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THE

PARISH SCHOOL ADVOCATE

And Family Instructor,

FOR NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK, AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

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Libraries and Text Books.

The subject of District Libraries has been referred to in former numbers of our Periodical, and in consequence of their importance we now bring this important part of educational machinery more prominently before our readers. Libraries of useful knowledge forms a very important educational auxiliary of every country where knowledge is making salutary progress. In Great Britien this subject has recently engaged the attention of some of the principal statesmen and philanthropists of the nation; and also in the New England States, and Western Canada, the subject of District School Libraries forms a very important part of their educational movements. It is a settled point, that the mind will have food as well as the body, and if the means of obtaining useful knowledge is not generally provided, the mass of society will run into the extremes of vice, the social fabric will soon become morally and intellectually paralyzed; people will have some place of resort; and if no library exists in the community, the tavern, the ball-room, the card-table, and such other places, will take the attention, and be the means of leading, as they too often do, a large portion of society into the channels of vice. It is a certain fact, that man is not made to act like the beasts that perish,—his mind requires cultivation,—he is destined for a more lofty state of existence, even on earth, than merely to sit down and eat, and rise up to play; or eat in order that he might work, and work in order that he might eat. We do not know of any means of more importance, in a secular point of view, towards the education of our race, than the establishment of libraries, where are treasured up a large supply of the records of all that are great and good of past ages, as well as that continually transpiring, along

with the achievements in the arts and sciences. Good books are like good company, so great care should be taken in their selection. Most every law made in the British dominions for the better advancement of education, enacts, "that no work of a licentious, vicious, or immoral tendency, or hostile to the christian religion, or works *of denominational controversy, sha'l* be admitted into the public schools of the country." Here a difficulty arises;—for it is difficult at all times, and under all circumstances, to determine what should be excluded, and what introduced. One member of a community claims to have as good a right to think and act in the matter as another. Consequently it not unfrequently happens in these countries when libraries have been established, that the principal part of the parents have refused to let their children read or study from the works selected by the School authorities.

The safest course to pursue in such cases, is to let the School boards select a large and varied assortment of the best works; then let each school district be furnished with a catalogue and sample of the books; in this way communities may be able to select such works as will best suit the majority of the inhabitants; and many works may thus be obtained, that will suit all interested. None, we presume, will deny that parents, the natural guardians of their offspring, have the inalienable right to determine what works their children should read, and what subjects they shall study, and what religious sentiments they shall be taught; hence, the difficulty of selecting books and establishing libraries. Such a state of social, moral, and intellectual existence, teaches us the absolute necessity of the diffusion of general knowledge; parents should be so educated, as best to enable them to act aright in this important matter. *The right use of knowledge alone* will obviate the difficulty—a difficulty, which, we are happy to say, has not assumed in these Provinces, as yet, any magnitude. But an evil of a no less serious nature does very generally exist; *that is, parents in too* many cases care very little whether their children read at all, or what kind of books they do read, and often send them to school without books altogether; others, again, determine with great precision, not only what they shall read, and study, but even how much;—one says, "my child must learn nothing but history;" another says, "my child must learn nothing but cyphering and writing;" while a *third party says, "my child must learn* all these subjects, with half a dozen others."

As to Books, says the teacher, "Parents will not get them." "Every teacher must have new books," *says the parent. In some cases two* or three different kinds of class books are used in the same school. Such, then, is the diversity of sentiment and practice on this subject.

This diversity of class books, so prevalent in a large number *of the schools* of the Lower Provinces, calls for immediate remedy; it tends to multiply classes to such an extent that the teacher cannot do each class justice; the pupils are principally employed in the mere art of remembering, while the teacher's time is taken up in simply hearing pupils repeat. Teachers generally cannot be expected to be familiar with all the diversified text books extant, and it is of importance that the teacher should thoroughly understand not only the subjects to be taught, but the books from which he teaches.

Another evil arising out of this diversity of text books and systems of communicating instruction is, that it not only makes education more expensive, but it protracts the period required to make a pupil master of a study; the constant change of teachers, also, tends very much to increase text books in the schools, and adds to the cost of education.

Text books should not be changed suddenly without mature consideration, but when it becomes necessary to *change them, which it will, in process* of time, especially in the treating on Geography, History, etc., care should be observed, and the best works should be selected.

In the establishment of Libraries, and the selection of school books, the following suggestions may be of service :—

1. Let a cordial understanding exist between the school officers and the inhabitants of the district where it is proposed to establish a library.

2. Select books containing a knowledge of the country in which the library is to be established, its natural resources, extent of improvement, and form of government. Such Elementary works as are best calculated to advance primary education; also works treating on history, biography, physical science, ethics, general literature, travels, wages, manufactures, useful arts, encyclopedias, agriculture, education, periodicals, practical life, ect.

3. Those making the selection should study the peculiarities and predilections of the inhabitants, for, by so doing general satisfaction might be given

4. Select the most standard works—works having for their object the moral renovation of society, as well as those containing the most full and accurate system of literary teaching.

Legislative Encouragement

is afforded by the present School Bill of New Brunswick in aid of District Libraries as follows:—.

"Whenever any school district shall raise a sum of money for the purpose of establishing a library, or increasing any one already established, they shall be entitled to receive from the Province Treasury, a sum equal to half the amount so raised, to be expended in the purchase of books therefor not to exceed five pounds in any one year." In addition to this provision for the establishment of school libraries, the school regulations for New Brunswick further says—" that catalogues of books suitable for these libraries will be kept in the Chief Superintendent's Office, from which selections may be made, by first applying to the School Committee of the district where it is proposed to establish, or continue a library already established.

By these regulations the School Committee of the respective district, is to have control of the library, "appoint a librarian, secretary and treasurer," and " determine where the library shall be kept, and to make regulations for its preservation."

We take it for granted that it is the intention of the law, that these libraries shall be for the benefit of the respective communities where established, and that the books may be circulated, as in Upper Canada, among the inhabitants, as well as used in the schools of the districts; though it is not at all clear from the law or school regulations, what is to be done with the books, except that school committees are to have charge of them.

However, we do not suppose that the inhabitants of the district where such libraries may be established, will be liable to prosecutions for reading the books. And as these regulations do not lay down any rules for the government of the libraries, as is the case in other countries, we offer the following, which may be altered and amended, so as to suit the peculiar views and circumstances of those for whom the libraries may be intended.

RULES.

1. This shall be called the ———— District Library.

2. Each resident shall be allowed to have any book belonging to the library, when not previously given out, and keep the same for — days, for every one hundred pages such book contain.

3. The librarian shall enter in a book to be kept for the purpose, the title and number of every book delivered, to whom delivered, when delivered, when returnable, and the condition of the book.

4. The librarian shall have charge of the books, and exhibit a catalogue of all the books in the library when required by those having an interest therein.

5. No one to have more than one book at a ime.

6. Any person destroying, or materially damaging any book, or keeping a book beyond the time stated, shall pay to the treasurer the value of the book so injured; and such person shall not be allowed to receive another book while such forfeiture remains unsatisfied.

7. No minor shall receive a book, unless some responsible person shall become security therefor except such minor deposits with the librarian, the cost of the book.

8. All books shall be delivered according to priority of application.

School Bill—New Brunswick.

It is is now generally conceded that the present School Law of this Province does not meet the requirements of the Country.

One of the greatest blunders generally made in the administration of Colonial Government is, our appropriating to ourselves all the machinery incident to old wealthy and popular countries.

While we have not more population than that of a Borough Town of the Mother Country, still we have nearly all the political machinery common to the British Islands, with their 26,000,000 inhabitants. And this machinery we are maintaining at a disproportionate cost,—a cost far above our means and requirments, This principle is also extended to our Educational machinery We are paying, annually, about £2,600, not for education, but to those whose duty is little more than to make reports, rules and regulations, while the teachers do all the real good actually done. This sum is entirely too much for an infant Colony like New Brunswick with 220,000 inhabitants to pay for simply reporting 750 Parish Schools.

We should endeavour to use an old adage, to "creep before we walk,"—it is too soon for us, in this infant state, to adopt all the educational machinery necessary to countries with largely developed resources, and over one hundred times our population.

We have arrived, in educational matters, at that state of things, that the local officers and guardians of youth have thrown the *onus*, if onorous at all, of examinations etc., upon those who get the salaries, consequently, that wholesome guardianship which should be exercised by local parties, is not generally adopted, and the whole control is left to the flying visits of the Chief Superintendent of Schools, and the Inspector,—the latter spending an hour in each School twice a year. The law makes provision for the election of School Committees, but we have not heard of a single district as yet which has done so; and as for Trustees taking any special interest, no one thinks of it.

This, as far as we can learn, being the true state of the workings of the educational system of this Province, it should be the earnest desire of all those feeling an interest in this important subject, to use their influence with the legislature, which will shortly resume its sittings, to get this law amended so as to meet the requirements of the country.

The gross amount annually paid towards the support of Colleges, Academies, Grammar Schools, and other High Schools in the Province, amounts to nearly £6,000, and still we are endowing Training and Model Schools, at a large expense to the Province. Why pay *six thousand pounds* per annum, towards the support of these institutions, the Colleges, ect., without binding the recipients of such an amount, to qualify candidates for Teachers of Common Schools? Certainly, the Profrssors, Preceptresses, and other Teachers officiating in these institutions, ought to be fully qualified for the task of training and otherwise fitting the youth of our country for the office of Teachers of Parish Schools; and these institutions ought also to be well supplied with Books and Philosophical apparatus; and if they are not so supplied, and do not possess these essentials, the government allowance should be at once withdrawn; and if they do possess the necessary ability to qualifify the youth of our country to take charge of the Elementary Schools of the Province, then why maintain Training and Model Schools at an additional cost of £600, besides the cost of buildings, ect.

It may be argued that these, so called higher institutions of education, are all sectarian, and parties entering within their walls will have their religious sentiments tampered with, which we have no doubt is too often the case; but no matter, grant all this to be true; does not all the prominent religious bodies in the Province draw largely from the revenues of the country in aid of their institutions? Teachers generally speaking, hail, in a religious point of view, from the ranks of Episcopalians, Methodists, Roman Catholics, Baptists, and Presbyterians, and these religious bodies, the Presbyterians excepted,

have their Academical institutions of learning, where the youth belonging to such bodies may be prepared to perform the higher offices in life, the Grammar Schools are also each drawing one hundred pounds per annum of public money. So here, there are training and model schools in abundance, where each student may be fitt d for the office of Teacher of Common Schools, and in an institution consonant with his religious prepossessions.

The reader will perceive that this is dealing with our educational institutions as we find them. But we hope that the Legisl ture at its next sitting will sweep from the records of the Province every grant now made to sectarian institutions of learning, and devote the proceeds, or as much as may be required of it, to the endowment of an *University*, when all may be enabled, without fear of sectarian influence, to drink deeply at the fountains of pure knowledge, and our young men, yes, and women too, may be qualified to fill the office of teachers of the schools of the country, as well as the highest ranks in professional life. We are fully satisfied that until such a course is pursued, education will not make proper advances, and the Province will be without any settled system,—each applicant influencing the Legislature to get as large a grant as possible.

We make the following suggestions:

1. Abolish Training, Model, and Grammar Schools, and withdraw all grants to sectarian Institutions.

2. Establish a University in some central part of the Province; say at St. John.

3. Establish the School Inspection as at present instituted, and let the Trustees be appointed to this office in their respective parishes, and paid for their serivices.

4 Establish a Board of Education in each County, composed of the Trustees, etc., where all teachers of Parish Schools may be licensed and classed.

5 Let the Government appoint some well qualified person in each County to attend at the meetings of such Board, who shall conduct the examinations of teachers, etc.

6. Let there be a Superintendent of Education for the Province as at present, to whom the County Boards shall report.

7. Establish three classes of Schools, one of which to be Superior Schools; the latter to be established where required, on application to the County Boards.

It will be observed that if these suggestions were embodied into a law and acted upon, the inhabitants of each County would have full control of the Schools of their respective Counties,—the Trustees being elective, and paid for their services, would attend to the duties of their office, and see that others did the same; the Teachers would feel that they had the people to satisfy, through their trustees, would endeavour to do their duty, and the cost of maintaining the educational machinery of the country would be at least two thousand pounds per annum less than at present. Then, New Brunswick wou'd be able to say she had a System indeed.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Parish School Advocate:

Dec. 26th, 1858.

SIR,—An important question will come before our Legislature in the approaching Session, in consequence of the disallowance by the Home Government of the Act passed last year for the virtual abolishing of King's College. Although your useful publication is principally directed to the advocacy, (as its name imports,) of Common Schools, yet you will, I am sure, admit that *some* provision for a superior education for a portion of the community is absolutely necessary; otherwise all our young men destined for professional pursuits will be induced, as too many of them now are, to resort to the United States. The question, therefore, to be agitated, will be how this object can be best attained—how the revenues of the College, including its landed possessions, can be rendered most useful.

The Parish Common Schools form the first step in the education of the rising generation; and, as the pupils in these schools are by far the most numerous, they deserve the first attention from our law makers; more especially too, as they include a class which cannot so well afford to procure the advantages of education for their children. I am not, therefore, in the observations I am now offering to you, in any way depreciating the advantages of the Common Schools, or wishing for one moment that their efficiency should be at all impaired. The next ascending step should be the grammar or superior school, for which the last Act provides, if the inhabitants comply with its provisions, in each parish; but this description of school, however ably conducted, cannot prepare young men for the study of physic, of law, or of divinity. There are, however, some excellent institutions in the Province, in which a knowledge of the higher branches of science can be acquired. Still a College education is necessary for some among our numerous young men, by which they may be prepared for the bar, or either of the other professions, and fitted to take their part in the various departments of the State, civil and military, now open to them by the introduction of the competitive system in England. It must be remembered that, in the race for appointments in the rich clime of India, or in most of the departments of the Imperial Government, the candidates will have to contend against men from the British Universities, and from the first schools of the United Kingdom. If, therefore, these Provinces intend to hold any rank in the British Empire; if their youth have sufficient ambition to vie with their fellow subjects at home, or in the other colonies, the means must be provided for placing them on an equal footing with their probable opponents. Let us, on this subject, refer to the example of England. That veteran in the cause of science and education, Lord Brougham, some thirty years ago, was the principal founder of an institution, then called the London University, designed, to extend the advantages of a scientific education to those who could not afford the expence of a residence at Oxford or Cambridge, and also to include these branches of useful knowledge, which at that time received but little attention at the existing seats of learning. After much opposition, the object was effected; its advantages became obvious; and a second institution of the same nature was established in London, under the name of King's College. In process of time, the benefits derived from both these Colleges forced conviction on the minds of many of their former opponents; and the consequence was the formation of a body called the London University, the name of Lord Brougham's foundation being changed to University College; and the new University included in its provisions, not only the original institution, but also King's College, and any other of the same nature, whose managers might be desirous of uniting with it. Thus the London University now comprehends many establishments, not only in London, but at Birmingham, and other large places; and its examiners confer degrees on students from any of these seminaries. The examining body is carefully selected; and, notwithstanding the jealousy with which its degrees were at first looked on by the adherents of the older Universities the acquirements of its members have effectually established its reputation.

Cannot something of this nature be carried out in this Province? uniting perhaps with Nova Scotia in so desirable a purpose, and taking under its wing the several denominational colleges now existing in the Lower Provinces. All would of course be on precisely equal terms, and alike entitled to the honors and advantages of the United University.

If you will give place to these hints in your publication, they may perhaps come under the notice of some of our Legislators who have the cause of education at heart, and eventually be the means of devising some useful and comprehensive mode of effecting the object,

I am Sir, Yours, &c.,

NEMO.

Emulation in Schools.

Ambition has been called the last infirmity of noble minds; yet how often is the first impulse to their nobility! A generous emulation acts on the mind like the fairy in the legend of romance, who guided her votary amid innumerable difficulties and dangers till she led him to happiness. To awaken the pupil's ambition should be the first object of the teacher; for until that be awakened he will teach in vain. This is the reason why so many eminent men have passed thro' school with so few honors, and afterward have won so many from the world. They have been the "glory of the college and its shame;" and not until their energies were aroused and their ambition stimulated by stirring strife of the world, did they exhibit those faculties which have made memorable an age or country. Had not these men genius at school? Certainly! It was only dormant, like the strength of the sleeping lion. And many boys have been thought dunces at school, because their teachers had not penetration and sagacity enough to discover and develope the latent spark of intellect within them.

Swift's college-mates and teachers thought him a dunce at the very time that he was writing his "Tale of a Tub"—the rough draft of which he then showed to his friend and roommate. The "Tale" was not published until many years afterward. He got his degrees at college by the "special favor" of the faculty, as it stands recorded in the archives. It appears he would not read the old works on logic, but preferred laughing over Rabelais and Cervantes. His teachers did not understand his character. They should have studied it, and then they could easily have controlled him, and have prevented the lamentation on his part, in after days, that he had thrown away eight years of his life. Let those youths of talent who may have acted as Swift's did, remember what Dr. Johnson said of him, viz., that though he had thrown away eight years of his life in idleness, he was determined not to throw away the rest in despair. Doubtless some young man who ran away with all the honors of his school, Swift was his class-mate as easily as all the honors of the world afterward ran away from him, used to quote Swift as a proverb of stupidity; but it was this after-resolution of Swift's that gave him the world's honors and perhaps a want of spirit to follow up the honors acquired at school that caused his competitor to lose them.

One of Byron's teachers pointed to him one day, saying, "That lame brat will never be fit for any thing but to create broils" Poor Byron, it is true, had great talents for creating broils; but Doctor Drury, another of his teachers, discovered that he had talents of a far higher kind, and successfully sought to awaken his emulation. It is pleasing to know that, though Byron was always satirizing his other teachers, and setting their authority at defiance, for Dr. Drury he entertained the highest respect, and has so expressed himself in language that will not die.

When Sylla was about proscribing Cæsar, some one asked him what he had to fear from that loose-girdled boy. "In that loose-girdled boy," said he, "I see many Mariuses." Cromwell's associates thought him a foolish fanatic; and it was his kinsman, Hampden, who discovered his capacity, predicting that he would be the greatest man in the kingdom should a revolution occur.

We all know the history of Patrick Henry. He gave so little promise of mind, that when he went to be examined touching his qualifications to practice law, one of the gentlemen appointed to examine him abtusely refused the duty—he was so struck with the unpromising appearance of the applicant. Yet, but a short time afterward, Henry made his great speech in the "Parsons." His talents were so little known, even to his father, that the old gentleman, who was one of the judges, burst into tears on the bench; while the people raised their champion on their shoulders and bore him in triumph through the streets. How much sooner would have been the development of Henry's mind if his emulation had been earlier aroused, and a fit opportunity had been given him for display. And when he

was driving the plow, or officiating as the bar-keeper of a common tavern, or roaming wild through the wood in pursuit of deer, if he had met with a teacher who could appreciate his abilities, who wou'd have ta'ked to him of the immortal names of history, and cheered him on to emulation, we should now look back upon him, not only as our Demosthenes, but his own glowing pages would have been the best monument of his renown.

Dr. Barrow's father said that if it pleased the Lord to take any of his children, he hoped it would be Isaac, as he was fit for nothing but to fight and set two dogs fighting. Nevertheless, when this Isaac grew to manhood, and his emulation was awakened, he was thought in mathematics to be inferior only to Newton, and was the greatest divine of his age.

Dr. Parr, the celebrated teacher, who used to boast that he had flogged all the bishops in the kingdom, and who, whenever it was said that such and such a person had talents, would exclaim: "Yes, sir; yes, sir; there's no doubt of it—I have flogged him often, and I never threw a flogging away"; this reverend gentleman was remarkable for discovering the hidden talents of his pupils. He was the first who discovered Sheridan's. He says: "I saw it in his eye, and in the vivacity of his manner, though, as a boy, Sheridan was quite careless of literary fame." Afterward, when Richard felt ambitious of such honors, he was thrown, as Dr Parr says, "upon the town," without resources, and left to his own wild impulses. This, no doubt, was the cause of many of Sheridan's errors and wanderings, which checkered the whole of his splendid but wayward career. A teacher wanting the observation of Dr Parr might have concluded that because Sheridan would not study, and no inducements could make him apply himself, he wanted capacity. This was the case with Dr. Wythe, his first teacher, who did not distinguish between the want of capacity and the want of industry. It appears from the exploits of the "apple-lofts," and the partiality which Sheridan's school-mates entertained for him, that he was more ambitious of being the first at play than the first at study. Sheridan had not then versified the proverb of "good at work, good at play;" but it often happens that he who wins the game among boys afterward wins the game among men, when there is a far deeper stake, and when, too, there is not half so much mirth among the losers, and, alas, not half so much happy-heartedness with the winner.

There are few young persons who do not feel the thirst of emulation—the panting to reach the goal—when once the faculties are aroused by an appreciative teacher. They forget how many have fallen in the race; how many have been pushed aside by the strong and determined, who, in their turn, have shrunk from those of higher powers. How much circumstances which seemed but a feather, wind wafted any and every where! How often best-laid schemes, the profoundest plots, the most cunning contrivances, have passed away like the bubble on the stream, or turned to the ruin of those who were exulting in their handiwork! How often the best talents, adorned with every virtue, have fallen before the inferior talents, disgraced with every vice! Yet, nevertheless, the development of the talents and character of those who have struggled through difficulties and danger to eminence and power is interesting and instructive, no matter whether the individual uses good or bad means to attain his ends. And if interest attaches to him who struggles ardently in a bad cause, how much more does he excite who struggles nobly in a good one! Washington, no doubt, in contemplating the actions of Cæsar and Cromwell, felt that if they dared so much for mere selfishness, he could dare more for patriotism; that if they pledged life and fortune for their own success, he would pledge "life, fortune and sacred honor" for the success of his country. Besides, to show to aspiring ambition the rock on which so many split, victims to unhallowed passions, is as salutary as the Spartan's practice, when he exhibited his intoxicated slave to his sons, that they might shun the beastly vice to which the menial was a victim. And again, to show, on the other hand, the undaunted perseverance with which so

many great men have struggled in a good cause, is to lead by the hand the unsteady and the wavering until their foothold is sure. A great author used to observe that, whenever he sat down to write, he always placed the Iliad on the table open before him; "For," said he, "I like to light my taper at the sun." And certainly, the actions of an illustrious individual may be said to be a great moral luminary, from which all who choose may borrow light. That which elevates us above the brute, which does us service, is moral energy; which, like the fabled gift of the alchemist, extracts gold—golden rules, at least—from every thing around us. It determines us in the pursuit of that which we seek, with the spirit which may become a man.—*Illinois Teacher.*

Plant Flowers near the School House.

"Well that school-house looks twenty-five dollars better—altogether a more cheerful and comfortable house for our children." And what has wrought the transformation? What has added to its instrinsic worth? It is the same in its construction; no addition has been made to its physical proportions It looks very much internally as it did many years since. That same two-paned window over the door, with a crevice in one corner, the work of some truant snowball. The same gay fence in front, upon which are some hieroglyphic characters who e language is the genius and indefinite emanations of some crude youthful intellect. The old step, with a piece split from one side, and worn by the 'droppings' of many a merry foot-fall, is still in its place. If you enter the house, you will find things very much as of yore. The same rows of desks, with here and there the carvings of some "Yankee blade;" the stove-pipe running the entire length of the room, suspended by a dozen stout wires; and the master's desk, in its silent eloquence, standing beneath the old whitefaced clock. But there is an air of cheerfulness about the room, unknown to its earlier days. In front of the master's desk are two white shelves, upon which are vases, filled with the most beautiful flowers. The morning glory, peeping out amid the smiling family of Flora's household. The daffodil and daisy, the tulip and the buttercup, the bold crimson peony and the modest violet, blending their variegated colors, make altogether an object of peculiar interest to the lovers of the beautiful. But where is the extra twenty-five dollars? Whence this additional value? Why, about one year since the teacher planted a morning glory by the doorway. A few rose bushes were brought from a neighbour's garden and planted beneath the window. A row of pinks and daisies were set beside the walk. In a neglected corner was a circle of daffodils and buttercups, and the spirit of beauty seemed whispering amid a happy, joyous group of children. The morning glory sprang up at the touch of the first spring shower, and soon was seen winding its tender vine around a string leading up beside the window. Some red, white and purple flowers made their appearance, and attracted the attention of many a happy girl and boy. The daisies and pinks were soon in blossom, and the great peony, that Mrs. A. gave the teacher, was soon seen in broad luxuriant bloom by the gateway.

Before June had clothed the meadows in their thick, green vesture, the rose tree under the window bore more than a score of bright beautiful blossoms. Indeed, the inspiring breath of nature seemed to whisper encouraging words to the teacher's care for flowers. The rough, impetuous boy would stop and drop a word of admiration, as his eyes caught the phenomenon, and then stoop to tear up the weed that was choking the growth of the flower. What a beautiful text for a moral lesson. How simple, and how plainly similar the weeds of passion and lust are forever intercepting the growth of virtue. Every little girl had her own favorite flower. Some admired the daisy for its proverbial, its beautiful modesty, and almost stooped to listen to the sweet low words of "innocence" it seemed to breathe Others delighted to gaze upon the

sweet-scented pink, while the purity of affection seemed to glow still brighter.

Old Mrs. B. had frequently told the teacher, that the children were such careless creatures they would tear up all the flowers that might be planted around the school-house. "'Twas no use to try—only a waste of time." But the sequel proved that Mrs. B. misjudged for once. Not a flower was despoiled. New passions seemed awakened. The beautiful things of nature began to exercise a controlling influence over many a rough spirit. You would see a group of girls or boys out amid the flowers, after their lessons were repeated, searching for truant weeds, or watering the thirsty plants. And the privilege of doing this proved a profitable incentive to study. Not unfrequently would the passer-by stop and lean against the fence and admire, for a moment, the beauty of these strange flowers which had sprung up, as if by magic, in that barren place, the school house yard. This was, then, not an unprofitable investment. It yielded more than a "hundred fold." Fellow-teacher, is there not a neglected waste corner in your school house yard, where a flower would grow? Would not a morning glory flourish beside your door? Have you not a spare moment, in which it would be pleasant to turn your attention to the cultivation of flowers? Would it not be an agreeable manner in which to spend a recess now and then with your pupils? Communion with the beautiful is indeed desirable for our children. It refines the feelings, cultivates the affections, and reflects bright images upon the heart.

A child taught to love the beautiful things of nature, will earnestly inquire after nature's God. And to promote and direct this important inquiry, is the crowning work of education.

All systems of education, that do not regard moral obligation and moral responsibility as the corner stone, are most sadly deficient.

A flower will do what the rod cannot accomplish. It may soften the obduracy of the heart, refine the dull mass of human affections. Then plant flowers. Plant them in early spring time. Plant them at every waste corner. Cultivate them with care, and you will soon hear their beautiful language echoed from youthful lips, their bright images glowing in youthful countenances, and an atmosphere of purity reigning all around.—*New York Teacher.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

On the Vitality of Grass Seed.

[*From the Lower Canada Farmer's Journal.*]

The question is often asked, and many times by those who are esteemed the wisest and best of farmers—"Is grass seed and clover seed, which is more than one, two, or three years old, just as good as seed only one year old?"

By many it is believed that there is really no difference in seed, whether it is one or four years old; and it would seem that when proper care is exercised in securing such seed, not suffering it to be injured by storms, nor to heat in the mow before it is cleansed from the chaff, it would be good seed, and vegetate well even when it is a few years old. We have always thought, until recently, that old seed was as good as new, and have many times sown clover and timothy seed which was more than a year old, but have noticed almost invariably, that such seed did not seem to "take" well; and, not thinking that the seed was not good, we have attributed such failure to the unfavorable condition of the soil—that it was covered too deep, or not covered at all with earth. But I have always had good success in seeding land, in both fall and winter when I have used fresh seed. I have observed many times that those farmers who contend that old seed is just as good as new, and who are in the habit of sowing old seed, frequently complain that their grass seed does not seem to take well.

As every farmer should, if possible,

raise his own grass seed, we have been accustomed every year to select some of the best portions of our meadow and let it ripen for seed. In 1849 we saved about two acres of timothy grass; and as it yielded several bushels more than we wanted to sow in one season, it was kept in barrels in the granary. The seed sown in 1850 took well. In 1851 we sowed about one bushel of the same kind of seed, and were much surprised to find that but a small portion of the seed ever came up. Not having occasion to use the remainder of the seed, it was kept until the spring of 1855, when we sowed about two bushels of it, and none of it grew. The cause of failure was thought to be the universal dryness of the soil.

In the spring of 1856 from one to two bushels more were sown, but none of it vegetated; and in September last about two bushels more were sown after wheat on summer fallow, where the soil was very mellow and moist, and as favorable as a soil could be for seed of any kind. and not one single spear can be found which has sprung from the seed sown at that time.

In a few instances, in years gone by, we have sown turnip seed which was from two to three years old; and from such seed we never obtained many turnips; while from new seed they were almost apt to stand too thick.

In the spring of 1853, we used carrot seed which was three years old, and not one seed in one hundred vegetated. In the spring of 1855, we used carrot seed two years old; and in some rows of one hundred feet long, there would be but six, eight or ten carrots; and not one-tenth part of the seed in all the rows, ever came up. In the spring of 1853, I sowed a paper of carrot seed, which we have good reason to believe was old seed, and the result was, we did not raise one single carrot.

What the experience of others may be on this subject I am not able to say, but what I have penned I know to be veritable truth; and, furthermore, I know that the cause of failure was in the seed, and not in the unfavorableness of the soil. And if such should be the result with old seed on my farm may we not safely conclude that when a failure has been attributed to a poor and barren soil in many instances, the fault was in the seed? We know that grass seed is kept on hand many times by proprietors of agricultural seed stores until it is several years old, and it is no uncommon thing for country merchants to keep clover and timothy seed from year to year, and sell such for fresh seed; and if my seed should lose its vitality in so short a period of time, it would seem to be the dictate of sound wisdom for every farmer to raise his own seed from year to year; or sow none except that which is known to be the product of the previous year.

A Curious Question.

It is a singular illustration of the inexactness of agricultural knowledge, that the question how many seeds there are in the pound of our commonly cultivated field plants, should still remain to be answered. It is plain that the answer will not necessarily affect farm practice—for the quantity of seed which it is proper to sow per acre, is a matter to be determined by experience, not by argument apart from trial, and yet surely it is most desirable to compare the number of the seeds we ordinarily sow with that of the plants we raise. If in ordinary practice, 1 200,000 seeds of wheat are sown on every 40,000 superficial feet, or what is more extraordinary, fifteen to eighteen million seeds of flax are scattered on the same extent, about three to every inch of land, it is surely well to let the farmer know it. He knows very well he does not raise so many plants as this—and struck, as he may be, by the enormous disproportion between the means he uses, and the result he gets, he will inquire into its causes.

The turnip seed employed per acre, numbers from 600,000 to 1,000,000, according to the kind and quantity adopted; this, if the rows are two feet apart, is two or three dozen seeds per foot or row, where a single plant alone is to be grown. No doubt nothing like so many generally come up, but

that there is a great destruction by the hoe, which will explain much of the discrepancy in this case. What, however, becomes of the 18 000,000 seeds of flax which are common y—of the 6,000,000 seeds of oats which are sometimes sown per acre? There is no destruction by the hoe in either instance here A single ear of oats may contain 100 grains—a single plant will generally include half a dozen ears, but if 6.000.000 plants should yield as much as this implies, they would produce 100 loads of grain. Instead of 600 seeds a piece, they yield but half a dozen each to produce an ordinary crop of oats. It is plain that five-sixths of the seed, or of the plants that they produce, are killed in the cultivation of the crop; and the proportion is vastly greater than this in the case of other plants. What is the ordinary seeding of the clover crop? Eight pounds of red clover, four of white clover, and four of trefoil may be sown —that is at least 6,000,000 seeds per acre—a seed on every inch of land—but instead of 144, are there generally half a dozen plants on every square foot of the clover field?

There are about 25,000 seeds of sainfoin in a pound of 'rough' seed, as it is called, and it weighs some 20 lbs. per bushel, four bushels in an ordinary seeding, and they contain 2,000, 100 seeds, or fifty per square foot of land. This is the number, too, of seeds in an ordinary seeding of vetches. It is manifest that in both these cases there is an enormous destruction either of young plants or seed, and these are the two great divisions under which the causes of this anomaly must be classed: faults of seed and sowing, and faults of cultivation. We are enabled, by the assistance of Messrs. Rendle, of Plymouth, to lay before them the following answers to the question—how many seeds to the pound?

Name.	No. of Seeds. per lb.	No. of lbs per bus.
Wheat,	10,500	58 to 64
Barley,	15,400	48 to 56
Oats,	20 000	38 to 42
Rye,	23,000	56 to 60
Canary Grass,	54,000	
Buckwheat,	25,000	48 to 56
Turnip, (Rendle's Swede)	155,000	50 to 56
" (Cornish Holdfast)	239,000	"
" (Orange Jelly,)	233,000	"
Cabbage, (Scotch Drumhead)	128,000	56
" (Drumhead Savoy,)	117,000	50 to 56
Clover, (Red),	249,600	60
" (White,)	686,400	59 to 62
Rye grass, (Perennial,)	314,000	20 to 28
" (Italian),	272,000	13 to 18
Sweet Vernal Grass,	232,000	8

—*Idem.*

Rural Architecture.

In a progressive and enlightened age like this, it is somewhat astonishing that so little effort has been made to improve and beautify the homes of the rural population.

The associations connected with chilhood have an important bearing on the conduct of the man, and the recollections of youth from the most agreeable pictures that are impressed on the tables of memory.

The scenes of our childhood, the hopes of our youth, and the aspirations of our manhood come crowding to the mere mention of home. In infancy, consciousness first dawned upon the beauty of nature beneath the grateful shade of its trees, and their memory in after life acts as an incentive to noble action.

There are but few eyes whose will not brighten, and whose pulse will not quicken as the reminiscences of past happy days are brought to mind.

"How dear to my heart are the scenes of my childhood,
As fond recollection presents them to view:
The orchard, the meadow, the deep tangled wild wood,
And every loved spot which my infancy knew.

"The wide-spreading pond, the mill that stood by it,
The bridge and the rock where the cataract fell,
The cot of my father, the dairy house nigh it,
And e'en the rude bucket which hung in the well."

With associations similar to these, and with sufficient wealth at their command, a large portion of the citizens of our prosperous country are content to dwell in houses but little if any better than those constructed by the first settlers of our soil; and there to bring up and educate the children, who are to

be the men and women of the next generation. They think, no doubt, that it is for the benefit of those children that they continue to economize and toil; but a few moments' reflection would show that the foundation of all education is laid at the home of our childhood. With the perceptions of order, symmetry, and beauty, awakens the desire for possessions, and with them comes that refinement of manners which distinguishes a civilized from a coarse and brutal people. And as the first perception of order and beauty is awakened in most minds by external objects, a comfortable and attractive home has an important bearing on education and refinement.

Like a strong anchor, the mere sentiment of home has saved many a man from shipwreck.

Then, how necessary does it become, for a thinking moral people, to throw every attraction around their home that their means will allow. In this view, the adornment of the Homestead has social and moral influences far beyond the mere gratification of the eye, or the consideration of dollars and cents.

The desire to surround ourselves with the higher sources of enjoyment, rather than be content with mere utility is to acknowledge the existence of a sentiment, which, next to a religious one is the purest and noblest part of our nature. A man's dwelling, to a certain extent, may be regarded as a type of his character, and in the aggregate the appearance of the houses, as an index of the people.

Ranlett, in his work on Architecture, observes that, "The house proper, deserves more care and calculation, in its structure, than a packing box. It is the case in which a man places the objects which are dearest to him; in which he shuts himself from the world to enjoy that portion of it which he can call his own; it is his sanctuary in the time of trouble, his retreat from oppression, the scene of his struggle for life, and the last glimpse of the world."

Doubtless many persons are deterred from endeavouring to render their homes attractive, by fear of its involving a large outlay of money. To a certain extent this need not be the case—taste and judgment will point out many additions and ornaments that can be had, which cost but a trifle, or a few hours' labour.

The effects of vines, evergreens, and shade trees are not sufficiently appreciated.—Three-fourths of the cottages that have endeared themselves to the hearts of true poets and lovers of nature, have owed their charms to the trees and shrubs and vines with which they were embowered. It is the rural character imparted by this drapery that wins the affections.

Associations of refinement, grace, and beauty, are connected with the occupation of a cottage, where

"Across the porch, thick jessamines twine,
And in the garden, myrtles blossom."

A row of evergreens judiciously placed might hide an unsightly object from the view. But nothing can compensate for the want of shade trees around a country house.

In lieu of enclosing the door yard and adjoining field with the ordinary worm fence, how much better it would be to have a hedge—a plain paling—a rough board, or even a post and rail fence. Such additions as these, costing little but time, would entirely change the aspect and throw a charm around many a place that now looks cold and desolate. Something of a love for the beautiful is always suggested by a vine covered cottage, because mere utility would never lead any one to adorn their residence.

A house may be compared to a woman. A great deal of money might be expended in rich dressing, which would add, if properly applied to the attractions suited to the taste of some persons, but when neatly and tastily dressed with well fitting garments, there is a charm that all will acknowledge; and to carry the simile a step further, if slovenly dressed, a dislike is sure to be produced.

There is a misapprehension of the requisites of beauty in a dwelling; most persons think to embellish a house would be very expensive—this need not be the case. An expression of beauty can be given to the simplest farm house. Even a common log house may be made attractive.

Our country houses should embody such ideas of order, beauty and truth as shall elevate and purify the mind. A building may completely answer the useful requirements of man, and yet not give a ray of pleasure or satisfaction to the heart or understanding.—*Agriculturalist.*

Origin of Parliaments.

The origin, or first institution of Parliaments, is so far hidden in the dark ages of antiquity, as not to be very easily or distinctly traced. The word *Parliament,* was first applied to general assemblies by King Pepin of France, in the year 706. In the reigns of the first kings of France, justice was generally administered by the king in person, assisted by counsellors of his own selection and appointment. Pepin being obliged to go to Italy, and apprehensive that his subjects might suffer for want of justice in his absence, instituted a *Parliament,* composed of several of the wisest and greatest persons of the kingdom, who were appointed to meet twice a year for the decision of all suits which might be brought before them. Although designed but for a temporary purpose, this institution was found of so much public convenience, that it was adopted as part of the permanent frame of government; and subsisted under various modifications down to the great revolution of 1789. Its functions were always, however, strictly of an executive order; nor had it otherwise than by a very indirect operation, the power of legislation. What gave it this power, and rendered it in some sense a barrier betwixt the prerogatives of the crown and the liberties of the people, was a rule of great antiquity, that every edict, ordinance, or declaration of the king and council, must be enrolled in this court, before it could have the force of a law: so that though it could not originate good laws, it had at least the power of putting a negative on bad ones.

In England, too, where the appellation of Parliament is considered as so peculiarly applicable to the legislature of the country, it was long exclusively applied to an assembly of select persons, who met at stated periods, and acted as council, or assessors to the king in the administration of justice. As far as legislative powers were allowed to the crown, without the assent of a more general assembly, the king, in his Parliament or council, seems to have assumed such powers; but its chief functions were still strictly executive The legislature of England, as it has existed in later times, arose out of occasional communings between the king and council; and certain persons invited to represent the people, for the purpose of treating of the common weal. The king summoned the latter to *meet him in his Parliament*; and when such meetings, in the process of time, expanded into a complete representative system, the name of *Parliament* naturally attached itself to the whole united body of king, lords, (or council) and Commons.

In order to be in full possession of the legislative history of England, we must, however, go farther back than the introduction of the term *Parliament,* in either the one sense or the other. It was an innovation of the Norman conquest; and long before that period, the nation had its great councils, in which all matters of importance were debated and settled; a practice which seems to have been universal among the northern nations, particularly the Germans; and carried by them into all the countries of Europe, which they overran at the dissolution of the Roman Empire. In England, this general council had been held immemorially under the several names of *michel synoth,* or "great council;" *michel gemote,* or "great meeting;" and more frequently *wittenogemote,* or "the meeting of the wise men." It was regularly convened at the festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, and occasionally at other times, as difficult circumstances in other exigences might require. Who were the constituted members of this supreme tribunal, has long been a subject of debate; and the dissertations to which it has given rise, have only contributed to involve it in greater obscurity. It has been pretended, that not only the military

tenants had a right to be present, but that the ceorls, or husbandmen, the lowest class of freemen, also attended by their representatives, the borsholders of the tythings. The latter part of the assertion has, however, been made without a shadow of evidence, and the former is built on very fallacious grounds. It is, indeed, probable, that in the infancy of the Anglo-Saxon states, most of the military retainers may have attended the public councils; yet even then, the deliberations were confined to the chieftains, and nothing remained for the vassals but to applaud the determinations of their lords. In later times, when the several principalities were united into one monarchy, the recurrence of these assemblies, thrice in every year within the short space of six months, would have been an insupportable burthen to the lesser proprietors; and there is reason to suspect, that the greater proprietors attended only when it was required by the importance of events, or by the vicinity of the court. The principal members seem to have been the spiritual and temporal thanes who held immediately of the crown, and who could command the services of military vassals. It was necessary that the king should obtain the assent of these to all legislative enactments; because without their acquiescence and support, it was impossible to carry them into execution.

There are many charters to which the signatures of the *wittenagemote* are affixed. They seldom exceed thirty in number, and never amount to sixty. They include the names of the king and his sons, of a few bishops and abbots, of nearly an equal number of ealdormen and thanes, and occasionally of the queen and one or two abbesses. The fideles, or vassals, who had accompanied their lords, are mentioned as looking on and applauding; but there exists no proof whatever, that they enjoyed any share in the deliberations.

Indeed, the *wittenagemote* did not possess much independent authority; for as individually they were the vassals of the sovereign, and had sworn "to love what he loved, and shun what he shunned," there can be little doubt that they generally acquiesced in his wishes. We have instances of this council meeting to order the affairs of the kingdom, to make new laws, and amend the old, as early as the reign of Ina, King of the West Saxons; Offa, King of the Mercians; and Ethelbert, King of Kent, in the several realms of the Heptarchy. After their union, King Alfred ordained for a perpetual usage, "that these councils should meet twice in the year or oftener, if need be, to treat of the government of God's people; how they should keep themselves from sin, should live in quiet, and should receive right." Succeeding Saxon and Danish monarchs held frequent councils of the sort, as appears from their respective codes of laws. After the Norman conquest, all laws were invariably made in the name of the king. On some important occasions, however, the king exercised his powers of legislation with the advice and consent of persons styled his barons, convened by his command; and on others, he appears to have exercised those powers with the advice of a council, consisting of certain officers of the crown. The Great Charter of King John, is the earliest authentic document from which the constitution of that legislative assembly called the King's Great Council, or the Great Council of the Realm, can be with any degree of certinty collected. According to that charter, whatever might be the authority for enacting other laws, such an assembly as there described, was alone competent to grant an extraordinary aid to the crown; and the persons composing that assembly were required to be summoned by the king's writ, either generally or personally, but both in reference to their holding lands in chief of the crown. No clear inference can be drawn from the charter, that any city or borough had any share in the constitution of this legislative assembly. The charter of John, however, does not appear to have been afterwards considered as having definitely settled that constitution, even for the purpose of granting extraordinary aids to the crown; for by a subsequent charter of Henry the Third, in the first year of his reign, the whole subject was expressly reserved for future discussion. It is a charter of this last monarch, passed in

the ninth year of his reign, and not that of John, which ought, in fact, to be regarded as the great charter of British liberty. A grant of a fifteenth of the moveables of *all persons* in the kingdom, is declared in this instrument to have been made by *all the persons* by whom it was to be paid. The instrument does not indeed express in what manner the consent of *all* was given to the grant; but as that consent could not have been given by *all* personally, it must either have been given by persons representing, and competent to bind all, or the whole statement must be an audacious fiction. However the fact may stand, this charter distinctly recognized that principle on which the right of representation seems best to rest, that *all who contribute to the support of* the state, ought to have a voice in its councils.

In the 49th of Henry the Third, when the country was torn by civil commotions, and that monarch was a prisoner in the hands of part of his subjects, a great council was convened in the king's name, consisting of certain persons, both of the clergy and laity, who were summoned individually by the king's special writ, according to the charter of King John, and of persons not so summoned, but required to attend in consequence of writs directed to the sheriffs of certain counties, and to the officers of certain cities and boroughs, and of the cinque ports, enjoining them to cause persons to be chosen as representatives of those counties, cities, boroughs, and cinque ports. This is the first authentic evidence we have of the existence of a legislative assembly in England, subsequent at least to the conquest, consisting partly of persons summoned by special writ of the king, and partly of others elected by certain portions of the community to represent them. The legislative assemblies of the country appear to have been generally, though not always, constituted nearly in the same manner as this of Henry III., until the time of Edward II., when they at length consisted, as they now consist, of two distinct bodies, having different characters, rights and duties, and generally distinguished by the appellation of LORDS and COMMONS.

The *Lords* were all summoned by special writs; but distinguished among themselves as spiritual and temporal. The rights of the Lords spiritual, as members of the legislative assembly, were attached to temporal possessions which they enjoyed as belonging to their respective ecclesiastical dignities, and were transmitted with these possessions to their successors in these dignities; whilst the rights of the temporal Lords, as members of the legislative assembly, were generally, though not universally, considered as hereditary, according to the terms and modes of their creation.

The *Commons* consisted of those elected by the counties, cities, boroughs, and cinque ports, to represent them; but the the king exercised a discretionary power of issuing precepts for such election, and could at his pleasure increase or diminish the number of members.

The functions of the legislature, as thus constituted, were solemnly fixed by a declaratory statute of the 15th of Edward II., and confirmed by an ordinance of Richard II. in the fifth year of his reign. It was by the former declared, that "all matters which were to be established for the estate of the king or his heirs, and for the estate of the realm or the people, should be treated, accorded, and established in Parliament by the king, and by the assent of the prelates, earls, and barons, and the commonalty of the realm, according *as it had been theretofore accustomed.*"

Although the right of "the *commonalty of the realm*" to a share in the national legislature, was thus expressly declared, a right which they could not, of course, exercise in their aggregate capacity, but must do by a representative body, the constitution of that body remained extremely imperfect, as long as the king retained the power of adding, at his pleasure, to the number of places which were to return members.

Yet the power the kings of England continued to exercise long after the days of the Edwards and the Richards, and even down to a very late period It was not indeed until the union with Scotland, that this power could be considered as virtually done away, by the terms of the compact which united the two kingdoms, and brought them under one legislature, to which each was to send a stipulated incorporation of members.—[Percy Anecdotes.