

OUR ADVANTAGES.

(Written for Moore's Rural New-Yorker.)

To the young searcher after wisdom, the present age is one of peculiar interest. The past is brilliant with the deeds of the learned, but our own period eclipses their mightiest efforts. Our Universities and Colleges are mines of knowledge, glittering with massive and precious ores. The whole aspect of the intellectual field speaks a guiding hand richer in wisdom, and more royal in learning. The accumulated experience of age, expressed in characters of living light, is here centered, free to the ardent gaze of millions.—Everywhere is to be seen the fruits of minds matured after years of deep and profound study. The flames enkindled upon the altar of Education burn with brighter lustre and increasing brilliancy, dispelling the gathering darkness and threatening gloom. The thoughts of the learned, the heroic deeds of the great, the victories of the good and just, are garnered as into one common store-house, to feed and nourish the youthful mind.—There is spread out before our vision a picture of which the world has never seen the precedent.

Knowledge is everywhere diffused, radiating in all directions, and, like the sunlight, visiting the poorest. Its genial light, emanating from a free press, cheers the pathway and illumines the dwelling of the lowliest, elevating their condition, dignifying their characters, and sweetening their lives. The plodding husbandman may pass his leisure hours in hoarding up intellectual riches. Though his body is bowed earthward by the hardships of his lot, and his immortal mind is in comparative darkness, unhewn and shapeless, void and unfashioned, yet he may, by improving the many opportunities for profitable reading, mental and moral culture, break through the barriers that wall him in, and in the sunlight of free knowledge, develop the dormant rudiments of noble purposes that are imbedded in the deep mines of his nature. Though his hands still guide the plow, turn the sod or reap the ripened grain, his mind is unburdened, and in its free liberty turns from things groveling to revel in loftier studies and higher converse.

The spirit of Education has moved the world, and is destined to exert an influence which will increase and gather new strength as ages roll away. It possesses a charm that is boundless in its sway, no barrier being so formidable but it will assail and overthrow, setting free the oppressed, and instilling into their minds noble aspirations. Its works are in harmony with the better feelings of our nature, touching the tenderest heart-strings and inspiring our very being with a relish for things beautiful. Nearly every nation at the present time gives proof of its renovating influence. Its workings may be traced in the heretofore barbaric islands of the Pacific, and it is slowly wending its way to the sunburnt coast of degraded Africa. We have reason to believe that ere many ages have passed to swell the vast ocean of the past, it will be the acknowledged conqueror of the world. Every land paying homage to it as the

fountain of their many blessings and privileges.

The present age may truly be denominated an age of advantages far superior to that of any other in the history of our world. Knowledge has unfolded her glittering and varied store to the youth of our land and they flock to the fountain, drinking deep of the pure waters. Here they find originality portrayed in all its fascinating colors, here they can paint from reality, scenes radiant with Christian love,—here they find a congenial field that is inexhaustible in its vast researches. The archives of the past have not reached the acme of present aspirations, and we are seeking still higher stand-points. We have passed beneath the beetling cliffs of adversity, and are cheered by the sunshine of prosperity. Fame, from her lofty summit, still beckons on, waiting to deck the winner's brow with a wreath "that fadeth not away."

H. T. M.

Pearl Creek, N. Y., 1860.

TEACHERS SHOULD STUDY.

Some of the best lessons of life are learned from familiar objects, and we do not hesitate to seek instruction from the humblest sources. We have often watched with interest the management of steam engines on boats and on railroads. A goodly supply of fuel is provided at the outset, and so placed as to be convenient for use. Before the machine can be made to work, two things have to be done. A fire must be made in the furnace of the engine, and then must be duly supplied with fuel. The former of these operations is generally styled by engineers "firing up," and the latter "wooding up," or "coaling up," according to the materials used. We have heard the chief engineer of an Atlantic steamship call out to a subordinate, "coal up." Recently on a railroad connected with this city, we heard the order given, "wood up." And once in a miserable steamer, having been weather-bound for twelve hours in a Mediterranean port, we heard with joy the Captain's call, "fire up."

We have been led to reflect on the consequences that would follow if orders of this kind were either not given or not obeyed. Steamships would halt mid-ocean, and railroad cars would disappoint us more than when blocked up by "mountains of snow." Indeed, the whole course of business would be seriously affected, and general indignation would be excited against the steamboat and railroad engineers.

Now, we have educational crafts that are stopped in their career of usefulness by the ignorance and blunders of the managers more months than we spent hours on the Corsican coast. With what joy, then, would the call be heard by suffering communities, "fire up, wood up." Without assuming any but a subaltern's post, we take the liberty of raising the cry in our ranks, "Fire up; wood up."

Light and truth are as needful to the teacher as fire and fuel to the engine.—Neither can carry forward either man or humanity without proper attention.—Therefore, while veritable engineers "fire

up" and "wood up," let teachers "read up" and "study up" at every interval of their labors, for the better discharge of their duties.

We need not institute here a formal and extended parallel. Teachers should provide themselves with suitable books, maps, charts and other means of instruction and improvement; and should seek to kindle their zeal and quicken their interest in the objects of their profession by study, meditation, and intercourse with their fellow laborers. Teachers thus provided, and improving their means of usefulness, acquire, during a lapse of years, great energy of character and power of propulsion, often reminding one of the steam engine; and they bear about the same comparison with improvident, unimproving teachers, that a powerful locomotive does to a hand car.

In employing this figure of speech, we need not guard against misapprehensions. Though the steam horse goes snorting through the country, and, as a signal to parties interested, utters a shrill whistle on approaching a railroad station, noisy, officious demonstrations of zeal and interest on the part of schoolmasters and schoolmistresses are not hence to be commended. Rather such manners are to be characterized as vulgar and prejudicial to the best interests of education. Teachers of this order may float on the surface of society, but they are not the strongest reliance or the best representatives of their profession, lacking, as they generally do, the quiet energy and the inherent force of character which spring alone from genuine scholarship and mental culture.

"A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring;
For shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking deeply sobers us again."

Teachers should study and think; for in this way alone can they keep in the line of their profession, understanding its aims, maintaining its spirit, and accomplishing its objects. Unfaithfulness or negligence here is a prolific source of mischief, often causing friends to pity and mourn, enemies to despise and rejoice, and bringing defeat to the best laid plans for the promotion of good learning.—They should work, drawing from the fountains of heavenly wisdom and illuminating their minds with the best lights of the ages. They should read and study the best books on the nature, objects, and means of education, or forever resign their noble calling.—*Ithaca Island Schoolmaster.*

PRIDE.

In beginning the world, if you don't wish to get chafed at every turn, fold your pride carefully, put it under lock and key, and let it air on grand occasions.—Pride is a garment, all stiff brocade outside, all grating sackcloth on the side next to the skin. Even kings don't wear dalmaticum except at coronations.—*Dutcher.*

It matters not whether a man be mathematically, philologically, or artistically cultivated, so he be cultivated.