

turn it to account if they would, and not teach book-keeping or tailoring? Music and drawing consume time which produces neither artist nor musicians; the same time devoted daily to the acquisition of a trade would be fitting the boy for life. It will be answered that it is impracticable to give instruction in the schools in these handicrafts; then do not keep the boys in school, wasting the time; let them seek some such instruction where it can be given. It is not impracticable to teach sewing; nor as difficult or annoying to the teacher as instruction in drawing is. It is sometimes argued that drawing is an aid toward writing. This plea is quite absurd. The child writes well who mechanically acquires muscular skill in imitating certain rigid models which compose our script alphabet; the gift of the artist is to abolish rigidity and discover curves and *chiar-oscuro*. The artists are usually the worst penmen in the community. The children should be trained for business; not for art. If any artist in embryo be among them, he will naturally develop into his intended state. Teaching him to write clearly will not defeat or impair destiny. Every embryo inevitably matures into what God intended it should be.

It is quite notorious how few successful merchants dare even write their own letters. They are educated men, in a general way; in their youth they were taught many things, but grammar was only imperfectly acquired, and they do not trust themselves in its mazes. How few leading public men send a line to the press without first subjecting it to the censorship of some friend capable of correcting, if need be, its grammatical errors! How few Senators and Congressmen, on the floor of the National Assembly, are not indebted to the generous and unappreciated news-paper man for setting right the verbs and subjects, the cases of the nouns, and the number of the pronouns, before the honorable gentleman's ungrammatical speech reaches his admiring constituents!

The lack of adequate knowledge of grammar and arithmetic has blunted the life of many an able and ambitious mechanic. There are men working at the forge, in the boiler shop, and among the moulders' casts, whose brains are big enough and clear enough to place them in stations where their talents would bless mankind, and enrich and enoble themselves; but they remain drudges and slaves of matter because they have not sufficient knowledge of grammar to write an exact statement of an idea, nor enough familiarity with the rules of arithmetic to solve, in figures, the problems which their association with involved machinery suggest. George Stephenson learned to read after he was grown up, and to write, by the light of his engine-fire, after his marriage. But in the United States the children who become mechanics go to the common schools for some years, at least, and instead of being taught language and mathematics with a persistent thoroughness, their precious period of school-days is largely frittered away upon a list of sublime sciences, not one of which they learn anything of, not one of which can render them substantial assistance.

Let not the reproach be suggested that the children of the poor should not acquire universal knowledge; that a royalty ought to be placed upon science and art which only the rich may safely invade. No, no; knowledge is the domain of every one who chooses to enter upon it; but let us give to the children the keys by which its gates are opened. The keys are—ready skill in arithmetic, and that actual familiarity with the grammar of the English language which will enable each to think with a consciousness of exactness; and so thinking, he will not be afraid to speak and to write. Together with these, they should be taught geography to a reasonable extent, United States history, and book keeping. They will learn

other kinds of knowledge after their minds are ready for them. And music will not depart from the schools, even if the music teacher never enters there.

ARABIA FELIX.

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Hints to Young Teachers.

GOVERNMENT.

It may seem strange, but I think you will recognize the fact, that when you hear the expression, "He is a first rate teacher," six times out of seven it has no reference whatever to the instruction, but means that the school is in good order and well governed. I know teachers, who have been successful in their calling for years, who have very little knowledge to impart and very little skill in imparting the small amount they have, but who possess that gift for organising and directing which makes them born leaders.

Although it is scarcely just to call a man a good teacher merely because he has good government, yet there is a truth lying at the foundation of this general opinion, as there usually is of one so commonly received. Education is something more and higher than merely imbibing facts. Its very first lessons are order and obedience, and he who cannot command these need not hope to success in minor matters. They are the foundation, without which it is impossible to rear the edifice. I give you this little lecture preparatory, that you may go to your school Monday morning decided that, first of all, you will have system and obedience; and to this subject I shall devote most of this letter.

You find your children all collected, and casting curious glances at the new teachers, for unspoiled children are adepts at reading character. Assume your place as teacher at once, quietly but firmly. I will say nothing at present of the matter of opening school, as that will come more appropriately in my next letter. Take your scholars' names in full; then their fathers' names and addresses; then the studies which each scholar desires to pursue. This may seem a small thing, but it will keep your pupils busy and curious as to what is coming next; it will impress them with the importance of their school duties, to see everything put down in black and white; and, most of all, it will give you time to overcome the nervousness natural to a new beginner, and to regain your composure and presence of mind. Remember, in the very beginning, that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," and try to make such arrangements that you may, as far as possible, preserve order without punishing. You can often tell by faces or motions of scholars where to look for mischief. Try to seat those inclining that way near you, and separated from each other.

Do not make many rules, but state clearly what your regulations are, and then *do not talk* about them. I have heard teachers begin by saying: "I have made these regulations for the good of the schools; and I am sure, if you will consider them, you will see that they are reasonable and just, and I hope that none of you will think of disobeying them." The possibility for disobedience being presented to their minds, the children immediately begin to question whether the rules are reasonable, and if they decide that they are not, they consider themselves at liberty to break them. Better simply to tell them, "you are to do thus and so," taking it for granted that it is your place to decide, and theirs to obey, and nine times out of ten they will do it without question or hesitation.