

Wesleys; this was the time she chose for commencing the literary part of their education. Her sentiments on this subject were precisely those of the celebrated tutor of Alexander the Great. Aristotle forbade attention to letters till after the first seven years, considering that those years were best employed in the establishment of perfect health and strength of body and mind, and a knowledge of the objects of the senses. Then, if these sentiments be correct, and we have little hesitation in saying they are, may we not be justified in emulating such models, and at a proper time begin to point out to our children the first steps in their literary career. Let our constant aim be to make the inexhaustible treasures of literature as interesting as possible, read out their minds and excite their curiosity, but never try to force anything! We should inculcate religious and moral principles more by example than precept, for children are ever ready to imitate, and what they see never fails to leave a more lasting impression on their minds than what they hear. But while we attend to these things, we should not overlook physical exercise; for to it, rightly directed, is due the education of the body, and to a great extent the tenacity and structure of the same. There is a possibility of the mind becoming too strong for the body and *vice versa*; then the weaker should receive the most exercise; but if both be healthy and evenly balanced, exercise both alike to keep them so. To all parents in fitting their children for the great battle of life, our common schools and other higher institutions of learning have been established; and our system of education is now so complete that those who fail in this all-important duty are without excuse and must be held responsible for the neglect of the same.

If many of those who murmur at our programme find fault with our teachers, hurl anathemas at our law-givers, and fortify themselves in their own compound ignorance, would only send their children more regularly to school and attend to them at home, their prejudice, so injurious to themselves and posterity, would glide into oblivion, like darkness before the penetrating rays of the sun. I ask all to give this subject careful consideration, and be content that other children, at the age of three, are able to go over the A B C's in rhyme without understanding them. Do not be moved from your rule by the popularity of some little prodigy who can recite and tell you the names of all the kings of England. All this is like the forced fruits of the hot-house—prematurely ripe, and valued only for its rarity. Be you content to wait for the slow growth of real excellence; for it is to self-education, rather than that which is forced upon children or communicated at school, that excellence in the intellectual world is chiefly ascribed. The unhappy children to whom I allude are peculiarly liable to early death, or ill health all their lives. Not unfrequently do they turn out incurably stupid; the undiscerning lament over them, and make the sagacious observation that this one or that one was too clever to live in this world, or wisely moralize on the transitory nature of earthly things. But to these results the parents themselves have unconsciously conduced.

Moral habits, health and amusements connected with them, are the only appropriate objects of attention during the first seven years of a child's life. No doubt the faculties of some are more

quickly developed than of others, and some may be better fitted for their work at five years of age than others at ten; still there are exceptions to the general rule, and it is not my intention, at present, to speak of such, further than there is a reason for them, and they are the result of some cause.

In conclusion, I repeat that the health and education of the rising generation is a subject worthy of attention. And such a course as I have prescribed, if rightly pursued, I am convinced, will ultimately produce wiser and more useful men and women than those who are crammed from their infancy upward. Many of the dark clouds that now cluster around the meridian of life would only be known as things of the past, and those verse 1 in *without sorrow* would find less scope for the practise of their profession; life would regain its wonted sweetness, happiness become more universal, and fewer guests be found amid the haunted chambers of sorrow.

Intermediate Grades.

BY JOHN IRELAND, READING.

A certificate shows what a man once knew; if this knowledge is scarce and useful, it will be desirable by others, and remunerative and honorary to its owner. But scarcity depends on abstruseness; and, consequently, both emolument and honor, the two great incentives to action, depend on the same thing. When, therefore, we ask an easier programme, we virtually ask consequences as certain as undesirable. Distinction is an important quality; and the more confused the distinction becomes, by too many grades, the less conspicuous will classes become. There should be no intermediate grades between classes, nor grades in the same class. First, second and third are just right. Suppose the Government would fix a permanent standard for all time to come (and it could do so, for the docility of children of a given age is very nearly uniform), what would become of the remunerations and the honor, if nearly all candidates would pass test? The truth is, distinction is essential. Turn the case as we like, there must be excellence in every avocation. But to attain excellence, and therefore profit and fame, we must do something desirable by many but obtainable by few. There is some error in assuming that high classes show high intellect, or that low classes show low faculty; very much of this distinction must be attributed to the different ultimate aims of men; those who have no intention of making teaching a permanent business are content to remain where they are, rather than shorten their days by excessive labor to fit themselves for an avocation precarious, unhealthy and comparatively unremunerative.

Biographical Sketches.

BY C. H. ASHDOWN, SANDWICH, ONT.

An outline of the life and writings of those Authors from whose works are taken the selections of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Readers of our Public Schools.

[The matter for this department not having reached us up to the hour of closing our forms for the press, we are reluctantly compelled to lay it over until next month. Our readers may expect a more than usually liberal share of sketches in next number, the copy being now in hand.]