practical pursuits are too much jostled and crowded by subjects which, having originally got their places by accident, retain them not by virtue of relative educative power or utility, but by mere prescription. Let us with candor admit the possibility of the criticism being founded in justice. But if we are asked to turn out accomplished agriculturists and mechanics, we are asked to do a palpable impossibility. Why, look at our colleges? They pick up our boys at the most advanced stage of our public school work; they subject them to a four years' course; they examine them and re-examine them; they take them through literatures ancient and modern, through sciences various, through the fiery furnace of mathematics and the spongy bog of metaphysics; and yet they do not profess even to have made them doctors, or lawyers, or clergymen, but only to have fitted them to begin to study to be doctors, or lawyers, or clergymen. It ought to satisfy all reasonable friends of technical education if we turn out of our common schools boys ready to enter special schools organized for the purposes of technical education, ready by virtue, not only of their general training, but also and especially by virtue of that impulse towards untried pursuits which we may hope it will soon be in the power of all our schools to impart."

On the subject of high school studies the speaker carefully balanced the claims of modern literature and science and the ancient classics. To the latter he expressed strong attachment, but freely recognized that they could no longer be taught in the same methods, or devoted on the same grounds, as when they locked up the whole treasure of the mind. It was stupid conservatism to adhere to what has plainly outgrown its usefulness. He asked for the new course liberalit, breadth, adaptation. Let the classics be taught, not as the sole intellectual instrument of our rising youth, but as a valuable means of mental discipline. In conclusion, after bidding his hearers to keep in mind the practical tendencies of the present day and the wisdom of adapting themselves to them, he exhorted them also to remember that the words of the Divine Founder of Christianity, "man shall not live by bread alone," have an intellectual as well as a spiritual application, and that science, art, and industry have their chief inspiration in the gratification of tastes which nothing but long processes of general culture could have created.

The next paper read was by Professor Caldwell, of Acadia College, on "Science in Schools." After dilating on the advantages of education in every walk of life, he proceeded to enforce the idea that education should be promoted by all available means, and that it was fitting for everybody to obtain all the mental culture within his reach in order that he might be of more commercial value in the world, and that he might stand higher in the scale of being further removed from the brute creation towards the supreme intelligences. The stimulating and directing of the youthful intellect was considered and the best modes of effecting it. He believed in the intelligent mastery of a few subjects rather than an attempt to cover the whole field of knowledge. He thought a large amount of teaching was unproductive because unnatural, not taking into account the natural order of mental development. In youth, curiosity, imitation, and memory are predominant; later in life reason and judgment are mature. A sound system of education would follow this line of natural development. Let the child learn grammar by imitation rather than by rule. These general ideas were enlarged upon and elucidated in detail. The difficulties of the average child in learning were instanced, and the best methods of profiting by natural capabilities for the greatest advantage in imparting instruction, according to the speaker's opinion, shown up. He thought primary instruction was confined far too much to rules

and text-books, without sufficient explanation of the why and wherefore. The various requisites of a good teacher were pointed out, and the benefits of the Acadian Science Club, a worthy Wolfeville institution for aiding teachers in acquiring scientific knowledge, were given a lengthy exposition. He instanced a method of instructing pupils in such a science as geology, and closed with an appeal to teachers to pay more attention to the careful and considerate instruction of youth.

Mr. S. K. Hitchings, State assayer of Maine, was called upon for an address, and occupied a few minutes before closing the session in some account of the high school system under the American flag, which were very acceptably received.

In the afternoon the association went on a scientific excursion about the harbor, arm, and basin in Mr. Waddell's commodious steam lighter, the Robbie Burns. Mr. McKay, of the Pictou academy, delivered a highly edifying lecture on board on the subject of botany, with illustrations of numerous specimens collected at points touched at. A most interesting little botanical expedition was made in the grounds at the head of the N. W. Arm.

(The conclusion of the association's proceedings will be given in next month's notes.)

Mr. John A. Smith (A.B. Mount Allison college, provincial grade A, 1883) has been appointed head master of the model school, Truro.

UNITED STATES.

In the public schools of Ohio 98,691 scholars are taught the alphabet, 642,748 reading, 653,368 spelling, 528,417 arithmetic, 221,051 grammar.

The school authorities of Juniata, Adams county, Nebraska, have introduced reading the daily newspapers in the schools, instead of the Readers so long in vogue. The plan is said to work well.

Kansas owns 5,555 school-houses, worth \$5,000,000. It has a State university, a State agricultural college, two normal colleges for the education of teachers for the public schools, a college to teach the deaf and dumb to speak and the blind to read.

The Board of Education of Cleveland have in consideration a measure to discontinue the services of women as principals of public schools. The *Cleveland Leader* does not believe that there is any good reason for such a step. No fact, it says, has been more completely established in this age of common schools than that ladies make competent and successful teachers.

Overwork in schools is not confined to this country; there are serious complaints of it in England. A gentleman wrote a letter a few weeks ago to the *Liverpool Mercury*, in which he criticized severely the schools of Liverpool for over-teaching. The day's study, he says, begins at 7.45 a.m., and lasts until 8 p.m. Besides this, the evenings are supposed to be devoted to study at home, and there are no holidays on Saturday.

Miss Pingree, the superintendent of the Boston free kindergartens, has written a letter for the *Kinderzarten Messenger* which is an interesting review of what the Boston kindergartens have accomplished. There are at present thirty-one free kindergartens for poor children in and near Boston, carried on by the private charity of one lady. Four of these kindergartens began their work in 1877, during 1878 and 1879 fourteen others were started, and in 1880 the remaining thirteen.

Girard College, which has already grown to noble proportions, has quite recently entered upon a new branch of educational work. It is training its boys to fit them to become mechanics and manufacturers. The education in mechanics and the use of hand tools will be of value to them, even if they should enter upon the learned professions of becoming clerks or bookkeepers. It is such a development of the educational features of the college as we might easily imagine a man of hard sense like Girard to heartily approve if he were living.

The expense imposed upon society to protect itself against a few thousand criminals, most of whom were made such through the neglect of society to take care of their education when young, is one of the heaviest of the public burdens. *In the city of New York it is fifty per cent. more than the whole cost of the public schools.*—*Dezter A Hawkins.*

Dr. McCosh has presented a proposition to the trustees of Princeton to start a school of Philosophy. He wishes to have this Department in charge of three other professors beside himself, and asks for \$150,000 in order to carry out the scheme.