

exercise of different talents, then it follows directly that whatever impedes such interchange is a drawback to prosperity. The merchant understands very well that the oftener he turns over his stock, the safer, more profitable and more satisfactory in every way is his business; but, with strange fatuity, from time to time he stocks himself heavily, seeing, or fancying he sees, that certain lines of goods are to meet with a special demand, and so not only enters upon the domain of the speculator, which is dangerous, but blocks the wheels of commerce by accumulating stock, and in this way sows the seed of his own discomfiture. So the farmer, by holding on to his crops rather than sell them at the legitimate market price at the time of harvesting (and as to what is the legitimate market he may and should always keep himself informed by the careful study of market reports), not only introduces into that occupation, whose great merit is the surety of the yield, the unwholesome element of hazard, but with the same fatuity shown by the merchant he adopts a policy that measurably at least defeats itself.

While we would recommend growers, therefore, to post themselves thoroughly as to the markets at trade centres, so as to secure a fair ruling price for their produce, we would also suggest to them that there are evils connected with the policy of delay none the less real because incurable. It is not to be supposed for a moment that the grower should not use his best judgment as to the time when, as well as the price at which, he will sell his stock, but we think that judgment will always be best when it is made up of a strong bias towards prompt sales for the reasons herein traced.

WHAT EDUCATION IS OF MOST VALUE.

For shoe-making or housebuilding, for the management of a locomotive engine, a newspaper or a country store, some apprenticeship is needful. Is it, then, that the unfolding of a human being in body and mind is so comparatively simple a process that any one may superintend and regulate it with no preparation whatever? If not, if the process is with one exception more complex than any in nature, and the task of administering to it one of surpassing difficulty, is it not madness to make no provision for such a task? Better, we say, sacrifice accomplishments than omit this all essential instruction. When a father, acting on false dogmas adopted without examination, has alienated his sons, driven them into rebellion and ruined them by his

harsh treatment, by over-exactions, and made himself miserable; when he made no effort to make the family circle more cheerful and entertaining for them than the street corner or the bar-room; when innocent amusements were forbidden; when no effort was made to gain their confidence and to prove to them that he was the best bosom friend they had in the world; when too constant regard on his side was had to the inheritance he should leave them, to the neglect of other and more direct ways of gaining their confidence; he might reflect that the study of Ethnology would have been worth pursuing even at the cost of knowing nothing about Sophocles or Eschylus. When a mother is mourning over a first-born that has sunk under some infertile disease; over a son who is gradually sinking into the depths of social degradation, which some knowledge of physiology and psychology on her part might have averted, it is but a small consolation that she can read some favorite foreign author in the original.

That parents in general should be expected to acquire a knowledge of subjects so abstruse will seem to them an absurdity. And if we proposed that an exhaustive knowledge of these subjects should be obtained by all fathers and mothers, the absurdity would indeed be glaring enough. But we do not. General principles only, accompanied by such detailed illustrations as may be needed to make them understood, would suffice, and these might be readily taught—if not rationally, then dogmatically. Be this as it may, however, here are the indisputable facts:—that the development of children in mind and body rigorously obeys certain laws; that unless these laws are in some degree conformed to by parents, death is inevitable; that unless they are in a great degree conformed to, there must result physical and mental defects; and that only when they are completely conformed to, can a perfect maturity be reached. Judge, then, whether all who may one day be parents should not strive with some anxiety to learn what these laws are.

Let us next pass to the functions of the citizen, and inquire what knowledge best fits a man for the discharge of these functions. It cannot be alleged, as in the parental functions, that the need for knowledge in the present case is wholly overlooked, for our school courses contain certain studies which nominally at least bear upon political and social duties. Of these the only one that occupies a prominent place is history. But as already hinted the historic information commonly given is almost valueless for purposes of

guidance. Scarcely any of the facts set down in our school histories, and very few even of those contained in the more elaborate works written for adults, give any clue to the right principles of political action. The biographies of monarchs—and our children commonly learn little else—throw scarcely any light upon the science of society. Familiarity with court intrigues, plots, usurpations, or the like, with all the personalities accompanying them, aids very little in elucidating the principles on which national welfare depends.

We read of some squabble for power; that it led to a pitched battle; that such and such were the names of the generals and their leading subordinates; that they had each so many thousand infantry and cavalry, and so many cannon; that they arranged their forces in this or that order; that they manoeuvred, attacked and fell back in certain ways; that at this part of the day such disasters were sustained, and at that such advantages gained; that in one particular movement some leading officer fell, while in another a certain regiment was decimated; that after all the changing fortunes of the fight, the victory was gained by this or that army, and that so many were killed and wounded on each side, and so many taken prisoners. And now, out of the accumulated details that go to make up the narrative, say which it is that keeps you in deciding on your conduct as a citizen. Supposing that you had diligently read, not only the "Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World," but accounts of all other battles that history mentions, how much more judicious would your vote be at the next election?

"But these are facts, interesting facts," you say. Without doubt they are facts; such, at least, as are not wholly or partially fictions; and to many they may be interesting facts. But this by no means implies that they are valuable. Factitious or morbid opinion often gives seeming value to things that have scarcely any. To one man an ugly piece of cracked old china is worth its weight in gold; to another the relic of a celebrated murderer, or a tobacco pipe that had seen service in the Crimea seems his most desirable possession. Will it be contended that these tastes are any measures of value in the things that gratify them? If not, then, it must be admitted that the liking felt for certain classes of historical facts is no proof of their worth; and that we must test their worth as we test the worth of other facts, by asking to what use they are applicable. Were some one to tell you that your neighbor's cat kittened yesterday, you would say the information was worthless. Fact though it might be,