

are, in fact, mere shams and disguised common-places. Now I am constrained to admit that many books on education which make a great show, are made up entirely of these disguised common-places; so that it is not to be wondered at if many young teachers have attempted to study educational works, and have been as unsuccessful as though they had tried to eat sawdust. All I would say is, do not be discouraged if the first books you attempt to read prove dull. You may have hit upon a worthless book; you may too (and this is often the case) have hit on a book not by any means bad in itself, but unsuitable for you at present. I suppose it has happened to all of us—all but the very young, at all events—to open a book which once seemed meaningless, and to find that a change had taken place, and that it had become full of meaning for us. It is, therefore, very difficult to recommend books, and one should always make the reservation, "Try such and such books, and read them *if they interest you*;" for in all learning, there is much sense in Voltaire's rule, "Every way is good, except the tiresome."

But the great gain to be derived from studying good books on the theory of education is this: such study gives us an insight into the capabilities of our calling, and into the chief problems connected with it. And, by knowing what may be done and what might be found out, we get an infinite field of interests thrown open to us, and so escape from the feeling of monotony and the bondage to dull routine which is the common disease of the schoolroom.

One of the great lessons of life—a lesson so important that we are wise only so far as we have learned it—is that things are not what they seem, and that we must look, not to what is seen, but to what is not seen. And this great truth has a special application in the school-room. We all know what our work seems to us, what our pupils seem to us, when we are jaded with hours after hour of toil and worry. But if we give ourselves, as we are in duty bound, proper seasons of thought and study, we rise to a higher level, and see things very differently. In the schoolroom we have perhaps got to think of boys as the drill sergeant thinks of his recruits. The only difference he can find in them is, that some pick up the goose step much faster than others; and the only difference we can see in our pupils is, that some don't talk and know their grammar, and that others do talk and don't learn. But when we think of the things not seen, we find we have to do with much more complex beings than we supposed. The title "many-sided" is kept as a special honour for the great Goethe, and yet it might in a sense be applied to the ordinary schoolboy. The boy is a son, and on this side he has a whole world of feelings and affections connected with his home. Then, again, he is (at least I myself am inclined to believe it) a *thinking* being, who will not, indeed, think just at the time and on the subjects you desire, but who nevertheless speculates habitually about the problems of his daily life, and the characters of his superiors and associates. Then, again, he is the schoolboy proper, with his tendency to shirk his work and throw heart and soul into his play, with his proneness to bullying, deceit, and false shame, and to coarseness in thought and language. Again, he has a spiritual nature which impels him to seek improvement, and frame many an earnest prayer and good resolution. All these different and apparently conflicting characters are combined in the boy who seems to you a mere repeater of Latin grammar. If we are to be worthy of our calling then, we must look to the things that are not seen; and in doing this good books will help us.

There are a great number of interesting problems connected with education, and every teacher should be an inquirer and investigator. Books are useful here in pointing out the problems before us. To take an instance. Mr. Eve, in his excellent paper on the training of the teacher, (1) has remarked that young teachers think of accuracy, and neglect stimulus. Here is a very difficult and important problem: How are we to keep to the same ground long enough to secure accuracy, and at the time keep our pupils interested, as they are interested, by novelty?

This and many more problems are not to be settled off-hand; but books can put them before the teacher, and then leave him to investigate himself.

In conclusion, I would urge the same point I began with: avoid the descent into routine which must follow from overwork. Let the young teacher have time to make an intelligent study of his profession; let him keep his eyes and his mind open, and believe in the possibilities of his calling. School teaching certainly may be dull and monotonous; it may also afford infinite variety and life-long discovery. And this vast difference depends very much on the road in which the young teacher is started. If the young teacher is left to find the way for himself if we do nothing for him and require everything from him, he will almost inevitably settle down into the mere mechanical worker, whose real life with all its interests and pleasures has no connection with his calling. But if we give him our guidance, and still more our sympathy, when he comes fresh to his work with a belief in its possibilities, we may develop in him a spirit of enthusiasm powerful enough to resist for his whole life the stifling atmosphere of the schoolroom.—*The Educational Times*.

Hygiene.

This is a matter the importance of which is now only being comprehended, and a sufficient knowledge of it scarcely exists in the best informed authorities, to say nothing of the general public.

THE HOUSE WE LIVE IN.

This will deal with the house in which we have to live, and the various points to be attended to in its construction, and in the selection of a site. To take the latter first, it should be so situated that there is an outfall for the waste water and sewage; and it should also be exposed fairly to the sun. The necessity for the first is obvious; a word about the latter may not be out of place. The effect of cutting off the light are seen in the blanched condition of vegetables deprived of light, or even more still in the debilitated appearance of those parts of a plant which are removed from the light. What is more to the point is the effect of sunlight upon the human frame. This has been most illustratively seen in the effects upon the health of residents in different portions of the same barracks. The largest portion of ill-health was always found in those sections which were furthest removed from light and sunshine. The companies were changed back and forward, but the illness always stuck to the dark and shaded barracks. The effect of the glancing sunlight is well seen in the convalescent who seems positively to absorb strength and spirit by being bathed in the invigorating light.

(1) *Monthly Journal of Education*, Sept. 1875.