

"But have we not necessarily to do something of this kind in training the whole class as a unit?" asked the school-mistress.

"In training the whole class, a mean of school-work has, of course, to be struck, and it may nearly always be taken as a kind of proof that such a mean has been struck when the parent of one pupil complains of over-pressure of home-work, and the parent of another pupil in the same class complains of seeming idleness in the matter of home preparation. Yet we must never lose sight of the fact that the training of the whole class is only a means to an end, the end being the mental development of the individual. Hence in every school there must be some special tutoring of the brighter pupils, some additional work demanded of them."

"Some people say that it is the stupid pupil who should receive the special tutoring," said my companion.

"And yet, when such is conscientiously attempted, these same people seldom fail," said I, "to join the outcry about over-pressure. It is hard to please the fault-finder, even when his demands are in the positive."

"That is true," exclaimed the little woman, with something in her voice that sounded very much like a sigh. "Yet one cannot help being a complainer at times. I know it is foolish, but, while working away to the best of my ability in my school, I cannot help wondering how it is that, if all the memories of my pupils have the same physical basis, one pupil's memory is better than another's."

"If we only knew how to solve that wondering problem of yours," I returned, "we would be well on the road towards explaining very many things that have made the wisest of men shake their heads. Like other maids or matrons, Madame Nature has very many secrets, which we would fain make her divulge. But how often, in our impotency, are we forced to laugh at our own untenable conjectures as to what these secrets are! Scientific theories are often as unstable as the fashions. What was beauty in the hood-and-cloak of our great-grandmothers is seeming ugliness to us, and what was the truth as seen through some of the out-worn scientific theories of the past appears to us of to-day as being little else than the playfulness of men's prejudices. You perhaps remember the old scientific watch-word, which some of us had to pin our infantile faith to, that nature abhors a vacuum. And perhaps, after all, we have not got much further than nature's likes and dislikes in our science of to-day. Protoplasm does not always develop a god. The old lady has still her whims, which the scientist calls her laws. And, in my