

entirely subverts their meaning and diminishes the value of conversation. If a ribbon or a cravat is *splendid*, how can a mountain view or a stately cathedral exceed it? If the pain of a scratch is *awful*, what can describe the agony of a fatal wound? Such statements are not believed by those who hear them or by those who utter them, and thus little or nothing of the real feelings of the speaker is conveyed. Something even worse than this must ensue. Thought itself must suffer for want of adequate expression. Slovenly language will react on the mind, and render the ideas also slovenly and confused. The powers of discrimination will be seriously injured by indiscriminate expression, and a feebleness of thought will hide itself behind an unreasonable strength of language.

There are several reasons which may be alleged for this deterioration. The enlarged schedules of studies leave less time than formerly for this kind of instruction; the multitude of juvenile books of a mediocre character prevents the youth from forming his style of thought or expression from the best standard authors, and the natural tendency of the young to exaggeration is less restrained than formerly. Perhaps, however, a more potent cause than any is a diminution of that respect which was once expected by elders and rendered by the young, as a matter of course. Whatever liberties of expression might have passed between young people when by themselves, they were all restrained when in the presence of parents and teachers, and then, at least, the effort was always made to select the most appropriate terms to convey their meaning. Now, however, there is less discipline and less deference. The children, contrasting their intellectual advantages with those of their parents, make the very great mistake of supposing that they are superior in all things, and the parents readily acquiesce in the delusion. Thus the flippant retort, the slang phrase, the powerful expletive, the rude and exaggerated utterance, go unrebuked and gain too firm a hold to be shaken off. Both respect and self-respect are good intellectual and moral trainers, and their presence will do much to correct this evil. It is well for our young people to congratulate themselves upon their superior advantages, but let them beware while doing so that they do not lose the palpable and valuable results of a training that was more exact, although more circumscribed.—*Philadelphia Ledger*.

Train pupils to Think.

No teacher can be truly successful who fails to awaken in his pupils that interest and spirit which will lead them to investigate a subject carefully and to think patiently. A prominent aim of the instructor should be to teach his pupils how to study, and encourage them to surmount the difficulties. But it is too often the case that the teacher does that for a pupil which he ought to do for himself. This may be much easier for the teacher, but it is not for the scholar's best good. It will not educate, nor will it awaken thought. The true way is to lead and encourage pupils to rely upon their own powers and resources.

Let the teacher never forget that it is not what he does for his pupils so much as what he induces them to do for themselves, that will prove truly beneficial and helpful to them. Let him, in view of this, seek to inspire them with confidence in their own powers and resources. Let them be made to feel that they *can* do, and in most cases they *will* do. But care should be taken

not to leave them to feel discouraged. Let them be cheered by kind words while they are required to make further effort. A few kind words, or a little indirect help, pleasantly given, will accomplish wonders; while a cold repulse, or aid reluctantly or sourly given, will dishearten. John, for instance, goes to his teacher and says,—“Will you please to show me how to perform this example? I don't understand it.” “No,” says the teacher, tartly, “study it out for yourself; you don't need any help.” John passes to his seat, feeling dispirited,—repulsed by one who ought to be his friend and helper. He has no heart to apply himself with earnestness to his work, and so when called to recite he makes a failure, and is severely censured by his teacher. He becomes discouraged, and loses interest in his school and its lessons.

William has a different teacher; no more accomplished than John's, but he is full of love for his work and full of sympathy for his pupils. He understands human nature, and boy-nature in particular, and inspires all under his care with a spirit of confidence and self-reliance. William approaches him and politely requests aid in solving a problem. He is received in a friendly manner. The teacher carefully reads the example, giving all proper emphasis and expression. The very reading imparts a little light. In pleasant and encouraging tones the teacher says, “William, this example is not so plain and simple as many others, but I think with a little patient thought you will get it right. Read it over very carefully and ascertain just what it means, and I think you will get at the proper solution; if not, come to me again.” William passes to his desk with a light heart. He feels strengthened and encouraged by his teacher's kind manner and pleasant words. With earnestness he applies himself to the example, and soon all becomes clear. He has not always solved the given problem, but he has gained confidence and power which will be of future help. He has taken a step of developing his thinking-powers and gained in self-reliance, while his teacher has shown his skill by inspiring him to persevere.

Let it not be forgotten that every effort which will tend to develop and bring into activity the pupil's mental resources, will prove of far greater importance than the formal hearing of set lessons. See to it, teacher, that your pupils learn how to study and to think, and then they will acquire knowledge. So far as possible encourage them to get a clear and accurate understanding of the subject under consideration, and then require them to express their thoughts and views in their own words. Pupils who have learned how to study and think, and to give proper expression to their ideas, have made great advancement in education, though their studies be few or many.—*New England Journal of Education*.

Beauty of the Clouds.

JOHN RUSKIN.

It is a strange thing how little, in general, people know about the sky. It is that part of creation in which Nature has done more for the sake of pleasing man, more for the sole and evident purpose of talking to him and teaching him, than in any other of her works; and it is just the part in which we least attend to her. There are not many of her other works in which some more material or essential purpose than the mere pleasing of man is not answered by every part of their organization; but every essential purpose of the sky might, so far as