

us waste no time in composing this strife. If good, let us improve it; if bad, let us reform it. It is of human institutions, as of men,—not any one is so good that it cannot be made better; nor so bad, that it may not become worse. Our system of education is not to be compared with those of other states or countries, merely to determine whether it may be a little more or a little less perfect than they; but it is to be contrasted with our highest ideas of perfection itself, and then the pain of the contrast to be assuaged, by improving it, forthwith and continually. The love of excellence looks ever upward towards a higher standard; it is unimproving pride and arrogance only, that are satisfied with being superior to a lower. No community should rest contented with being superior to other communities, while it is inferior to its own capabilities. And such are the beneficent ordinations of Providence, that the very thought of improving is the germination of improvement.

The science and the art of Education, like every thing human, depend upon culture, for advancement. And they would be more cultivated, if the rewards for attention, and the penalties for neglect, were better understood. When effects follow causes,—quick as thunder, lightening,—even infants and idiots learn to beware; or they act, to enjoy. They have a glimmer of reason, sufficient, in such cases, for admonition, or impulse.”

EXTRACT FROM THE SECOND LECTURE.

“After the lapse of another year, we are again assembled to hold counsel together for the welfare of our children. On this occasion, we have much reason to meet each other with voices of congratulation and hearts of gladness. During the past year, the cause of Popular Education, in this Commonwealth, has gained some suffrages of public opinion. On presenting its wants and its claims to citizens in every part of the State, I have found that there were many individuals who appreciated its importance, and who only awaited an opportunity to give utterance and action to their feelings;—in almost every town, some,—in many, a band.

Some of our hopes, also, have become facts. The last Legislature acted towards this cause, the part of a wise and faithful guardian. Inquiries having been sent into all parts of the Commonwealth, to ascertain the deficiencies in our Common School system, and the causes of failure in its workings; and the results of those inquiries having been communicated to the Legislature,—together with suggestions for the application of a few obvious and energetic remedies,—that body forthwith enacted such laws as the wants of the system most immediately and imperiously demanded. Probably, at no session since the origin of our Common School system, have laws more propitious to its welfare been made, than during the last. True, the substantive parts of the great system of Public Instruction, pre-existed; but, in many respects, these parts were like the wheels of some excellent machine, unskilfully put together; and hence, if not absolutely refusing to go, for want of