

advise the teacher, but also dictate to him in the discharge of his duties. The provocations from this are frequently such as to require great discretion and magnanimity to rise above them. Bear in mind that parents have a peculiar interest in their own children, and that it is one of the weaknesses of many parents, that they deem it necessary to superintend, and to have a voice in all that is done for their children by others. Furthermore, schools, and especially public schools, are considered as a kind of public property in the management of which every one has a right to take a part. Such being the fact, it is very natural that injudicious parents should often seem altogether too officious in their intercourse with teachers and schools. Unpleasant as such intermeddling is, it need not generally be a source of much trouble or anxiety to the teacher. It is to be treated on the let-alone-principle. If resented or allowed to bring on disputes or altercations, it surely will increase tenfold; for a testy temper and angry words in a teacher are a sufficient provocation for fault-finders to do their worst. It is by such fuel that the flame of contention is usually fanned to its intensest heat. Not so, however, if it is met with an unruffled temper and with respectful silence. It can not flourish under neglect. It is a good rule to listen calmly and attentively to all the advice, and abuse even, that may be offered, or heaped upon you; and then, avoiding immediate action if possible, to follow your own judgment.

Many teachers very foolishly bring much trouble upon themselves by injudicious talk in school, or before their pupils elsewhere about their parents. A teacher of some promise, occupying a good situation, had occasion to reprove a lad, and to make some changes in his studies which his own good and that of the school seemed to require. The mother of the boy injudiciously made some petulant remarks about it, but would probably have forgotten the whole affair in a month, had the matter ended there. But her remarks found their way to the teacher's ears, whose want of judgment allowed him to bring the matter up before the school, and to indulge in violent language, abusing the boy, his mother, and meddlers in general. The result was he lost his situation and thereby received a just reward. Pupils should never hear from their teachers an unkind or disrespectful word about their parents.

It should be a principal object with the teacher, to keep out of trouble and to live on terms of peace and cordiality with pupils and parents, and with all others concerned. This must be done by the exercise of prudence and good judgment, and by a desire to deal fairly and justly with all. Care must be taken, however, not to vacillate where promptness is required, nor to shrink from the line of duty; for where that plainly leads he must go, cautiously, indeed, but fearlessly. But most of the troubles which this class of teachers encounter may be avoided by a determination to keep clear of them, as we have hinted above. Learn a lesson from the folly of the serpent, which is not always "wise." When a coil of fire is held towards one of our common field snakes, the spiteful reptile darts its forked tongue about it, and then, in wrathful folds, encircles it with its whole body. Result: A burnt offering uncalled for and ineffectual. So do not thou, fellow teacher. Repress the controversial element in your character; let your policy be pacific but firm; and by your fidelity and persistent magnanimity win the good-will and approbation of pupil and patron.—A. P. S., in *Mass. Teacher*.

## 2. PICTURES IN THE SCHOOL ROOM.

Our remarks under the head of "the Schoolroom as a Teacher" in the March number of the *Teacher*, have called forth some half a dozen letters of inquiry as to the schoolroom which we said had been called "the pleasantest in the State." One unknown friend, who signs himself "A Constant Reader," wants to know where it is, and adds:

"Ought you not, in justice to your readers and the 'not wealthy man' who made it so pleasant, to tell us, and to tell us when and how the pleasant thing was done, that others may be incited to go and do likewise?"

The room referred to is that of the *Oliver High School*, at Lawrence, and it owes its adornment, as it does its name, to Hon. Henry K. Oliver, for many years a resident of that city, now Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, everywhere and always an enthusiastic friend and zealous advocate of our public school system.

In 1866, he took charge of the school as instructor, during the interregnum between the resignation of one teacher and the inauguration of his successor. He drew his pay for this service, but some time afterward returned it, with liberal interest, by the donation of two engravings with busts of Plato, Socrates, Demosthenes, Cicero, &c., and statuettes of Goethe, Schiller, Dante, Tasso, Petrarch, Ariosto, Galileo, and Bowditch. In a Lawrence paper of the time, which a friend has obtained for us, we find the correspondence between the donor and the donees of this generous and

tasteful gift. We cannot refrain from quoting a portion of Hon. Mr. Oliver's letter to the School Committee, believing that his statement of the motives that influenced him in making the donation will serve, as our correspondent has said, to incite others to go and do likewise:

"These pictures I desire to have suspended upon the walls of the schoolroom, in full view of the pupils, that they may look upon them not merely as representing great historical facts, but as typical of great epochs in the history of religions and political freedom. And I desire further, that they may see in the great events thus portrayed before them, the perils which our fathers willingly and fearlessly encountered, to secure for themselves and for their children, the immeasurable blessings of free thought, of free speech, and of freedom with all its legitimate limits and safeguards. May they never be unworthy of the heritage!"

Again, referring to the busts and statuettes, he says:

"I present these, not merely to beautify and render interesting in its associations, the place wherein our children spend so many valuable hours, but that by a kind of visible presence, their youthful minds may enter into communion with the majestic minds of these great men, and may feel the force of Cicero's glowing and glorious words:—'*pleni sunt omnes libri, plenae sapientium voces, plena exemplorum vetustas!*' \* \* \* *Quam multas nobis imagines, non solum ad intuendum, verum etiam ad imitandum, fortissimorum virorum expressas, scriptores et Graeci et Latini reliquerunt! Quas ego mihi semper proponens, animum et mentem meam ipsa cogitatione hominum excellentium conformabam!*"

"I risk all charge of pedantic display in quoting these words, so familiar to every scholar, and I venture upon no translation, because none can adequately embody the admirable sentiments expressed by the great Roman orator and philosopher, and certainly none can be needed, in addressing those to whom the city has confided its highest, as well as its humblest educational interests.

"May the daily sight of great and good men, and of great and good deeds, awaken in the breasts of our children, the desire and resolution to be great and good likewise; but,

'only great as they are good.'

We may add that this was not the first, nor the second time that the school had been indebted for valuable donations to the generous patron whose name it bears. He had previously given it an excellent philosophical, chemical, and astronomical apparatus, and a set of maps and globes, besides adding many volumes to its library.

The large hall of the Oliver Grammar School, in the same building, is also adorned with many paintings, engravings, and busts, not a few of which it owes to the thoughtful liberality of the same gentleman. In this case, as in others of the kind, the generosity of one has led others to emulate his example; and we trust that, through the influence of the *Teacher*, the good deed may prove the seed from which, in many another city and town, good fruit may come.

Apropos of this subject, we find in a recent Report of the Board of Education, of Chicago, the following remarks:

"In most of the schools, the walls are still entirely destitute of ornamental paintings and engravings. If some of the parents in the several districts would furnish a few paintings, engravings, and other works of art, for the adornment of the schoolrooms, they would greatly aid us in our efforts to elevate and refine the taste of their children."

There is no neighbourhood, not even the poorest, in which something of the kind may not be done. *Beauty is cheap*, as Mrs. Stowe has so admirably shown in her "House and Home Papers" (if, indeed, their value can be estimated in money,) and just as cheap, just as economical, in the schoolroom as in the home. Would you protect the schoolhouse from the jack-knives of juvenile vandalism, *make it beautiful!* Every picture you put on its walls will save its cost, the first year, in the diminution of the bills for "incidental repairs."

The more elegant these artistic adornments of the schoolroom, the better; but, as we have before said, if you can have but a few cheap lithographs, it is better than nothing. The best lithographs, indeed, as we remarked in a notice of *Bufford's Catalogue of Prints, etc.*, in the *Teacher* for April, are often mistaken for steel engravings, and may deceive even a critical eye. We have seen a lithograph of Scheffer's "Dante and Beatrice," recently published by Bufford and sold for one dollar, which reproduces the beauty of the original painting as perfectly as the steel engraving for which you must pay six or eight dollars. There are those, indeed, who think that in softness and mellowness of effect, the cheap lithograph is superior to the costly engraving, and more faithfully represents the painting.

It must be understood that it is only the best lithographs to which these remarks apply. Among those which are appropriate for adorning our schoolrooms, are those of historical personages,