

granting Universities for two million inhabitants. It is only too plain that the present System is attended with the maximum of expense in getting degrees, and a minimum of value to degrees when got. The *laissez aller* "fly on the wheel" system will not do in the Ligher, any more than in the lower branches of our Educational System. If compulsory education is the duty of the State, it is also the duty of the State to withdraw grants to Denominational Colleges, and to ensure uniformity of value to degrees, by centralizing the degree-giving power.

—The London *Times*, commenting upon the prosecution of Dr. Buchanan in Philadelphia for forging Medical diplomas, says that "our ancient universities have sinned quite as much as he in making degrees a mere matter of money. Many thousands of men add M.A., D.D., or P.C.L. to their names without having answered a question, or shown any scholarship or knowledge over and above what is implied in a B.A. degree."

### Contributions and Correspondence.

#### THE CIVILIZING INFLUENCE OF SCHOOLS.

BY DAVID ALLISON, LL.D.

The dissemination of education among the masses of our population, briefly referred to by me in a previous paper, raises many interesting questions besides that there considered. Professor Seely, in one of his Suggestive Essays, clearly points out that with the expansion of the area of education must come an intensification of its influence. This is more strikingly true in the Old World than in the New, but it is true as respects all countries. Education spreads by extending its influence to the neglected, the distant, the hitherto inaccessible. Operating on the rude and impressible material thus brought within its reach, its work is revolutionary, and its results are often more obvious than where it simply continues a cultivation which has become the settled and hereditary order of things. Any advantage, however, likely to accrue from this view of the case to our Free School system when compared with other systems, is in my opinion more than counterbalanced by the temptation offered to make unfair demands of that system. I listened not long since on a public occasion to an address by one of our most distinguished educationists, out of which has grown the chief thought of this paper. The address was stirring, and its tone excellent. Spoken in the hearing of many engaged in the teaching profession, it rang out clearly truths and counsels admirably adapted to inspire and guide sincere and earnest teachers. The accomplished speaker dwelt strongly on the refining influences of education itself, and on the specific duty of the teacher to make his school-room a nursery not only of "book-learning" but of all that is proper in conduct and graceful in demeanor. I cannot call in question the fact asserted, that the pupils of our public schools are in some instances boisterous and ill-mannered, but I cannot admit that we have here presented a "defect" of our system or education. No system can guarantee exemption from the radical defects of human nature. Particular teachers may fail in either precept or example, or in both, to properly mould the habits of their pupils. This is as possible and probable under one system as another. But it should be borne in mind that our public schools are not primarily responsible for the rudeness which sometimes brings discredit upon them. They are solving the problem of national education. It is not their "defect,"

but their glory that they have in part to deal with representatives of classes possessed of but a limited degree of refinement. - That which the home has failed to give, the school is expected to supply. The teacher must stand *in loco parentis* in a special sense. I believe that a proper induction of facts, a generalization, taking into reasonable account the difficulties of the case, would accord to our schools credit, not less for their humanizing than for their strictly educational results. That they do not reach and remedy all the evils and infirmities of human nature, that, through inherited tendencies, or in the free play of volition, some who frequent them are models neither of morals nor manners, is entirely too narrow a basis on which to predicate their failure. The style of reasoning adopted by Richard Grant White in his severe arraignment of the Public School System of the United States, might be employed to discredit the institutions of Christianity itself. As I have said, no system can get back of the depths of human nature. That is the best system which reduces evil to a minimum by securing a maximum of substantial good, of positive progress.

#### THE TEACHER'S RENEWAL OF STRENGTH.

BY THE REV. CHARLES PELHAM MULVANY, M.A.

When the hero of Goethe's great poem, sated with the worldly pleasures lavished upon him by the evil spirit whom he had chosen to be his ministrant, demanded access to a higher and purer ideal, that of Homer's loftiest conception, the Argive Helen; then the powers of Mephistopheles availed not to do his bidding, "Of that Hades he held not the key." Faust was obliged to rely on his own powers of will to conjure up the phantasma of Helen, through whom the purification of his nature was to be effected.

This, like much else in that powerful but extraordinary work, the second part of Faust, has an esoteric and mystical meaning. There are tasks, those that relate to the purification and ennobling of the soul, which we must accomplish for ourselves. No sorcery from without, no magic of system, method, lectures, colleges, can supply the place of that which must be done within the sanctuary of the soul, which can be done there alone.

In one of the most charming of that series of *bijou* biographies edited by Mr. Morley, that of Sir Walter Scott, it is remarked that all that Scott poured forth so lavishly in poetry and fiction was but the assimilated and transmuted outcome of the rich stores of observation carried on for years of communion with man and nature. Hence the wonderful fidelity of his Scottish characters; hence the pre-Raphaelite minuteness of his descriptions of scenery, so well and justly praised by Ruskin.

If it be true that the evolution of functions follows the law of evolution of organs, we may expect to throw some light on the processes of intellectual vitality by considering them under the formula which describes vital action in general as *the continual adaptation of organisms to surrounding conditions*. Healthy intellectual utility must be adapted to its actual conditions. The intellectual life of a monk in his cell spending half a century in carving a crucifix or colouring a missal, is a free and healthy vitality. Intellectual life should not act and react on those with whom it is in contact. Again, we find in intellectual vital action, as in organic vital action, a two-fold process, of *synthesis* as of *analysis*. By synthetic action, oxygen from the atmosphere, as nutriment from food, is absorbed; by the analytic action these are distributed to the several organs, adapted with infinite difference of form and action to each.

The work of the teacher is an organic form of the intellectual and social life. This is plain, because without the function of the