

son happily possesses, is that he should cultivate that talent in the only way in which it can reach the height of the art, and I wish to turn his attention to two points. I speak on this subject with the authority both of experience and observation; I have made it very much my study in theory; have written a great deal upon it which may never see the light, and something which has been published; have meditated much and conversed much on it with famous men; have had some little practical experience in it, but have prepared for much more than I ever tried, by a variety of laborious methods, reading, writing, much translation, composing in foreign languages, &c., and I have lived in times when there were great orators among us; therefore, I reckon my opinion worth listening to, and the rather, because I have the utmost confidence in it myself, and should have saved a world of trouble and much time, had I started with a conviction of its truth.

"1. The first point is this,—the beginning of the art is to acquire a habit of easy speaking; and, in whatever way this can be had (which individual inclination or accident will generally direct, and may safely be allowed to do so,) it must be had. Now I differ from all other doctors of rhetoric in this,—I say, let him first learn to speak easily and fluently, as well and as sensibly as he can no doubt, but at any rate let him learn to speak. This is to eloquence, or good public speaking, what the being able to talk in a child is to correct grammatical speech. It is the requisite foundation, and on it you must build. Moreover it can only be acquired young, therefore let it be by all means, and at any sacrifice, be gotten hold of forthwith. But in acquiring it, every sort of slovenly error will also be acquired. It must be got by a habit of easy writing (which, as Wyndham said, proved hard reading;) by a custom of talking much in company; by speaking in debating societies, with little attention to rule, and mere love of saying something at any rate, than of saying anything well. I can even suppose that more attention is paid to the matter in such discussions than in the manner of saying it; yet still to say it easily, *ad libitum*, to be able to say what you choose, and what you have to say,—this is the first requisite, to acquire which everything else must for the present be sacrificed.

"2. The next step is the grand one,—to convert this style of easy speaking into chaste eloquence. And here there is but one rule. I do earnestly entreat your son to set daily and nightly before him the Greek models. First of all he may look to the best modern speeches (as he probably has already;) Burke's best compositions, as the *Thoughts on the Cause of Present Discontents*; speech 'On the American Conciliation,' and 'On the Nabob of Arcot's Debt;' Fox's speech 'On the Westminster Scrutiny' (the first part of which he should pore over till he has it by heart;)' 'On the Russian Armament;' and 'On the War,' 1803; with one or two of Wyndham's best, and a very few, or rather none, of Sheridan's; but he must by no means stop here. If he would be a great orator, he must go at once to the fountain head, and be familiar with every one of the great orations of Demosthenes. I take for granted that he knows those of Cicero by heart; they are very beautiful, but not very useful, except perhaps the *Milo pro Ligario*, and one or two more; but the Greek must positively be the model; and merely reading it, as boys do, to know the language, won't do at all; he must enter into the spirit of each speech, thoroughly know the positions of the parties, follow each turn of the argument, and make the absolutely perfect and most chaste and severe composition familiar to his mind. His taste will improve every time he reads and repeats to himself (for he should have the fine passages by heart), and he will learn how much may be done by a skilful use of a few words and a rigorous rejection of all superfluities. In this view I hold a familiar knowledge of Dante to be next to Demosthenes. It is in vain to say that imitations of these models won't do for our times. First, I do not counsel any imitation, but only an imbibing of the same spirit. Secondly, I know from experience that nothing is half so successful in these times (bad though they be) as what has been formed on the Greek models. I use a very poor instance in giving my own experience, but I do assure you that in both courts of law and Parliament, and even to mobs, I have never made so much play (to use a very modern phrase) as when I was almost translating from the Greek. I composed the peroration of my speech for the Queen, in the Lords, after reading and repeating *Demosthenes* for three or four weeks, and I composed it twenty times over at least, and it certainly succeeded in a very extraordinary degree, and far above any merits of its own. This leads me to remark, that though speaking, with writing beforehand, is very well until the habit of easy speech is acquired, yet after that he can never write too much; this is quite clear. It is laborious, no doubt, and it is more difficult beyond comparison than speaking off-hand; but it is necessary to acquire the habit of correct diction. But I go further, and say, even to the end of a man's life he must prepare word for word most of his finer passages. Now, would he be a great orator or no? In other words, would he have almost absolute power of doing good to mankind, in a free country, or no? So he wills this, he must follow these rules."

## V. Papers on Practical Education.

### 1. MISS COUTTS' ADDRESS TO SCHOOLMISTRESSES.

In November last, Miss Burdett Coutts visited the National Society's Training Institution for Schoolmistresses at Whitelands, and kindly presented to eighteen of the students prizes for general usefulness, for good needlework, and for progress in needlework. We extract the following valuable remarks from the address of Miss Coutts to the students on the occasion:—

"Before reading the names of those to whom prizes have been awarded, I would briefly refer to the object for which they are given, especially those I have termed "progress prizes." They would greatly fail in their object if considered only as intended for personal encouragement. That is certainly one object; but it is also to be wished that they should be regarded as suggestive of plans and principles to be brought forward in schools hereafter to be placed under your care as schoolmistresses, especially to those amongst you who will shortly enter on active school duties. Among the first points to which your attention will be early directed will be, "The best means of encouraging those children who, either from the defects of their early training, or from natural inaptitude for learning, do not rise rapidly in their classes, and yet who strive to do well." This will require consideration. A large proportion of such children is to be found in every school, and their management is always a cause of anxious thought to conscientious teachers; for it is not easy to give to these the encouragement they need, and not to cause others to relax in their efforts to attain to excellence. It is difficult to give any rule upon this and similar points of school management; and in the skill and delicacy with which they are managed consists the superiority of one teacher over another. But *one* rule, which it is hoped the progress prizes may suggest, seems safe and just, and is found to work well—namely, that any child who persistently and continuously exerts itself to improve should at certain intervals receive positive encouragement, when a sufficient time has elapsed to show that progress has been made.

Another point to which it is intended these prizes should draw attention, is the expediency of adopting some means of diffusing throughout the whole school a general impression that much stress is laid upon the attention given to instruction in needlework; and that those children who are attentive, and who endeavour to improve in this particular, are not unnoticed, though they may not make such rapid progress as some of the other children.

You will find it very necessary to secure attention to, and improvement in, needlework throughout the school. Year by year, industrial training seems more and more valued; and needlework is of primary importance, both from its intrinsic value to girls, and from its being that part of industrial work which can be most practically and efficiently taught in schools.

The object of the prizes given by me have been confined to needlework and industrial instruction, because I conceive these to be of the greatest moment, not only to children in National schools, but also to yourselves; and whenever an opportunity offers, I feel the deepest anxiety to impress upon all (I may almost say) the indispensable obligation due to society, that girls of every rank should receive practical instruction in needlework, and possess a sound knowledge of domestic economy. I have striven so very earnestly to obtain a recognition of this principle, that I sometimes fear, as respects needlework at least, I may seem to attach an undue importance to it; and to me therefore, it seems not uncalled for if I enter somewhat more minutely on the present occasion upon some of the reasons which induce myself, and others who think with me, to feel so earnestly on this subject.

Many of these are within the range of your own experience; for you must have noticed how great a difference the knowledge and practice of needlework makes in a home. You will all feel, too, that it tends to cement the ties of family affection; for the little comforts furnished, or the little gifts made and received with so much pleasure, are familiar to us all; and you will all be ready to admit that skill in needlework promotes habits of economy, but economy has roots which strike deep, and produce results which may not at first be so easily observed. It was the wont of the greatest soldier England ever had, and one of the most acute observers of the principles from whence spring the actions of men (the "great duke," as he was commonly called when amongst us), that "economy was the parent of generosity." Trace this throughout, and you will find that the apparently humbler branches of instruction may play a more important part in forming the character than you would at first sight have imagined.

I will also say a few words on "the Uniformity of School-routine."

The regularity with which each class is refilled, as the younger children grow up and the elder leave, has a tendency to check that adaptation of instruction which is indispensable in order to produce