

But since the time the tortoise reached the goal before the hare, real progress has been slow. By a law of nature, that which *lasts* matures slowly. Mushrooms spring up in a night, but they die as soon. The annual plant buds, blooms, and produces fruit the first summer, but the early frost kills it.

Though "tall oaks from little acorns grow," they require a century to reach perfection. The dew, the rain, the sunshine, and all the agencies of growth, can produce but one layer of the wood in a season; but that layer is composed of materials so firm and so compactly arranged, that they long resist the power of decay.

Mental development is the growth of time, and mental power the result of long training and action. A teacher once told a *primer* there was "no royal road to geometry;" and there is, as yet, no railway up the Hill of Science. There are improvements in the methods of teaching, and the teacher should avail himself of every aid; but "learning made easy" will make no intellectual giants. He who learns algebra with a "Key," and "Greak in six lessons without a master," will be an ephemeral scholar. Mental strength comes from grappling with difficulties, from the trial of severe study, and the triumph of long application. Some of the greatest men the world has known, showed no peculiar talent when boys. Walter Scott was said by his teacher to have the "thickest skull in school." It is said that Barrow, the greatest scholar of his age, was pronounced a blockhead by successive teachers; and his illustrious pupil, Newton, had been declared fit for nothing but to drive a team. Thackeray, a bright literary star that has just passed from our field of vision, was in school "distinguished for nothing in particular." It is related of Story, the eminent jurist, that when he undertook to read Coke on Littleton, and "strove in vain to pore his weary way through its rugged page, he was filled with despair. The tears poured from his eyes upon the open book. Those tears were his precious baptism into the learning of the law. From that time forth he persevered with confirmed ardour, and confidence." Daniel Webster could not *declaim* in school. He says, "I believe I made tolerable progress in most branches, but there was one thing I could not do. I could not speak before the school. Many a piece did I commit to memory, and recite and rehearse in my own room over and over again; yet when the day came, when the school collected to hear declamations, when my name was called, and I saw all eyes turned to my seat, I could not raise myself from it. Sometimes the instructors frowned, sometimes they smiled. The kind and excellent Buckminster always pressed and entreated most winningly that I would venture, but I could never command sufficient resolution." Webster became the unrivalled orator only by determined will and frequent trial.

From such instances the faithful teacher may learn never to be disheartened. Labouring earnestly, he must wait patiently for results. Schiller says, "Give the world under your influence a *direction* towards the good, and the tranquil rhythm of time will bring its development."—M. M. F. in *Iowa School Journal*.

### 3. VACATION.

Ho! for vacation, for the glad time of re-unions and rest, of laughing and laziness, of lying on the grass in the cool shade, with nothing to do but *dream*, and *read*, and listen to the pleasant voices which have been silent to us so long.

God bless the man who invented vacations.

Every body needs a vacation now and then.

Professional men, mechanics, merchants, house keepers, sewing-women, students, and workers of all kinds. The wear and tear of business, year after year, are too severe for most organizations; and unbroken routine where the labor is not severe, coils like an anacanda around the spirits and the life.

Custom has shewn one favor to teachers which it has denied to most men of business—it has granted them vacations.

This seems an absolute necessity. A teacher, working earnestly even six hours a day, and keeping up his labor year after year, would find himself exhausted even to perfect prostration much sooner than men of any other business. Teaching is more than unrelaxed toil—it is more than the unbroken routine of the book-keeper or the compositor—it is giving away life and vitality, and there must be times for recuperation.

Few people understand this who have not taught, or had friends teaching whom they have seen grow pale and careworn and sick even beyond recovery.

A gentleman of considerable intelligence once asked me why I had such long vacations—wasn't it better to keep the children in school constantly? (probably his children were a care and a trouble at home during vacation). I told him even if it were better for the children I did not wish to murder myself. He expressed considerable astonishment when I informed him that teaching was hard work. He had always supposed it was a genteel, easy, pleasant way of passing

the time, embraced by those who needed money, and were too lazy or too proud to work.

Pupils as well as teachers need vacations; not little children, but pupils who have learned what it is to study, who devote several hours out of school each day to their books. They need a spell of forgetfulness, a time for romping and rambling and visiting. Then they return to their books with greater zest, with fresh elasticity of spirits, and more strength to bear them through their duties.

Vacation time is at hand. In a few weeks how many school rooms will be filled with gloomy silence and how many hearts will be leaping with the joy of freedom.

A school room in vacation time is as sombre a thing as one can imagine. It is shadowy and dingy and full of lonesome silence. Its reticence seems stubborn and almost ominous.

It would seem to hint at many secrets which had weighed it down but which it will never utter. Sometimes if you visit it with merry friends, it seems to have drawn down the corners of its mouth in sullen gloom, and hollowed its cheeks and closed its eyes to a long mournful meditation. Your gay friends laugh, and you could almost laugh too at its solemn air, but when they leave you alone and you remember how it has held so many sunny faces, and listened to so many kind words and grand thoughts, and been the altar of so many sacrifices, and the sanctuary for such aspirations and worships—when you remember how tenderly it has answered the laugh of fresh and happy voices, and is now silent and sad, waiting for the dear ones to return, you can laugh no more, but look tenderly upon it as a shrine—a sanctuary.

Pupils and teachers are away, scattered, gone to their homes or on visits to friends.

Vacation is the grand visiting time of the year. Homes receive the dear ones who have been absent a term or a year, and many who have been at home in school flit away among friends, and there is a jubilee of visiting and recreating.

We date events from vacations. They are the mile stones on our journey.

These vacation times in life are the oases to which memory forever reverts. But in our happiness we should not forget those to whom life grants no vacation, who must toil incessantly lest wolfish eyes gleam in at the door. But for such, and for us all, a long summer vacation will come when we shall have left the hard toil of hands and the fear of the gleaming eyes, the blackboards and grammars, the worry and the work of the school and the world forever.—H. M. P. J. in *N. Y. Teacher*.

## V. Papers on Education in England.

### 1. EDUCATION IN ENGLAND, 1863-4.

The Parliamentary "Blue-book" on the state of education in England, just published, contains some interesting statements. It appears from the general report that the inspectors, in the year 1863-4, visited 11,230 daily schools, or departments of such schools under separate teachers. They found present in them 1,092,741 children, 9,481 certified teachers, and 13,849 apprentices. Of the schools or departments, 2,549 were for boys only, 2,357 for girls only; in 4,431 boys and girls were instructed together; 1,690 were confined to infants (children under seven years of age); and 284 to night scholars. Of the children 600,075 were males and 492,666 were females. The female scholars were 45.08 per cent. of the whole number, which is the highest per centage yet reached. The difference of the per centage of female scholars is explained by the demands of a poor man's home upon the services of his daughters, particularly as the nurses of younger children, from a very early age.

The inspectors also visited 40 separate training colleges, occupied by 3,109 students, in preparation for the office of schoolmaster or schoolmistress. In December last these students and 2,122 other candidates were examined for the end of the first or the second year of their training, or for admission, or for certificates as acting teachers. The inspectors also visited 179 schools for pauper children, containing 12,455 inmates, and 26 industrial schools, containing 2,159 inmates.

During the year 1863, as compared with 1862, the number of schools or of departments of schools under separate teachers which were actually inspected was increased by 312, and the number of children by 35,315. The number of certified teachers was increased by 503. The number of new schools built was 125, comprising, besides class rooms, 191 principal school rooms, and 82 dwellings for teachers; 50 other schools were enlarged, improved, or furnished afresh; accommodation was created for 27,098 children, exclusive of the schools improved or newly furnished, but not enlarged.