

# EDUCATION IN CANADA

Notes Made at a University College Lecture.

In an address at University College, London, on February 20th, Colonel Adami, M.D., Sc.D., F.R.S., surveyed the whole field of education in Canada, praising it where praise was due, and criticizing it where its weakness and its defects are apparent.

In all attempts to draw up a system of education from the Elementary School to the University, the great difficulty which always presents itself is to preserve the proper balance between the requirement for a broad education, that is to say, a fair knowledge of many subjects, and for obtaining the highest degree of efficiency and specialization in one subject or in one branch of learning. To a certain extent the former is necessary in order to make the latter possible, and to develop the breadth of outlook so necessary in the citizen of to-day. The latter is equally necessary in this age, where the specialist is required in every subject, because the horizon of knowledge has become so extended that it is only the man who devotes his full thought and energy in one direction who can hope to bring to light anything new.

In this connection Colonel Adami criticized the High Schools of Canada as attempting to cover too many subjects, turning out Matriculation students who do not know any one subject absolutely thoroughly. The long standing controversy as to the value of Classics was here touched upon, and the statement made that as the result of many years close study of Canadian students, the fact was established in the lecturer's mind, that they suffered throughout their College course in the Faculties of Law and Medicine from the lack of sufficient knowledge of Classics. In the subject of Pathology alone there are 2,000 terms of Greek or Latin derivation. A student who has not a good acquaintance of these "dead languages" is compelled to commit these terms to memory without the aid of the law of association which is such an important factor in helping the memory. In a broader sense he lamented the lack of more thorough classical training, purely on account of the mental discipline which it gives.

While listening to this outline of the need for keeping to a *via media* in education, neither going to the extreme of attempting to master too great a variety of subjects, nor to the opposite extreme of specializing so intensely as to be stultified, one's mind reverted to the paragraph in Robert Louis Stevenson's "Essay on Human Life," in which he sets forth the same thought in different words—"A man is one thing and must be exercised in all his parts: whatever part of him is neglected, whether it be the training of the muscles or the intellect, or the taste for Art, that which is cultivated will suffer in proportion. Thus the dilettante misses the kernal of the matter, and he who has wrung forth the secret of one branch of life, knows more about all the others than he who has tepidly circumnavigated all."

Speaking of the Canadian Universities, Colonel Adami paid a warm tribute to the high standard which they maintain, and to

the widespread reputation which they have gained on both sides of the Atlantic. He referred especially to the magnificent training which is given in the Universities—such as McGill and Toronto in the Faculties of Medicine and Applied Science. McGill was the pioneer among Universities in throwing hospital wards open to the medical students, in order that theoretical and practical training might be carried on at the same time—a system which has since been adopted by almost every one of the leading medical schools. With regard to the courses in Applied Science, he referred to the fact that just before the war, each year students from the British Isles came over in greater numbers to avail themselves of the unsurpassed opportunities for a thorough engineering training which the Canadian Universities offered. To a great extent he thought their superiority was due to the system of making it possible for the student to obtain between each of the four Undergraduate years, two or three months of practical experience in some of the finest works and engineering plants in the country.

Referring to the teaching power of the Dominion of Canada, Colonel Adami lamented the fact that the proportion of male teachers in the schools was very small and had been on the decrease. He said that the benefit could hardly be over-estimated of having a male teacher in charge of boys above the age of seven or eight years, a man who should lead them in their sports, inspire them with the thought of what citizenship in a developing country means, and hold them under a discipline and a control which a very small proportion of women teachers can exercise. It is time that the State formulated some scheme to encourage men to take up teaching as a profession by systematically aiding them in obtaining higher education and making possible their advance to the better positions such as those of High School Teachers and University Lecturers.

Regarding education as a whole, the lecturer said that the secret of a successful system was that each stage should be closely related to that which preceded it and to that which was to follow; thus only a sequence could be obtained which was so necessary if valuable time was not to be wasted by overlapping and by being misdirected at one time or another. He spoke in high terms of the educational system in the Maritime Provinces based upon the old Scottish traditions formulated so thoroughly by John Knox.

In order that education may play its fullest part in the life of the country and in its development along all lines of national or provincial activity, it is necessary that the educational institutions keep themselves in close touch and sympathetic understanding with the ordinary citizen, whether it be the agricultural labourer of the rural district, or the industrial worker of the cities. It is in this respect that the State University has an advantage otherwise almost impossible. It is the pride of every tax payer; it is quick to follow up every new line of activity, to encourage the best methods and the closest

co-operation between all members of the community.

Canada owes much to her education in the past, and as her population increases, her industrial wealth grows and her natural resources are harnessed, she will continue to owe yet more to her educational institutions if they maintain a breadth of outlook and sympathetic understanding of, and association with, all the problems which will arise in the country.

## FULLER IN THE FACE.

Tinwafer had never been what you might call plump, and since rationing had become general he certainly hadn't been putting on weight.

"I say," he remarked to a friend, "I met Fuller yesterday, and he told me that I was getting fatter."

"Well, it's only natural he should say so," was the answer.

Tinwafer looked surprised and asked why. "That's easy," replied the friend. "You were looking Fuller in the face."

## HOW!

Helen was a very inquisitive child who greatly annoyed her father each evening with endless questions while he tried to read the newspaper.

One evening, among other things, she demanded, "Papa, what do you do at the store all day?"

Exasperated at her persistence, he answered briefly, "Oh, nothing."

Helen was silent for a moment and then she asked, "But, how do you know when you are done?"

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