

Acadia Athenæum.

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As is already known, this, the first number of the ACADIA ATHENÆUM, was promised in our Prospectus at the middle of November. Acting upon this notice, a number of our friends forwarded their names with the amount of their subscriptions. Delay, however, in the arrival of the type and other necessary appendages of our intended publisher, hindered the progress of the work; and when five hundred copies at last appeared, their not proving satisfactory either in the quality of the paper used, or the mechanical execution of the work, rendered necessary a republication of the whole.

Having accordingly changed our publishers, and employed the NOVA SCOTIA PRINTING COMPANY, we anticipate no such failure in the future.

THE successive steps in the course of study are the reception of truth, the certain perception and vivid appreciation of it when received, and the employment of all acquisitions in making new explorations and discoveries in the vast fields of research, thus manifesting one's individuality, securing independence of action, and, in the end, attaining to completeness of conception.

The inventor furnishes us with good illustrations of this process in the mechanical products which he is continually giving to the world. First there is the conception of the machine, then the embodiment

of that conception in pulleys, wheels, cords, and the various appendages belonging thereto; but it is only when the different parts are in full operation before the eyes that improvements are suggested which aid much in the harmonious adjustment of the whole, or entirely new creations disclose themselves. We have also an exemplification of this in the laws laid down for regulating the conduct of life. The original transcript is certainly better than disorder; but it is only in the cancellation of much that is old, in the creation of much that is new, by frequent suggestions and keen observation, that a product is obtained suited to the stern demands of society. We have an illustration, too, in the theories which educationists have given and are still giving to the world in great abundance in order to so adapt instruction to the mind as best to develop the faculties, and raise man to a higher plane of thought and feeling. No doubt the simplicity of ideas on the subject aids in reaching completeness of result, but the ratio of progress depends upon the continuation of effort to grasp the perfect idea, and thus we almost insensibly pass from particulars to generalities. Progress in its onward march is subjecting to impartial sifting the researches of past generations. Thus many old theories have been exploded, opening up the way for more perfect degrees of thought. The darling idol of the soul is torn away from its pedestal for the enthronement of a new divinity. The belief of to-day becomes the doubt of to-morrow. New creations are continually disclosing themselves admitting of new modifications—of more perfect ideas respecting them. The tide of faith succeeds the influx of error. The very face of Heaven and earth changes as man approximates towards the absolute, the unchanging realization.

In reference to the reception of truth we maintain that the health and development of the mind must depend upon the character of the knowledge received; that the *first* shaping and moulding must largely determine the future usefulness and success of those that are under the fostering hand. We believe this. Expressions embodying it meet you with sufficient frequency. "Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined." "Youth is

the seed-time of life." "The child is father of the man." Looking at this in the light of reason, we see that it must be so. The mind in its passivity is open to impressions. These impressions and the mind mutually affect each other. This contact of the one with the other—this reciprocity—begets a vital union which incorporates the individual existences. The one lives in and through and vitalizes the other, as a foreign branch becomes part and parcel of the tree into which it is grafted, and the same life-blood permeates both, so the love, mingling with that which is received, is assimilated with it. There is, then, but one fountain of life, and the value of either necessarily comprehend that of both. We learn the nature of the study from the thought; and the thought is the key to the particular cast of mind. The true and thorough interpretation of the one must of necessity involve the logical exegesis of the other. Thus each new product reveals the successive developments of years. The man vitalizes his creations, and the creations reflect the man in all the stages; yet the character of the manifestations is traceable to the first perceptions of truth—to the first years of mutual discipline. The great thing is, that all the future unfoldings are wrapped in the form of the present.

Now a curriculum of study, beginning at the fountain-head where the bubblings and nature of the ground determine the everlasting course of the river, is most manifestly adapted to start into life the slumbering energies of the soul and secure broad and sound development. As Spring causes to bloom with richness and beauty those things which possessed all the conditions of life, yet lacked the warm and genial breath to vitalize them, so the soul blooms like an Eden at the influences of the life-giving breezes of thought and application. There is a general waking up, an intense and longing desire to know how growth can be secured, a glimmering creates a longing for the free and glorious sunlight: a drop begets a thirsting for the waters of truth: at the mention of liberty there is the strong cry for the release of the captive. And the measure of the benefit received is precisely the measure of the intensity of the aspirations begotten. Strong praiseworthy desire tells of whole-