

claims have been but recently admitted. Here, then, is a comparatively new field of study, downright progressive study, opened; and surely the schoolmaster must be among the first to apply himself to an investigation so plainly within his province, demanding, by the by, the exercise rather of common sense than of subtlety for its successful pursuit.

One more point and I have done. Look at history. I need only refer to the able paper of a correspondent in this Journal to illustrate the scope of my observations as applied to this particular branch of study. Let any one read his remarks, and try to realize the activity of mind which this view of the subject necessitates, involving as it does the communication not merely of so many facts, but of "*a power of self existence and reproduction, of vitality as well as of growth*," as of the essence of that communication, and he will be at a loss to conceive how any one could come to any other conclusion than that the status of a schoolmaster is eminently rich in opportunities of intellectual growth and refinement.

There is no room indeed, for stagnation in the running streams of history, any more than in that sea of thought to which all these rivers of knowledge directly conduct. It is to the waves of this sleepless ocean that the daily life of the schoolmaster is tied. And, to bring our subject and metaphor at once to a homely conclusion, he, least of all men, can afford to make a sacrifice, amid the ebb and flow, the storm and calm, the gales and gusts of human intelligence, that peculiar praise of his type the actual mariner, the merit of being always *wide awake*.

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### AN EVENING AMONG RAGGED SCHOOLS.

At the earliest opportunity, accompanied by a devoted friend of youth, I spent a Sabbath evening in visiting the ragged schools of London. The night was rainy and dismal, and I would not have been disappointed at seeing a thin attendance. I was therefore agreeably surprised in finding the two schools which I visited quite full.

The first was the Plum-tree Court Ragged School in Shoe-Lane. The entrance was from a small porch, at which a policeman was stationed, to preserve order without and to render service within, in case of its being required.—School was not opened when we arrived, and a truly uproarious scene did we witness. About fifty boys, from three to sixteen years of age, were present, seated on benches, with a scanty supply of teachers in their midst. Their dress exhibited nearly every variety of the dirty and the ragged. About half of the boys seemed disposed to be quiet, the rest were trying to amuse themselves by pushing and striking, pulling hair, and cuffing each other's ears; uttering, at the same time, all sorts of exclamations in a partially suppressed voice.

By a little effort the superintendent secured silence, which was pretty well maintained during singing and prayer. The classes proceeded to their lessons with a single interruption, from the rushing out of a class of the worst boys, who would not stay because their teacher was not present to instruct them. The lessons then went on in the usual style of Sunday-school teaching, and with as little noise as could have been expected from such a tumultuous set of subjects.

On the opposite side of a board-partition, connected by doors and an open window with this room, was another of the same form and size, occupied by female classes. Half a dozen teachers were then engaged instructing about sixty girls of different ages between five and twenty years. The girls were much more orderly and attentive than the boys in the other room, and yet we were informed that at the beginning they were less so. Industrial classes are held for them on week evenings, at which they are taught to sew. Several of the smaller girls, when asked if they had learned to sew, eagerly exhibited their aprons as the products of their skill and labor. Probably none of them would have been taught the useful art of sewing at home.

After passing on through some very wretched parts of the city we reached the Field-Lane Ragged School, at which we found three hundred scholars in a large upper room, well lighted, warmed, and ventilated. As we ascended the stairway we listened to the singing of the school in the act of opening, in which many voices blended together with no inferior harmony.

As the teachers proceeded to the task of instruction, a rare and peculiar scene was exhibited. There was an infant-class on a gallery behind the superintendent's desk, and over head, on another gallery, separated from view by a curtain, was a large class of grown women, several of them with infants in their arms. A small class of girls in one corner, were learning the alphabet; and besides these three classes, the first of which was mixed, the rest of the scholars were males. And what a motley throng! Here were not only the young, but the middle-aged and the old. "We have," said the superintendent, "all ages, from two to seventy."

He might have added all races and colours, from the fair skinned Celt and Saxon to the tawny African, including also the New-Zealander and the Chinaman. Decent clothing, gaping rags, shaved heads, and flaring, uncombed locks, were mingled together, in the various forms. Grave sobriety and sly mischief, attention and vacancy, the bright twinkle of

intelligence, and the dull stare of semi-idiotcy, were seen in frequent contrast. In the midst of every group of eight or ten scholars was an earnest, and apparently a skilful teacher. The eagerness of youth, the strength of manhood, and the wisdom of hoary hairs, together with the gracefulness and devotion of Christian womanhood, were all represented in the band of teachers. But, O, what a work was before them! Truly they deserved to be called followers of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost. Here was practical Christianity appropriately developed in mitigating the woes of humanity, and pointing the wretched and perishing to the source of all joy and hope.

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### THE GERMAN AND SWISS TEACHERS.

*Extracted from Mr. Joseph Kay's Paper on "The Condition and Education of Poor Children in English and in German Towns."*

As the education of a people depends much more upon the characters of its teachers, than upon any other part of its educational system, I will endeavour to show what kind of men the German and Swiss teachers are, and how they are prepared for their duties.

The Teachers in Germany and Switzerland are men, who from the age of 15 to the age of 21, have been educated in preparatory Schools and Colleges, expressly for the Teacher's Profession. They are learned men, who would do credit to much higher situations; but whose habits of thought and life have been so carefully disciplined, as to make their work in the classes, otherwise so irksome, really a pleasure to them.

Those children, whose parents wish them to be trained for Teachers, do not leave the Primary Schools, before the completion of their fifteenth year. They then generally continue to attend the Head Masters to receive instruction in the evenings for one or two years. At the end of this period they enter, either one of the Superior Schools, where the children of the middle classes continue their education, and where the weekly fees are so small, that children of poor parents often attend them; or they enter, what is called a Preparatory School, that is, one which is expressly designed to prepare Candidates for the Normal or Teacher's Colleges.

They remain in these Preparatory Schools until the completion of their eighteenth year, and are educated there in Scripture history, and the history of their own country, in the elements of mathematics, in several sciences, in music, singing, and in geography. When they leave these Schools, they have already received a very good education. Up to this time their parents have paid the small weekly fees for them, stimulated by the hope of their sons' gaining admission into some of the Teachers' Training Colleges. These Institutions are Teachers' Universities, in which all the candidates for the Teachers' Profession in Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, and Holland, who gain admission to them in the manner afterwards described, are educated at the expense of the State for three years.

In each of the divisions of Germany and Switzerland corresponding to our counties, there are two or three of these Colleges, one or more for Roman Catholic students and the other for Protestants.

The Directors of all these great Training Schools are religious ministers, and the education given in them is of a strictly religious character.

They are supported in Switzerland by the Cantonal Governments, and in Germany by the several States, and are liberally supplied with large staffs of from eight to fifteen Professors and Teachers with good libraries, numerous class rooms, organs, piano-fortes, all necessary school apparatus, model practising schools, and farms or gardens attached to them.

In very few of these Colleges is there any attempt to instruct both Protestants and Roman Catholics as such, but candidates belonging to the different sects of Protestants are generally trained together.

There are a great number of these Institutions in Germany, Switzerland, Holland, and Denmark.

In Prussia alone there are 45, in Switzerland 14, in Holland 3, in Bavaria 8, in Saxony 8, in Hanover, 6, in the Duchy of Baden 8, in Wirtemberg 3, and in each of the smaller German States, one or more.

At certain periods of the year, public examinations are held in each of them, at which all young men who desire to be Teachers and who seek admission, may present themselves as candidates.

No candidates however can be received, even for examination, unless he can present a certificate from a physician of good health, and certificates from his religious minister and his former teacher of good character; nor can any one be admitted or ever officiate as a Teacher who is a cripple, or deaf or deformed, nor any one who has weak lungs, so important is it thought that the Schoolmasters should be in every way fitted for their duties.

The Candidates who satisfy all the conditions I have mentioned are carefully and rigorously examined by a Committee of Examiners composed of the Directors and one or more Professors of the College, one of the Local Educational Magistrates, and an Inspector.