

MAN'S SUSCEPTIBILITY OF MENTAL CULTURE.

Such is the constitution of man that he is capable of becoming fitted for states of life for which he was once wholly unqualified. The human mind is susceptible of great changes, from the circumstances in which it is placed, and from the attention and culture which it receives. On this susceptibility, the whole system of education is founded. A person's estimate of the value of education will be very much in proportion to the strength and vividness of his belief in the capacity of the mind for cultivation. On this same belief will depend his hope for the elevation of nations in the scale of civilization and social improvement. Were the mind incapable of acquiring knowledge, of securing discipline, of experiencing development, the occupation of the teacher would be gone, and his office have no existence. Were nations also incapable of improvement in the arts of life, and destitute of the power of mental and social elevation under the appliance of the means of culture, the philanthropist would cherish no hope of the advancement of society, and the Christian no expectation of moral redemption of the barbarous tribes of the earth under the influence of Christianity. The fact that mankind are susceptible of improvement by culture is a fact full of significance in its bearings on the cause of education and the hopes of our race. The plant and the animal are not required to become a different thing from what they already are at the moment of their mature growth. The purpose of their existence is realized in its full extent by the fact alone of their material nature and physical organization. But with man, it is quite otherwise. He is destined for improvement. This is the law of his being. Instinct is less in man than in the animal, because man is constituted with this susceptibility for development—the power of acquisition—the capability for advancement and elevation. The physical man, however admirable may be his organization, is not the true man. Man as a barbarian, or as a corporeal giant, is not all he is capable of being. He has a higher nature and a higher mission. He has a susceptibility for improvement—for intellectual, social, and moral culture. The barbarian may be made a civilized man. Under the influence of education in its largest sense he may be elevated to a high position of honor, enterprise, and happiness. Here is the warrant and the security for systems of education.—*R. I. Schoolmaster.*

To the discoverer of the law of gravitation—Sir Isaac Newton—we also owe the first distinct philosophical elucidation of the great chemical law of affinities. "Sugar," said he, "dissolves in water, alkalies unite with acids, and metals dissolve in acids. Is not this on account of an attraction between their particles? Copper dissolved in aquafortis is thrown down by iron. Is not this because the particles of iron have a stronger attraction for the particles of the acid than those of copper; and do not bodies attract each other with different degrees of force?"

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.

Every person conversant with our free institutions, will readily admit that their permanency depends mainly upon the intelligence and patriotism of the people. In proportion as these are weakened and degenerated, in that degree will their stability and permanency be affected.—The Common School is the "Alma Mater," from whence the mass of the people derive their education. Hence, upon its efficiency, hangs, we might almost say, the destiny of the nation. Crush out our common schools, and their hallowed influence, and the liberties of our country must inevitably perish. The liberties of an intelligent and patriotic people can scarcely be wrested from them. There is little difference between ignorance and barbarism, if not synonymous, they are, at least, twin sisters.

All must see the importance of our common schools—seeing their importance, do we really appreciate them as we ought? Do we manifest that deep interest and anxious solicitude that they demand?—Or, has our interest in common schools declined? If so, for what cause? Are they of less importance now than in former times? Is not the education of the mass even more important now than ever before? These are questions of great significance, and should be pondered long and earnestly, by every lover of general education. That there is a general apathy manifested, in reference to our common schools, must be apparent to the most casual observer. Indeed we should scarcely know that there was such a thing, did we not occasionally see the school-house. We hear little said upon the subject. True, there is an occasional echo from the press, as though the thing was being throttled and smothered-out, rather than nourished into life, and vigor, and health. There must be something wrong, vitally wrong. We are no doubt reaping what we have sown.

The following is told of Horace Vernet, the celebrated French Artist:—The artist was coming from Versailles to Paris in the cars. In the same compartment with him were two ladies whom he had never seen before, but who were evidently acquainted with him. They examined him very minutely, and commented upon him quite freely—upon his martial bearing, his halo old age, his military pantaloons, etc. The painter was annoyed, and determined to put an end to the persecution. As the train passed under the tunnel of St. Cloud, the three travellers were wrapped in complete darkness. Vernet raised the back of his hand to his mouth and kissed it twice violently. On emerging from the obscurity, he found that the ladies had withdrawn their attention from him and were accusing each other of having been kissed by a man in the dark. Presently they arrived at Paris, and Vernet, on leaving them, said:—"Ladies, I shall be puzzled all my life by the enquiry—Which of these two ladies was it that kissed me?"

MIXED SCHOOLS.

Mr. Stowe, a celebrated Glasgow teacher, in advocating mixed schools, or the union of males and females, in the same room, says:

"It is stated on the best authority, that of those girls educated in schools of convents, apart from boys, the greater majority go wrong within a month after being let loose on society, and meeting the other sex. They cannot, it is said, resist the slightest compliment of flattery. The separation is intended to keep them strictly moral; but this unnatural seclusion actually generates the very principle desired to be avoided. We may repeat, that it is impossible to raise the girls as high, intellectually, without boys as with them—and it is impossible to raise boys morally as high without girls.—The girls morally elevate the boys and the boys intellectually elevate the girls. But more than this, girls themselves are morally elevated by the presence of boys, and boys are intellectually elevated by the presence of girls. Girls brought up with boys are more positively moral, and boys brought up in schools with the girls are more positively intellectual, by the softening influence of the female character."

ROMPING.

Never punish a girl for being a romp, but thank Heaven who has given her health to be one. It is better than a distorted spine or hectic cheek. Little girls ought to be great romps—better than paying doctors' bills for them.—Where is the gymnasium that should be attached to every school? That's coming, too, like other improvements.

CONVERSATION.—The most casual remark lives forever in its effects. There is not a word which has not a moral history. And hence it is that every "idle word" which men utter assumes a character so important, that an inquest will be held on it in the general judgment.—*Harris.*

The Principal of a male and female academy, near Somerville, Tenn., says, in his catalogue:—"The use of tobacco will not be permitted, and all male pupils will be required to wear suspenders, and be attentive to their personal appearance."

A man went to a judge to be qualified for an office. Said he, "Hold up your hand, I'll swear you, but all creation, couldn't qualify you."

A cubic foot of gold is worth two hundred and fifty-two thousand two hundred and eighty-eight dollars.

Every man is the former of his own character which determines individual destiny.