

dent. And what a troop of useful, everyday virtues this ceaseless striving to say the fitting thing fittingly nourishes—accuracy, truthfulness, painstaking, thoroughness, patience, justice!

If then a generous, and much more a masterful, command of English is so desirable, why is it so rare a possession? Is there any reason that accounts for this? A hearty appreciation of good English, an eager desire and an imperative demand for it—and the supply of it so scanty! What are the causes that defeat our reasonable expectations in this matter and turn us away disappointed and humiliated? And, in particular, why do our schools do so poorly the work in English expected of them? We have to deal largely with those who are not merely ignorant of good English but also have already acquired what one at times is sorely tempted to call incorrigibly bad English. The twig is bent, and the future tree all but hopelessly inclined, when the pupil first comes into our hands. Before we can sow and harrow in the seed of good English, we must dig out the stumps of ugly habits that pre-occupy the ground. Good habits of speech would grow there, and will, but only after the evil ones have been eradicated. And remember that, in starting under conditions so adverse, this study is almost unique. A pupil beginning arithmetic, geography, algebra, etc., has no misconceptions to be removed before just conceptions can take root. Respecting these studies, the soil of his mind is virgin—untilled. It is true, but with no obstructing growths to be destroyed before it can be tilled. The teacher can thrust in his spade at the start and sow his seed at once.

I do not mean to say that, in thier English, boys and girls have all fallen into ways extremely bad. Some come

from families in which good English is spoken—few from families where the English is perfect. And what parental care can completely shield the child from the hurtful influences of the street? Slang, misuses of words, and vicious verbal collocations, constructions that kick the traces of grammar, and sentences with clauses misjoined and disjointed abound in the speech of some children more than in that of others, but are found with painful frequency in the speech of all.

Will my fellow teachers forgive me, if—making against them no charge that I do not make against myself—I say that another peculiar difficulty in our way is, that we are incapacitated for teaching English superlatively well by our own ignorance of English? I do not here refer to our lack of special training for the work—our not having thoroughly learned what there was to do, and our failure to equip ourselves adequately to do it. We are not to suppose, because we have corrected bales of compositions, taught grammar and rhetoric, and even written on them, that necessarily our English is above reproach. The widest reading of good authors and the greatest familiarity with their felicities are no guaranty that we speak always with correctness. Who of us has not, when occasionally he has seen himself in the mirror of someone else's better English, been startled at some instance of his own ignorance?—*Prof. Brainerd Kellogg, in the School Review.*

Happiness is made, not found.—*Quiver.*

"In teaching the different branches of study, teachers should recognise that the greatest success lies in teaching their pupils how successfully to use books."—*S. M. Finger, Supt. Public Inst., N. C.*