

and exciting the imagination from the first dawn of thought, as a condition of quickening that faculty in time, and sustaining the human race at a due elevation.* There are indeed dry men, who are satisfied with the restrictive system which made them what they are, by stopping some of the mind's outlets for good and all; while *Fancy's* child, on the contrary, is often painfully conscious of something missing, some strength needed to carry out the brain's conceptions: but satisfaction with an intellectual status is no warrant for its justice. The poet has both types in his thought when he pictures the model child, the growth of the system of his day, as

"A miracle of scientific lore,
Ships he can guide across the pathless sea,
And tell you all their cunning; he can read
The inside of the earth, and spell the stars;
He knows the policies of foreign lands;
Can string you names of districts, cities, towns.
The whole world over, tight as beads of dew
Upon a gossamer thread; he sifts, he weighs;
All things are put to question; he must live
Knowing that he grows wiser every day
Or else not live at all, and seeing too
Each little drop of wisdom as it falls
Into the dimpling cistern of his heart;"

and contrasts the little prig with the child expatiating, all unconscious of itself, in the free range of fiction and fairy-land. It is thus Wordsworth congratulates Coleridge on their mutual escape:—

"Oh! where had been the man? the poet where?—
Where had we been, we two, beloved friend,
If in the season of unperilous choice,
In lieu of wandering, as we did, through vales
Rich with indigenous produce, open ground
Of fancy, happy pastures ranged at will,
We had been followed, hourly watched, and noosed,
Each in his several melancholy walk;
Stringed, like a poor man's heifer, at its feed,
Led through the lanes in forlorn servitude;
Or rather, like a stalled ox, debarred
From touch of growing grass, that may not taste
A flower till it have yielded up its sweets
A prelibation to the mower's scythe?"

It is common, however, for men of genius to complain in their own case of a defective intermittent education in a tone which gives it for elaborate training; it is their grievance against their special belongings or against society generally. They assume their imagination a giant no chains could have bound; while exacter, more varied, and deeper knowledge would have added strength and power to their crowning faculty. We discover this querulous humility in men who have acquired distinction; to whom, therefore, the world allows the privilege of talking about themselves. They are aware of inequalities, and perhaps feel themselves pulled back by deficiencies which would not have disturbed them had their education been more regular and systematic at some early period when they were left to themselves, and allowed to follow their own devices. Under the desired circumstances their powers would have been more on a level. This is probable, but the level might be attained through the checked exuberance of their highest and most distinguishing faculty; a sacrifice they would be little prepared for, though the average of capability might be raised.—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

BALANCED FORCES.

(From the *Massachusetts Teacher*.)

ONE of the most wonderful things in all the natural world is the constant destruction and as constant restoration of the equilibrium of forces which are daily calling for readjustment. "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again." Every thunder-storm, each tornado, is a cry for quiescence. The destruction of the equilibrium is unceasing, its restoration always recurring. Where the balance is best maintained there is the most enduring and the securest life.

Whatever is true in this regard of the material world is true in a deeper sense of the world of man. All history is but the story of jarring forces adjusting themselves to and balancing

each other, the balance being more nearly reached as the progress of a race or a nation beyond primitive modes of living is more marked. The best governments of to day are those in which the different departments of the government are so arranged that they form a balanced whole.

What is true of the nation is also eminently true of the individual. The man is small and one-sided who trains himself only in some one direction, forgetting those qualities which are foils to his speciality. Generosity continually tends to become lavishness, a wise prudence turns to niggardliness, unless these opposite characteristics are so developed as to hold each other in check.

A wise and symmetrical development of all the opposite powers makes the strong thinker and worker, the man who,

"If an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need."

What is the real strength of the best and greatest men this world has known, but just this even balance of powers? They have known both how to be abased and how to abound. It was by no conspicuously brilliant single quality that Washington won and held the proud title of Father of his Country, or that the "silent prince" held steadily, through all discouragement, the purpose which, once realized, made his country free from a foreign yoke, and made

"his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
To keep the Soldier firm, the Statesman pure."

Such people often do not attract the attention as do those whose characters are unevenly developed, because there is no single marked excellence standing in bold relief, patent to the careless eye of any chance beholder, so that he who runs may read; but we turn to them in seasons of discouragement, in hours of darkness, and we feel the power which we do not see. We often measure its greatness by the void left when it is gone. No one would like to live with the irresolute, unready Hamlet whom all men may admire to study, who is the central figure of the play that bears his name, but whose meteor light is overshadowed by the steady radiance of the strong, quiet, balanced Horatio, whom we would take to our hearts to be trusted in any emergency.

Now, what is the secret of the development of a harmonious, a balanced intellect and character? He who could answer this question rightly would have told the one thing which all educators since the beginning of teaching have been striving to determine. Even one who points out any defect in systems of education is helping toward this end. Now and then some earnest soul has caught a glimpse of some one of the principles upon which all true training must be based, has wrought out a plan to embody this principle, and a new force has been introduced into systems of training whose echo lives even in those places from which its soul has died out. Nay, by that strange tendency of our nature to the destruction of symmetry, the new workers who follow the discoverer so work out the details of his plan, that they hide the principle itself by the very finish and elaboration.

Thus the classification and course of study in our schools are often so minutely wrought out that nothing is left to the wit or judgment of the teacher, and it requires a martinet rather than a thinker to manage the system, and our schools are no more places of real mental and moral training than the mimic show of the parade ground is a real battle. The problems of life are individual, and the training which fits people to solve them must be individual, to a greater extent than those who are adorers of system alone are willing to admit. There must be a limitation of the number of pupils under one teacher's care to twenty-five or even a smaller number, before the best results can come from our school training, before the true balance between the training of the individual alone, and of the class alone, can be struck.

The same tendency to elaboration of details is seen in the teaching of particular subjects, and in the preparation of text-books. Thus have arisen those finished systems of grammatical analysis, wherein language has been so pruned and trimmed, that no chance is left for any free growth of a living tongue. They are post-mortem rather than physiological studies, and the outcry against the teaching of classics is but the effort to return to a balanced training. It will be fortunate indeed if the momentum of this movement does not carry us so far that we lose the ability to retain what is valuable in the language training of the past.

The Education Bill of the Ontario Government is a most comprehensive measure, and, so far as we can judge from Mr. Cameron's speech, it is just what was required to complete the previously admirable system in that Province. The chief changes are that all schools shall be free, and that attendance shall be compulsory. It is also proposed to introduce into the school course the study of Natural History, Chemistry and Agriculture, and to establish Industrial Schools. Well done, Ontario!

* Bearing upon our subject is a well-considered lecture recently delivered and since published by Lord Neaves on "Fiction as a Means of Popular Teaching." The line of thought leads him chiefly to dwell on the value of parable and fable as moral teachers for all time and every age. His numerous examples in prose and spirited verse are not only apt and varied, but show a familiar acquaintance with the literature, both European and Oriental, of the subject.