

times and the biographies of eminent men in different nations, especially their own nation, are read, and a basis of comparison is laid by instruction in the Old Testament histories. The comparative method of study is the modern method in all subjects, and nowhere is there a better basis for historic comparison than in those brief sketches written from a prophetic or ideal standpoint in the books of Judges, Samuel and Kings, sketches and summaries that combine pregnant and glowing reflection with all the charm of concrete details. By this method of studying history the child will unconsciously get hold of links of connection between history and geography, and history and literature, and between these and life. His learning will prove of permanent interest and value. He is led to think of other nations and other generations in relation to himself and to the men and women he lives with instead of misconceiving them as abstractions invented to torment school-boys, or as mere "pagans" with whom he is not expected to have any sympathy. The difficulty of teaching literature to children is very great, perhaps greater than of teaching history itself, and the usual mistake is in being too formal, too didactic, too analytic, and too ambitious. The children must be interested, and they can be interested only through their imagination. Mr. Gradgrind would give them "facts." I would give them stories and tales instead. Books like Hans Andersen's, and Grimm's tales, the Arabian Nights, Robinson Crusoe and the Synoptic Gospels to begin with, to be followed by Scott's poems, selections of ballad poetry and selections from Scripture. "The best literature for children from their seventh to their fourteenth year," says Rosenkranz, "consists always of that which is honoured by nations and the world at large," and if the

books I have mentioned are objected to, choose at any rate others that have stood the test of time and a jury that may be said to comprise universal humanity.

The object of the common school, remember, is not industrial. It should not regard children as the raw material of craftsmen, and aim at making infant mechanics. They are in the flower of life, and the best fruit will be had if you give the flower free play and do not expect it to be fruit or even incipient fruit. The aim of the school is to make children happy, healthy and natural; to give them a love for their country and for one another; to open their eyes to the beauty of nature and the meaning of life; to give them a love for reading, and a taste that will enable them in some degree to discern good reading from bad; and to form in them habits that will make the end of their school days to be but the beginning of their education.

2. The influence of the school internationally. The school should teach patriotism. But, there is as great a difference between patriotism and that blatant, arrogant spread-eagleism which in Europe is called Chauvinism, as there is between enthusiasm and fanaticism. The one is healthy and full of generous inspirations, and the other unhealthy and the destroyer of true patriotism and morality. The one teaches us to love our own land and race first because it is ours, and we believe that it has done, and that it promises to do, most for man and for that which is best in man, especially for the good old cause of liberty, peace and righteousness. The other teaches us to hate men for the love of God or the love of country. The common school is, we have seen, broad as the nation, and necessary to the existence and well-being of the nation. May we not find for it a broader base? Yes.