

perfect state of efficiency will require something more substantial than their meed of approval of the project.

You may already have considered the advisability of making this a proprietary establishment. Such a system possesses numerous advantages, not the least of which is the direct pecuniary interest which the proprietors have in the good management. This has a talismanic effect on the regular attendance of directors.

You may reasonably expect that the Government will help you, more particularly as in other countries where such schools exist they originate with and are supported mainly at the cost of the State, and especially as you have proposed to give to the Crown the power of nominating six of the members of your council. You may for the like reason look for the support of the seven mining boards. You may further rely, and with reasonable confidence, on the sympathies of many of the general public. Still something more is required. Liberal salaries must be provided for your masters, lecturers, and teachers; a library must be formed; collections of minerals, models, &c., must be made; other things indispensable for the course of instruction must be got together.

You will doubtless see the advantage of founding exhibitions for the encouragement of your pupils: the question of maintenance becomes consequently one which addresses itself earnestly to a much wider circle than the audience who honour us with their presence here to-night.

Although it be not probable that in this community, so forward to avail itself of opportunities to assist in enlightened movements, any will be found actually opposed to the establishment of this school, there may be some persons indifferent to change, and of that timid disposition which shrinks from the responsibility of supporting any novel scheme; or perhaps there may still linger amongst us a few of that courageous old conservative stamp who, long since driven from their outworks by the advancing waves of general education, still hold the citadel in defence of the practical man, and contend strongly that all goes on well enough as it is.

The first will meet us with the inquiry—What is the use of such an institution? When such questions were put to Benjamin Franklin, not unfrequently in the vein of petulant interrogation, depreciating the value of his scientific pursuits, the philosopher replied by asking another, "What is the use of a

baby?" Indeed, as an abstract proposition it is not easy for any person, except the idolising mother or proud father, to pledge himself prospectively for the eventual utility of any individual infant. Yet Wordsworth has said:—

"The child is father of the man;"

Or, as was sung before by Milton—

The childhood shows the man,
As morning shows the day.

And truly the culture of this scion, which is to be developed into a rational, accountable member of the body politic, clothed with his rights and duties, and his responsibilities here and hereafter, is deserving of our solicitude.

Those who have meditated on the subject have been made uneasy by the growing tendency to obliterate childhood—to hurry on our youth either to drudgery for which the physical powers are unequal, or to occupations which induce an impatience of parental control—an independence for which it is not ripe; and disquieted by the fatal propensity to sharpen youths, who should be boys, into imperfect men. In no regions can uneasiness on this point be more keenly felt, than where the population lives in that state of chronic excitement caused by the search for gold, amongst which speculation is so rife, so stimulating, so contagious. Nowhere can the compensating influences of education be more required to moderate these precocious inclinations; and no kind of education can be devised better suited to calm the juvenile enthusiasm, to steady the volatile, and give a wholesome discipline to the mind, than a sound training in moral and physical science, in mathematics, engineering, geology, mineralogy, chemistry, and metallurgy, which we undertake to teach.

This simple statement would, of itself, suffice to show that the school is one of the best and most useful that the community could project. Your excellent prospectus, which has, it is hoped, had an extensive circulation, declares the uses which this school is expected to serve. Quoting from it, with your permission, it states:—"The object sought to be obtained is the combination of the highest scientific with the most practical training for all men engaged in the enterprise of mining in its various branches—whether so engaged as mining managers, engineers, surveyors, mechanists, working miners, directors, or promoters of companies."