

establishments, are numerous beyond anything that would be thought of by those who have no chance to witness it. Parents and relatives, as well as the boys and young men themselves, seem to be afflicted with the same infatuation. To all such we say, that the worst advice you can give to your boy is to encourage him to be a clerk or a bookkeeper. At the best it is not a well-paid occupation. Very frequently it is among the poorest. This is the case when a clerk is fortunate enough to be employed, but if he should happen to be out of a place, then comes a weary scarcity, the fearful struggle with thousands of others looking for places; the never-ending disappointments, the hope deferred that makes the heart sick, the humiliations that take all the manhood out of poor souls, the privations of those who depend upon the earnings, and who have no resource when he is earning nothing. No father, no mother, no relative should wish to see their boys or kindred wasting their young lives in striving after the genteel positions that bring such trials and privations upon them in after life.

The Power of Attention.

In proportion to a man's power of attention will be the success with which his labor is rewarded. All commencement is difficult, and this is more especially true of intellectual effort. When we turn for the first time our view upon any given object, a hundred other things still retain possession of our thoughts. Our imagination and our memory, to which we must resort for materials with which to illustrate and enliven our new study, accord us their aid unwillingly, indeed only by compulsion. But if we are vigorous enough to pursue our course in spite of obstacles, every step as we advance will be found easier, the mind becomes more animated and energetic, the distractions gradually diminish, the attention is more exclusively concentrated upon its object, the kindred ideas flow with greater freedom and abundance, and afford an easier selection of what is suitable for illustration.

And so the difference between an ordinary mind and the mind of Newton consists principally in this, that the one is capable of a more continuous attention than the other—that a Newton is able, without fatigue, to connect inference with inference in one long series toward a determinate end; while the man of inferior capacity is soon obliged to break or let fall the thread which he has begun to spin. This is, in fact, what Sir Isaac, with equal modesty and shrewdness, himself admitted. To one who complimented him on his genius, he replied that if he had made any discoveries it was owing more to patient attention than to any other talent. Like Newton, Descartes also arrogated nothing to the force of his intellect; what he had accomplished more than other men, he attributed to the superiority of his method. Nay, genius itself has been analyzed by the shrewdest observers into a higher capacity of attention. "Genius," says Helvetius, "is nothing but a continued attention." "Genius," says Buffon, "is only a protracted patience." "In the exact sciences, at least," says Cuvier, "it is the patience of a sound intellect, when invincible, which truly constitutes genius." And Chesterfield has also observed that "the power of applying an attention, steady and undissipated, to a single object, is the sure mark of a superior genius."—*Sir William Hamilton.*

Practical.

The *Massachusetts Teacher* contains the following practical, truthful, and well put suggestions:—

"Too often is it the fact that teachers, after having acquired familiarity with certain branches of study, are content with their acquisitions. Knowing enough, in their own estimation, to carry their pupils through the course assigned, they are careless about increasing their knowledge. They cease to grow; become mere pedagogues. To this large class of teachers is justly chargeable much of the disrespect with which too many educated people regard the occupation of teaching. A teacher

ought to know all that he has occasion to teach and a great deal more. He should possess an ever-increasing store of knowledge from which he may draw at pleasure, and with which he may command the admiration of his pupils and the respect of the community.

We ought to keep ourselves well informed in regard to the various educational movements of the day, that we may have a clear understanding of their purpose, be able to judge wisely of their merits, and be ready to take advantage of such new thoughts and instrumentalities as promise to aid us in the discharge of our duties.

We ought to draw what benefit we can from new educational publications, whether in the form of text-books or of periodicals. As an intelligent mechanic is quick to adopt new and improved tools appropriate to his trade, a teacher should be ever ready to seize upon whatever good thoughts, principles, and methods have been wrought out by other educators. A new book must be poor indeed, if it contain nothing new; and single, really new and valuable thought is often worth more than the cost of a volume. A teacher needs his library of professional books just as much as a doctor, who is not a quack, needs his works on medicine; or a clergyman his works on theology and the religious discussions of the times; or a lawyer, his numerous legal commentaries and reports. It is idle to expect that the business of teaching shall hold a high place among recognized professions until teachers themselves believe, and act as if they believe, that true teaching is both a science and an art, demanding profound and long-continued study, involving principles and methods of great importance, and giving occasion for the exercise of the highest faculties and qualities of the mind and heart. So long as the mass of teachers ignore all professional reading, are content to go in the ruts which they have made or others have made for them, and depend only upon certain stereotyped ways and means, without considering the principles upon which good teaching is based, teachers generally must fail to command that respect which ought to be liberally given to those whose chief work is to develop, instruct, and adorn the intellectual and moral natures of the young."

LITERATURE.

POETRY.

THE CHILDREN.

When the lessons and tasks are all ended,
And the school for the day is dismissed
And the little ones gather around me
To bid me good night and be kissed:
O! the little white arms that encircle
My neck in a tender embrace;
O! the smiles that are halos of heaven,
Shedding sunshine of love on my face.

And when they are gone I sit dreaming
Of my childhood, too lovely to last;
Of love that my heart will remember,
While it wakes to the pulse of the past,
Ere the world and its wickedness made me
A partner of sorrow and sin;
When the Glory of God was about me,
And the glory of gladness within.

O! my heart grows weak as a woman's,
And the fountains of feeling will flow,
When I think of the paths steep and stony,
Where the feet of the dear ones must go;
Of the tempest of fate blowing wild;
O! there's nothing on earth half so holy
As the innocent heart of a child.