

BOOKS.

WHAT grateful feelings a man of liberal education entertains towards the great minds of former ages! The obligation which he owes to them is incalculable. They have guided him to truth. They fill his mind with noble and graceful images. They have stood by him in all vicissitudes, comforters in sorrow, nurses in sickness, companions in solitude. These friendships are exposed to no danger from the occurrences by which other attachments are weakened and dissolved. Time glides by—fortune is inconstant—tempers are soured—bonds which seemed indissoluble are daily sundered by emulation or by caprice. But no such cause can affect the silent converse which we hold with the highest of human intellects. That placid intercourse is disturbed by no jealousies or resentment. These are the old friends that are never seen with new faces, who are the same in wealth and in poverty, in glory and in obscurity. With the dead there is no rivalry. In the dead there is no change. Plato is never sulky. Cervantes is never petulant. Demosthenes never comes unseasonably. Dante never stays too long. No difference of political opinion can alienate Cicero.—No heresy can excite the horror of Bossuet.

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THE CLAIMS OF UNIVERSAL EDUCATION.

It is not uncommon for those who have never reflected upon the subject to consider it unjust, under any circumstances, to tax the property of one man to educate the children of another.—Such are ever ready to inquire, Of what interest is it to me whether the children of others are educated or not? True, the whole subject has been thoroughly discussed, and its bearings clearly shown again and again; yet there are still found in almost every community, some whose minds remain unenlightened. To such it is therefore necessary to present anew the considerations which have led thousands of others (who once thought as they now do,) to believe that a liberal provision for free education is the cheapest and best insurance which can be effected upon property, and the surest guarantee for the safety of property, reputation and life. Among these are the following:

The statistics of *crime* inform us that nine-tenths of all the criminals confined in jails and penitentiaries are deplorably ignorant, as well in regard to science and knowledge in general, as in respect to morals and religion. Had they been properly educated in childhood and youth, instead of preying upon its best interests, they might have contributed to the improvement of society, or honoured its highest stations.

If proper inquiry be made, a large proportion of the paupers sustained at public expense, will be found to belong to the ignorant class, and to have been brought to their present condition by their want of the intelligence necessary to enable any one to manage business for himself. A good common school education would have saved them from becoming burdens upon society, and enabled them, beside maintaining themselves respectably, to bear their share of those burdens which are unavoidable by human foresight or sagacity.

Could the statistics of intemperance be fully ascertained, it would be found that the great majority of those who have ruined themselves and beggared their families by intemperate drinking, have, by the neglect of the culture of their minds, been rendered unable to enjoy any other than sensual pleasures. Does not every observing person know that those who frequent the grog-shop are not generally the intelligent.

It can be shown that more than one half the sickness in our country is the result of ignorance, of a want of that acquaintance with the laws of health which might easily be obtained, and that consequently more than one half of the expense occasioned by illness, and the loss of time, labour, etc., attendant upon it, might be saved if the whole community were properly educated.

It is well known that a large proportion of the litigation in this country arises from the inability (or the indisposition occasioned by a want of facility in doing it properly) to keep a proper record of business transactions. Let every young person be made familiar with arithmetic and the elements of book-keeping, and taught to keep an accurate account of his dealings with others, and one half or two thirds of all the petty law suits which are constantly disturbing the peace of neighbourhoods would never occur.