

Liberal Education." That phrase calls up in many of your minds a wide field of knowledge in which the classics occupy a prominent place. I do not mean that. A "liberally educated man," says President Gilman, of Johns Hopkins, "should possess the following intellectual powers :

- (1) Concentration : Ability to hold the mind exclusively and persistently on the subject under attention.
- (2) Distribution : Power to arrange and classify the knowledge acquired.
- (3) Retention.
- (4) Expression.
- (5) The power of judging, or of making sharp discrimination between that which is true and that which is false, between that which is good and that which is bad, that which is temporary and that which is perpetual, that which is essential and that which is accidental.

These powers cannot be given to a student in any degree of perfection while he is in the common school. Certainly not, nor does any man out of school have them all perfectly developed. This fact remains, nevertheless: should a student fail to develop these powers to any degree when at school, he will never develop them afterwards.

Add to these intellectual powers the power of self-control, and you have before you what should be the first aim of every teacher.

These powers are to be developed through the subjects in the course of study.

The committee of ten recommend that every subject taught at all, should be taught to the same extent and in the same way to every pupil, no matter what the probable destination of the pupil may be. And every subject studied at all, must be studied so thoroughly and in such a way, as to provide substantial mental training. The first part of the recommendation is clearly sound, and upon a little observation you will all agree with the last part. The mere smattering of any subject is of no practical use, and would rather allow the formation of bad habits of study, than compel the formation of good ones.

Again, those subjects that are likely to be of most use in life should be chosen in preference to those which are purely disciplinary, provided each gives the same amount of mental training.

While the first aim is to develop power in the student, as many useful facts must be given as is possible while inducing this mental development. Not only is knowledge of the world necessary that this ideally strong man may be produced, but of itself it is of great importance. In fact it is that a man may discover truth,

classify and retain it, and be able to understand his relation to the world and to men around him, that it is so necessary to have these powers. If, on leaving school, he were to cease acquiring knowledge, then the imparting of facts would be the first aim of the teacher. One hundred years at school would not give a child all the facts that are to be learned; so it becomes the teacher's duty to develop in the student power, and give the largest number of facts possible while developing that power.

A student generally forms those inclinations at school that lead to the choice of a profession. This is one reason why the course of study should be wide. Not wide that each student may gain an insight into those things which will be of use to him professionally at some later time, but for this reason: Knowledge of anything tends to create an interest in that thing, and the wider a man's interests the wider his sympathies, and in those many more points is he in touch with the world. A lady said the other day, "Oh, I am reading all about bicycles," a friend asked her where she found anything on the subject. The reply was, "Why, every paper I pick up seems to have something about them." You have all noticed this; when an interest is awakened in any subject, articles on that subject catch your eye that would have been passed over unnoticed before.

Again, the aim is to develop power. Power developed in algebra is power, but it is not directly available in solving the problems at issue in the late general election. Power developed in the study of political economy would have been of more immediate value. Power developed in algebra would be of more use in other mathematical subjects than that developed in the study of political economy.

What is the natural relation of the subjects? They are generally divided into three classes:

1. The symbolic subjects: those which are necessary in order that one may learn of others—reading, writing spelling, numbers, grammar and formal composition.
2. The content subjects, in which the facts themselves are important—history, geography, literature and the natural sciences.
3. Those subjects which are for the training of the body—physical exercise and the different lines of manual training.

As can readily be seen this classification has no reference whatever to the kind of mental training the subjects afford. The second list contains the material on which the first has to work. Number, for instance, is of itself of no use in practical life. But whenever something is learned of the trees or animals or men around us, or of time and space, number becomes in-