



THE EDUCATIONALIST.

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PARENTAL INFLUENCE IN
CONNEXION WITH OUR
COMMON SCHOOLS.

Parents have an unbounded influence in every section in making common schools efficient. They will in most cases benefit children, only in proportion as the precepts and instruction of the teacher are enforced by the parent. If the parent shows by his deportment that he values the school, and that he is anxious to increase its efficiency and usefulness; if instead of obstructing the teacher in his plans or disputing his authority, he assiduously furthers both; if he manifests a lively interest in the progress of his children—in such a case both the teacher and the children will have the strongest inducements to exertion and the school will flourish as it ought. But if on the other hand parents neglect their duty in this respect, and no cheering influence is exerted from the family to the school, the teacher must be more than human if he does not become discouraged in the midst of his unrequited and unaided labours. Surely he cannot exert himself with enthusiasm when he meets around him nothing but cold indifference and neglect. It is not natural to expect that a teacher's lessons will make a strong impression on the children when the parents, who ought to be most deeply interested in their advancement are careless and indifferent. Carelessness and want of interest on the part of parents is one great cause why our schools are not so efficient as they ought to be. Hence the preference which is often given to teachers of the lowest class because they are the cheapest. Now these parents, and they not few, do not act so in other cases. When they propose to raise a crop of good marketable wheat, they are very careful to get the best seed, to see that the ground is carefully prepared and to guard the young plant at every stage of its growth against every thing that would injure it or impede and hinder its growth. These same parents will trust no workman who is unacquainted with his business and omit no precaution which can secure them against loss and injury. Let them

then only manifest the same care in the education of their children which they almost invariably exhibit in every other relation of life, and our schools will become one of the greatest blessings to themselves and the world at large.

I have also observed that our schools suffer much from irregularity of attendance. Indeed this is a general cause of complaint throughout the country. And surely nothing can be more clear, than that the best schools can do little for those who are frequently absent. No child can be expected to make respectable proficiency whose attendance is irregular. Besides this, irregularity of attendance must act most injuriously on the child himself in many respects. It weakens and destroys his desire for improvement, makes him listless and careless, exhibits a bad example to others and increases the labors and vexations of the teacher, besides depriving the section of a proportionate amount of the taxes.

Intimately connected with irregularity of attendance in retarding the progress of our common schools is the frequent change of teachers which in some sections is an evil to be deplored. The course of a child's education at school may be compared to the ascent of the pyramids. You cannot reach the top without carefully ascending each successive step. So education at school consists of a series of processes, the latter always upon the earlier, and requiring therefore to be conducted, within certain limits on the same principles and by the same methods. Now every school is in some respect different from every other school, and no two teachers in whatever manner they may be trained have either the same acquirements or the same methods. No opportunity is afforded to the teacher under the system or practice of frequent changes, to form the habits of his scholars; and it is evident that when every new teacher arrives, the progress of the school is arrested, until he can learn his position. Besides as every teacher will cling to his own system and views of instruction, he will, in most cases, proceed to undo what has been effected by his predecessor. Thus the children will often spend much of their precious time in retracing their studies or in pursuing their education according to a new method. And what is the effect of frequent changes upon the teacher? The effect most certainly is to render him a sort of wandering gypsy, an unsettled vagrant without any

fixed residence or habitation. He may almost, with some appearance of truth, give the reply which Louis Kossuth made when asked, on a certain occasion, where he lived, the answer was, "Nowhere."—So teachers may almost say they live nowhere. Neither man nor woman in such circumstances can have much ambition to form a character.

For the Educationalist.

DON'T GET DISCOURAGED.

Disappointed and weary the fainting heart cries out—It is no use striving thus—throw aside your efforts, and let your thoughts and hopes drift away with the rubbish of this turbulent tide of life. What if he does imagine that he might sparkle in the sunlight of popular favor!

The world is all too busy to pause and glance at such little ripples as yours. It takes large, dashing waves to make the froth and foam that look so fair and glittering to the passers by!

Still the yearning spirit cries—Nay, but I would rather be one of the vain strivers, than a listless idler, floating aimlessly on the current of life—though the hand of affection even should not pause to gather the gems we vain would scatter along the way, and their brightness beam in fancy alone, there is light enough to fringe the clouds with a silvery tint.

F. A. D.

DIMENSIONS OF HEAVEN.

Dimensions of Heaven.—REVELATION xxi: 16:—"and he measured the city with a reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal." Twelve thousand furlongs, 7,920,000 feet, which, being cubed is 948,088,000,000,000,000,000,000 cubical feet, the half of which we will reserve for the Throne of God and Court of Heaven, half of the balance for streets, and the remainder, divided by 4,096 the cubical feet in the rooms, 16 feet square, and 16 feet high, will be 30,843,750,000,000 rooms. We will now suppose the World always did and always will contain 903,000,000 of inhabitants, and a generation will last 33½ years—2,700,000,000, every century, and that the World will stand 100,000 years—27,000,000,000,000 persons. Then suppose there were 11,230 such worlds, equal to this in number of inhabitants and duration of years, there would be a room 16 feet long, and 61 wide, and 16 high for each person, and yet there would be room