

### The Training of Female Teachers in France.

The following account, which we extract from *Old and New* for July, is eminently suggestive, and will, we trust, aid in arousing our educators to a better appreciation of the true character of normal training:

"No person is allowed to teach in France without a government certificate, or '*brevet de capacité*.' This is furnished, after the prescribed examinations, by the rector of the academy of the department to which the applicant belongs. Such certificate can be used only within the department in which it is given; but the certificates given in Paris are valid throughout the country. Confining our inquiry only to women, we find these examinations succeeding each other at intervals of about three years. The first is passed at about eighteen, and is limited to the elements of education in its simplest branches. Yet great accuracy is insisted upon; and, unquestionably, one may be sure that a person who has passed it knows thoroughly the work she has undertaken. She cannot be wholly ignorant of domestic economy, or the business talent requisite for country-women. She must be able to make a shirt for a man, and a chemise for a woman; and know how to teach the sewing of all kinds of seams, and the simpler sorts of embroidery.

"Successful candidates, who pursue no further studies, expect to be employed in the lowest primary schools in the country villages, or as governesses for very young children.

"The second examination requires a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the French language, — its history, grammar, and literature, — a good understanding of arithmetic, and plane geometry. (The French do not make so much of algebra for girls as we do.) She must also know history, ancient and modern, the elements of natural science, and be acquainted with general literature, — not merely as one gains it from compendiums, etc., but from actual study of the works themselves. Although a knowledge of Latin and Greek is not expected, the examination presupposes veritable study of the classics by means of translations. This certificate entitles a woman to a place in the higher primary schools; or, if she wishes to open a private school, she has the right to call it a *pension*. The larger portion of private governesses for young ladies are of this class. This explains the parenthetical *diplômée* which appears in *The Times* advertisements of French governesses. A Russian or German family in Paris, desiring to engage a governess, would first of all ask for her diploma.

"The third certificate permits a woman to open an *institution*, in which those of the second grade may hold the position of *sous-maitresses*. It is rarely taken by a person under twenty-four years of age. It requires not only a knowledge of books and facts, but also a maturity of reason and judgment only attained by long and patient study. The candidates must have a clear understanding of such subjects as the philosophic principles of the *Haute Grammaire*, and of logic, the rules of art, the canons of taste, and the philosophy of history. They must have studied not only the present French code, but also the principles of common law.

"It is obvious such work cannot be accomplished by mere cramming. Women who are really prepared for such an examination must have made the knowledge acquired a part of themselves; must have developed their minds by it, so that they may truly be called wise. We range over so many things, that we are coming to measure the value of acquirements by their variety; and we have fallen so far into thinking thoroughness means a multitude of details, that the simpler education of French women may seem scanty. No mistake could be greater;

for it admits of incontestable proof that the well-trained French woman is more than the equal of the English or the American. I mean, of course, to compare those who have had the *best* of the distinctive training of each country. Such a French woman has a steadiness of judgment and a clearness of reason that seizes the vital point in a question, and weighs and decides justly..... If ever we quit creating French women from our own fancy, out of the materials of romances and fashion-plates, we shall find the real women the most sensible, the most intelligent companions for men, because the most nearly their equals; and what may seem an anticlimax, but what is of vital interest to us in the lessons they can teach, they are the model business-women of the world."

### Syllabus of Latin Pronunciation. (1)

DRAWN UP AT THE REQUEST OF THE HEAD-MASTERS OF SCHOOLS.

The Head-masters of Schools, at their Conference held in 1871, declared the system of Latin pronunciation prevalent in England to be unsatisfactory, and agreed to ask the Latin Professors of Oxford and Cambridge to draw up and issue a joint paper to secure uniformity in any change contemplated. This request they repeated at their meeting of 1872. As we are ourselves agreed in all essential points, and find that there is a considerable body of opinion in the Universities and elsewhere in harmony with our views, we beg to offer the following brief suggestions.

If it were thought advisable to adopt any existing pronunciation, we should be inclined for many reasons to recommend the Italian with perhaps a few modifications. But not to speak of other difficulties, the tyranny of accent over quantity is at least as marked in the Italian as in the English reading of Latin; and we hold with the most experienced teachers that to distinguish between long and short syllables is an essential part of a reform in pronunciation. At the same time Italian appears to us to offer many valuable aids which should not be neglected; as English in its tones and vocalisation seems so different from old Latin, that often it is not easy to find in it even single sounds to give as adequate representations of an old Latin sound. The Italian of literature has been fixed for six centuries, and manifestly approximates to the Latin of the 7th or 8th century.

There can be little doubt that during the best ages the writing, as seen in inscriptions, was meant to represent exactly the sounding of words, and that a difference of spelling implied so far a difference of pronouncing.

We propose then that the letters of Latin should be sounded as follows:

Vowels and diphthongs:

*a*, as the accentuated Italian *a*: i. e. as the middle *a* of *amata*, or as the *a* of *father*:

*ā*, as the unaccentuated Italian *a*: i. e. as the first and last of *amata*. It is not easy to represent this sound in English: we know nothing better than the first *a* in *away*, *apart*, *aha*.

*e*, as the Italian closed *e*: *arena*; nearly as *ai* in English *pain*:

*æ*, as the Italian open *e*: *secolo*; nearly as the first *e* in English *there*, or French *père*.

*ɛ*, the same sound shortened: nearly as in English *men*. A wide induction, extending from classical times to the present, would support what is said of *e*, *æ*: thus Italians represent Latin *æ* always by their open *e*, and as a rule *ɛ* by closed *e*, *ɛ* by open *e*.

*i*, as accentuated Italian *i*: i. e. as the first *i* of *timidi*, or the *i* of *machine*: *ī*, as unaccentuated Italian *i*: i. e. as the two last *i*'s of *timidi*, or the *i* of *pity*. The way in which Latin *i* is represented in Greek on the one hand, and in Italian on the other, and its history in Latin itself, would tend to shew that its actual sound approximated to that of *e*, and was something between the *i* of *pity* and the *e* of *petty*.

*o*, as Italian closed *o*: nearly as in German *ohne*, English *more*.

*ō*, as Italian open *o* shortened: nearly as in German *gold*; less nearly as in English *corn*. The English and English-Latin *o* is very peculiar, in most cases hardly an *o* at all: compare our *honor*, *domos*; and our *non*, *bos*, *pons* on the one hand with *nos*, *hos*, *donum* on the other.

Perhaps, comparing Italian, we should pronounce *ō*, when it precedes *r*, or when it represents *au*, as the Italian open *o*: *gloria*, *victoria*, *plastrum*, *Clodius*.

(1) Having only this small character with the proper vowel quantities attached, explains why the type is mixed.