

distinct understanding that the excursion is not merely for sight seeing or having a good time, they have produced excellent results, not only as a practical stimulus to study, but in bringing teachers and scholars more in sympathy as to the definite aim of each. We hope to hear of such excursions being undertaken by Canadian schools in the near future. While the longer and more elaborate excursion may be possible only for a few schools, nearly every school is so situated that a day or a portion of a day may be devoted to it, and a stimulus given to the studies of geography, history, industrial arts and natural science, by visits to localities in the neighborhood of the school. In this way, local history, geography, manufacturing and other industries, and the plants, animals and minerals might be delightfully and profitably studied, with this condition—that the excursions be carefully planned beforehand, and instruction given on what is about to be visited. In the course of instruction recently revised for the schools of New Brunswick, school excursions are recommended for the pursuit of natural science. Why not the teacher extend it to other departments?

THE DOCTORS AND OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM.

A few weeks ago the Canadian medical association met in St. John, and during the deliberations of this body the ground was taken by Dr. Bayard (St. John), "that the present school system put too many studies on young children and as a result overstrained their nervous system and caused great injury, from which they never recovered. The effect of this cramming was particularly injurious to girls." In the discussion which followed Dr. Bayard's paper "nearly all the speakers," we are told, "agreed that the school system was injurious," and a resolution, condemning the whole school system of the dominion, was withdrawn, and the following adopted :

Resolved, That the system of education in force in the dominion draws too largely upon the brain tissue of children and materially injures their mental and bodily health.

This is certainly sweeping enough, and being made by men who should know what they are talking about, must carry some weight. But it seems odd that the children of certain physicians in St. John who are members of this association, have attended and are attending the public schools. The writer of this can verify that those who have graduated are not yet in their graves, nor are they walking about physical and mental wrecks, but are good specimens of physical and mental manhood and womanhood. Those attending school now are the picture of rosy health. They seem to be enjoying their school work, too, to judge by their bright faces and elastic, vigorous steps.

They have been, too, and are, among the leaders in their classes.

It cannot be said that *all* the children who are in attendance at the public schools are in this happy and healthy condition. It were idle to expect that, when we consider all the ills that flesh is heir to. But if one will step out on the streets of St. John any day about twelve o'clock or half past three, he will find that perhaps nineteen-twentieths are in the condition of those described above. Dr. Bayard and other members of the association residing in St. John could see this for themselves, or they could enter the schools and see and judge for themselves of the physical and mental condition of the pupils, and possibly suggest remedies for the disastrous state of affairs which they allege exists. They seem, instead, to draw material for their sweeping statement from the small minority of school children whom they have treated. These may be delicate children who may not be able to stand the strain of the school hours, either from constitutional weakness or from what is too often the case among larger pupils—the attempt to do school work and attend parties and keep late hours, or like excesses. Did the doctors, when they spoke from their experience on this subject, carefully weigh the distinction between the average boy or girl attending school twenty-five hours in the week, for forty weeks in the year, who has from one to three hours' work, according to age, out of school, who has plenty of exercise, nourishing food, and abundance of sleep, and the child physically weak, or one whose weakness is induced by the dissipation of late hours, late suppers, insufficient sleep, or the injurious habit of allowing children, especially girls, to leave home with perhaps too long a walk, and a long three hours' session, without a sufficient breakfast?

Such resolutions, unless founded upon more sufficient and exact data than the above, had better be consigned to the waste basket before they see the reporter's note book.

Among the journals that have taken a reasonable view of this subject are the *St. John Globe* and *Fredricton Gleaner*, and the weight of their testimony is strongly against the doctors. Their opinion should be entitled to weight. Mr. Ellis was for a long time a trustee of schools in St. John and took an intelligent interest in the schools, where he was a frequent visitor. Mr. Crocket, of the *Gleaner*, has exceptional opportunities upon which to found a judgment, as he resides in the educational centre of the province, where the intellectual activity of children might reasonably be supposed to be more intense than elsewhere.