

The Most Important Education.

If we do not train our boys and girls to pursue knowledge, and give them a love for knowledge in the public school, then the great object of the state in promoting free education is, to a great extent, lost. If the teacher who teaches reading does not inspire a pupil with a love for good, and a taste for high-class literature, then the work of education is in vain.

We have so moulded our young people in our high and public schools with a taste for the literature of the great masters, the great poets and historians, the literature of your country and our own, that fiction, in the ordinary sense of the term, is not sought as it was ten or fifteen years ago.

If we are to have great men — stalwart, vigorous men and women to bear the burdens of this state and to keep a clear head, you must indoctrinate them with the knowledge of the best literature of this and past generations.

Under a democratic system, such as yours or ours, the danger is that demagoguery will have sway, or that some great leader will stampede the ballot-box. What is to be the steadying force in the state? I answer, educating our young people for citizenship. The value of education is felt in the solidity of the state, in the continuity of legislation, in the steadfastness of civil government.

Character-building is the great work of the teacher. If the pupils are not trained to be honest, persevering, energetic and progressive, to be well-balanced in their judgment, all their knowledge is in vain. We look to our public schools to lay the foundation of that character which is needed in every position of life, the high schools to continue the structure, and the universities to fit for other professions in life.—*Hon. G. W. Ross before the New York State Association of Commissioners and Superintendents.*

[The Hon. Mr. Ross stands at the head of the educational affairs of the largest province of the Dominion, and a province which for many years was reputed to be in the first rank of educational progress among the countries of the world. In such a position he has the best opportunities of knowing the educational needs of the people and of forming the soundest judgment as to the character of the education required. It is gratifying to find such a man agreeing with so many other great educationists in giving a first place to literature, civics, and morals. For this life and for all men there is no knowledge more important than the knowledge of man — the object which stands in the closest relationship to us in the environment of life. We must therefore study man, his natural history, his progress, his mental achievements, his social, moral, and physical relations.]

We wish our boys and girls to know that they are not at school merely to learn how to earn a living, or to be able to read many books, but to become men and women who shall help the state by their lives and work.
—*Charles F. Dole.*

Teachers Rejuvenated

The methods, illustrations and expressions of teachers, for several years engaged in the same school, become monotonous both to themselves and to their pupils. It is true that some teachers, by the use of educational papers, by devoting themselves to some branch of science or literature, and by other means, keep out of the ruts longer than others. But all teachers need the inspiration obtained by visiting other schools, by travel, and by meeting distinguished educationists. We have read that in some town in the United States teachers are allowed to take one year in nine, and that, if the time is spent mostly in visiting schools in other states or countries, they are allowed half-pay.

In every town having as many as 4,000 inhabitants no better use could be made of, say, \$250 of its school funds every second or third year than by allowing one of its more enterprising teachers to spend six months in becoming rejuvenated and again inspired with the best ideals that prevail in other places. It is probably thoughtlessness that has hitherto prevented our school boards from adopting this plan of putting new life into their whole school system.

In Halifax it is not uncommon for the Sisters of Charity, twenty-five of whom are teaching in the public schools, to send one of their number to visit the schools of Boston, New York or Chicago for six weeks or six months. They learn much of the best methods in vogue in these places, and on their return they incorporate these improvements into their own schools. In some cases their whole pedagogical training is obtained abroad.

Sr. Perpetua of St. Mary's school, Halifax, has returned from an extended visit to the schools of Boston. She saw much that was new and interesting to her, but did not find the pupils upon the whole much better than those of Halifax, in some respects not so well advanced. The Swedish system of gymnastics was well taught, and met with her approval as being the best system for an all-round physical development. Manual training received very great attention in all grades. In only one particular did she find the Boston pupils superior to ours — in the power of expression. They could talk and read well, using good language and enunciating very clearly. They could also draw well. She studied carefully their best systems of teaching reading in the primary schools.

“Make my mental dreams come true
With the good I fain would do;
If there be a weaker one,
Give me strength to help him on;
Clothe with life the weak intent;
Let me do the thing I meant.”