

opinions of his own in reference to schools, methods and subjects of instruction which if called upon, he can defend with sufficient ability to insure for himself a respectful hearing.

Of all the complaints which parents make against established systems of instruction, the most common, perhaps, is that their boys should be obliged to waste so much precious time in the study of Latin. The time and labor of learning it, they urge, is great, and when it is learnt it is useless for the business of life. I propose, therefore, to consider whether the study of Latin is a practical study and adapted to the wants of the times, or whether it is out of harmony with the so-called progressive spirit which characterizes the present century. It will be necessary, in order to do this, to inquire briefly: What the objects of school instruction are? What, then, is the chief end or object of school instruction? The ever ready, but somewhat vague answer is, "to prepare the pupil for the proper discharge of the duties of his future life." If this be the correct answer, then manifestly the work of school instruction is one of great latitude and immense importance. It is enough, however, for our present purpose to insist that a great object of this instruction is to develop the intellectual strength of the child, and to furnish him with that *knowledge*, which is *power*. Allow me to quote the words which an eminent citizen of Boston uttered a few years ago when addressing the school-masters' club in that city: "A well disciplined mind is the first requisite of success in business as well as in professional life. The great variety of pursuits and the keenness of competition of the present day render the choice of an occupation for a boy a task of no little difficulty. It therefore behooves the teacher to so discipline the youthful mind that when a boy comes out of school he may be able to direct a well trained mind to such occupations as taste, fitness and circumstances may dictate. Whatever the instincts and endowments of the pupils, or whatever their future occupation may be, all should be taught habits of observation and concentration." To this I would add that a man may have gained more out of what he has forgotten than out of what he remembers of his school instruction, if in the process of instruction he has learned to use his own faculties and has had a spirit of inquiry developed within him. Man's relations to himself and others are of such a nature as to require that he should do his own thinking. It is then the first work of the true teacher to train the pupil by every method he can devise to do this. A spirit of inquiry must be awakened in a pupil, and until we succeed in doing this it is useless to attempt anything else; here, then, we must delay,

no matter how long the work may require. No matter what amount of time may be spent by the teacher in filling children's heads, no matter if they are conducted through whole treatises on arithmetic, grammar, geography and history, unless their understanding is taught and keeps pace with the process, the whole is simply mechanical, and at the end of the school period what they have gained in facts will not be equal to one principle thoroughly understood. It is the study of principles that disciplines and strengthens the mind, and they are the foundations of all solid learning. If the mind be strengthened and invigorated by systematic courses of thought constantly and habitually pursued, it may discover new principles, and perhaps even new sciences; but no weak or puerile mind ever yet originated anything of value to itself or others. On the other hand, we owe everything to the working of a strong mind upon principles. The mind of a Newton by reflecting on so simple an occurrence as the falling of an apple from a tree discovered the law of gravitation and solved for all time questions which had puzzled and baffled the ablest minds of previous ages. Again, it was the operation of a vigorous mind upon a well known principle that brought Columbus across the Atlantic and gave us for our heritage this glorious western world. And what shall we say of Franklin, who tamed the lightning and brought it from the clouds? All these men whom I have mentioned were independent thinkers with well disciplined minds habituated to active, persevering inquiry. It is, therefore, one of the main objects of school instruction to train up a community of independent thinkers, since they are the only men who can produce important results. If the independent thinkers of a community are but one in a hundred, they must and will in the end be the leaders of the whole, from the strictly necessity of the case. This, then, being admitted, it is obvious that the "business of the teacher is to teach the art of thinking, which is an essential characteristic of true manliness." I have never seen this idea better expressed than in the words of Dr. Edward Thring, the late distinguished head master of Uppingham school. "Thought," says he, "is the teacher's care, and the production of thought his intention. But as mind is a living power, with all the changeable properties of life, not only the production of thought, but the training and shaping it in such a way as to become skilful, self-restrained and consciously harmonious is a teacher's province. The work of a teacher, then, is two-fold, producing thought and training it."

We may now ask the question, By what subjects in the curriculum of study can this result be best