

Commercial Training at C. C. I.

An interesting Article Dealing With this Important Branch of Collegiate Work—What is Being Done in Chatham.

The long establishment and wide success of our local Business College have brought the subject of Commercial training more or less generally to the knowledge of the residents of Chatham and the County of Kent, but the Commercial Course now carried on in the Collegiate Institute is, perhaps not so familiar. It may be interesting, therefore, to our readers to learn something about the aims and the work of this department.

There are at present four courses open to the student in the local Collegiate, the first leading to University Matriculation, the second to the Profession of Teaching, a third to Commercial Life and a fourth, general training. There are no fast dividing lines between these various courses and it is in the best interests of Education that the work should overlap.

Inspector Hodgson at his last inspection of the Collegiate expressed his full sympathy with the Commercial Course, but his opinion was qualified by the remark that the course should be made educational in the true sense of the word. With this view those engaged in the work are fully in accord. It is impossible to infer from the mere title of a subject whether it is educational or not. Any subject, including the best on the curriculum, may be taught in such a manner as to destroy the aims of education. If the true aim of education is kept in view, at the same time with the practical, there is no reason why the subjects of shorthand and bookkeeping should not be thoroughly educational. This idea is gaining ground in countries most advanced in education, whether in Europe or America. The following quotation from Pitman's Manual sets forth fairly well the advantages of Shorthand:

"A practical acquaintance with this art is highly favorable to the improvement of the mind, invigorating all its faculties and drawing forth all its resources. The close attention requisite in following the voice of the speaker induces habits of patience, perseverance and watchfulness which will gradually extend themselves to other pursuits and cause the writer to exercise them on every occasion in life. When writing in public, it will also be absolutely necessary to distinguish and adhere to the train of thought which runs through the discourse and to observe the modes of its connection. This will naturally have a tendency to endue the mind with quickness of apprehension and will impart an habitual readiness and distinction of perception as well as a methodical simplicity of arrangement, which cannot fail to conduce greatly to mental superiority. The judgment will be strengthened and the taste refined. The memory is also improved by the practice of Stenography. The obligation the writer is under to retain in his mind the last sentence of the speaker at the same time that he is carefully attending to the following one must be highly beneficial to that faculty, which more than any other owes its improvement to exercise."

Special attention is given to the subject in the Commercial Department. The aim has been to make the students accurate in everything else. Speed has been encouraged in the junior division beyond sixty words a minute. The facility and accuracy with which many of the pupils can read notes written at this rate fully justifies the course taken. To gain a thorough knowledge of the

beauties of the subject a large amount of reading practice in shorthand is also essential and to meet this demand a small grant from the Trustee Board was obtained this year and the nucleus of a good library has been established. The books include Robinson Crusoe, Tom Brown's School Days, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, Self-Culture and other popular works. Two weekly periodicals are on file also—Pitman's Phonetic Journal and Pitman's Shorthand Weekly. Industrious pupils will read fully 2,000 pages of Shorthand matter in a year and thus lay the foundation for expert work later if they choose.

We may here call attention to another important feature—the necessity of a good English training as a basis of success in shorthand. Realizing this, the principal has made it obligatory for pupils desiring to follow the Commercial Course, to spend one year in the Junior Form before proceeding to Commercial Work. Nor is this all, since the English subjects receive nearly as much attention in the Commercial Form proper as do the special subjects, English Literature and Supplementary Reading, Grammar and Composition are taught by Specialists. The ambitious pupils also supplement these subjects by taking French and German and a good general course is encouraged.

In connection with Shorthand a department of typewriting has been introduced and to-day there are seven machines of the Remington, Smith-Fremmer and Underwood types. The popularity of this work furnishes a good illustration of the desire for manual training of some sort. Pupils acquire a dexterity at this which only diligent and persistent practice can attain. The attention of the student also is directed to the care of the machine; cleaning, oiling and the names of the parts being taught by practical lessons. During this year in spite of the continued and somewhat hard usage, which is unavoidable with beginners, nothing has been spent on repairs, and the machines are in fair shape for another year's work. For the use of the machines a small special fee is charged which about makes the Department self-sustaining.

Book-keeping and its correlative subjects, arithmetic, penmanship and business forms and usages also receive special attention. In the Business College the Business Course is separated from the Stenography Course and properly so on account of the specializing and the short time generally at the disposal of the pupil, but in the Collegiate, where the time to spend at the work the two courses are pursued side by side. Arithmetic in the lower forms is taught more with the idea of developing correct habits of thought than with the idea of gaining special knowledge of intricate commercial questions. In the Commercial Form more stress is laid upon speed and business practice. A good deal of practice in Penmanship is given in the way of transcribing shorthand notes; legibility and speed rather than ornament being sought after. Business Forms are taught in connection with penmanship and business usages are taught, not with an idea of teaching the pupil to dabble in law, but rather to show the importance of the "law merchant" in business affairs. The attention of the pupil is directed to the existence of such fundamental ideas as those contained in the main clauses of "The Statute of Frauds and Perjuries," "The Statute of Limitations," and "The Bills of Exchange Act." Special practice is given in copying deeds, mortgages, contracts, etc., on the typewriter more to make the pupil acquainted with the spelling and the meaning of common terms likely to be used than anything else.

Since 1897 the Education Department has held a special examination annually in Commercial Work. This examination has been divided into two sections—one part identical with part one of Junior Matriculation and including papers on English, Geography, History and Arithmetic, and the other part on Stenography, theory and practice, Book-keeping and Business Forms and Usages. That a high standard has been set up is shown by the fact that the percentage of failures is fully as large, if not larger, than in the other departments. Under the proposed new regulations this examination will be discontinued and each Collegiate will set its own standard. This arrangement will have many advantages, and although it is early yet to say just what standard will be set up in our local institute, it is certain that nothing but thorough and efficient work on the part of the student will be recognized by a diploma. It is believed in this way that the graduates of this department will stand as high in the estimation of the business public as those of any other school teaching the work. The difficulty sometimes experienced here, as elsewhere, is in the fact that pupils who have not completed the course seek positions which they cannot successfully hope to fill, thus injuring the reputation of their school and the chances of their fellow-pupils. While it is not the purpose of the school to find positions for graduates, the principal and the commercial master are always glad to recommend competent help to business men looking for the services of stenographers or other assistants.

The prospects for next year indicate that a large class will take up the work and every effort will be made to give those attending the best course the present facilities and arrangements permit. In this article only a very general outline of the work has been attempted, but fuller information on any point can be obtained on application to the Principal or Commercial Master of the School.

MICKEY WALTERS AND THE LADY

By WILLIAM H. OSBORNE

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Two hundred dollars reward for return of gold watch stolen from elderly lady between Cliff street and Parker avenue. No questions asked. Apply 1032 Parker avenue, city.

"Gee!" said Mr. Mickey Walters to himself as he read and reread the above advertisement in the Record, "this here super must be a prize for fair." Reaching into the depths of his trousers pocket, he brought forth a rich and much bejeweled timepiece and regarded it with reverential awe. "It's a beauty," continued Mr. Walters, with a sigh. "But if she ain't gone an' put her blamed initials in a dozen places, an' cut deep too. There ain't a fence in the place'd handle the d-d-gasted thing." He once more perused the interesting offer. "Well," he went on, "it's the only thing left to do, I reckon, an' I'll bet dollars to doughnuts it's genuine an' safe. She's such an innocent old party, an' she never saw me do it either. Two hundred plunks ain't bad—more'n Schwarz'd ever pay too."

He rose and carefully surveyed his features in a glass. Then he caught up a brush and mug and carefully lathered his upper lip. In five minutes he had transformed himself from a twenty-eight-year-old man to an eighteen-year-old boy. His real age was always a matter of conjecture, and his youthful appearance had invariably been his strongest card, one that he had always saved until the last and then played with telling effect.

All that day an aged lady sat in a window at 1032 Parker avenue. She had long white curls which shook with each movement of her head. Her face had become weakened with age, but there still shone a kindly light in her sparkling blue eyes. The doorbell rang, and a man in livery appeared.



ALLOW ME TO PRESENT THE SLOKEST PICKPOCKET IN THREE STATES.

He announced the presence of a man below. The old lady directed that he be shown up.

The old lady started slightly when a slender, fair haired youth entered—a youth with a frank and honest face. The youth himself was nervous, just a bit, as he pulled from his pocket a crumpled piece of paper.

"Is this here straight goods, lady?" he inquired in a pleasant voice. "'Cause I ain't done nothin' wrong myself, an' it wouldn't be right to mix me up in anything when I'm only tryin' to do you a favor. Is it straight goods?" She nodded.

"An'," he continued, "d'you mean that you'll give \$200 for your watch, an' no questions asked? Is that right?" Again she nodded. "That is right," she replied in a mild, quavering voice. "If my watch is returned, I will gladly pay the money." As she spoke she took from her purse a few crisp bills. Mickey Walters hesitated for a moment and then pulled out the watch.

"Is that yours, missis?" he asked. The old lady's eyes sparkled with delight as they beheld her treasured timepiece. She stretched forth both hands, one to deliver the money, the other to receive the watch. "I am glad—so glad—to get it back!" she exclaimed gratefully. Mickey Walters stood on one foot and counted the money.

"Gee!" he said to himself as he did so. "Gee! But she's an easy old party! Under ordinary circumstances at this juncture he would have discreetly retired, but his interested glance, roving around the room, had lighted upon several articles of vertu on the table at his side. These articles were marketable either in their present form or melted up. Two hundred dollars is a good find, but there's no use of flinging away good chances besides; at least so thought Mickey. So he executed a sort of flank movement which placed him squarely in front of the coveted objects.

"Well, ma'am," he said as his hand stole around and deposited a solid gold salver in his trousers pocket, "this here paper says no questions 'll be asked. That's right, too, but I want to say to

you that I ain't got nothin' to do with this here thing. My old man took it off you, an' I took it off him an' brought it here. I wouldn't take your two hundred only I want to live straight an' honest." His voice quivered as he went on, and he pocketed a gold pen. "P'raps 'tain't right f'r me to give the old man away. I don't want to get him into trouble, but you won't never find out who he is"—a fact which Mickey himself had never found out either.

The old lady nodded sympathetically. At that instant Mickey made away with a gold and jeweled paper knife. "Well, now, ma'am," he continued, a sudden idea striking him, "I must be goin', but I'd like to know one thing. Do you mind tellin' just how this watch was took off you?" The old lady explained how she thought it had been done. Mickey shook his head deprecatingly.

"The old man's a slick one, missis," he returned. Suddenly his glance became fixed upon some object across the way. The old lady, seeing this, also turned her head. At that instant Mickey Walters leaned forward. The next instant the treasured timepiece was nestling snugly in his vest pocket. "Gee, but this is easy!" repeated Mickey to himself as he started off, but the old lady placed a detaining hand upon his arm.

"I want to get you a book," she said kindly, "that will help you to live an honest life. Wait till I return." She hastened out, shutting the door behind her.

"Blame her," said Mickey, "she'll find that watch gone now." It was dangerous, but Mickey was prepared for it. He placed the watch on the window sill, where, if she missed it, she could easily find it, and if she did not he could easily get it again.

"There," exclaimed the old lady, bustling into the room, "is the small book of which I spoke!" Mickey watched her smile. He saw that all was right, so he took possession of the watch once more. The old lady touched him on the arm. "Now, whatever you do, be honest, always honest, Mickey Walters."

Mickey started at the sound of his own name, but the old lady kept on shaking her curls, and shook them so hard that a funny thing happened—they came off—and they left behind only a round pate covered with short hair and the weakened features of Mr. "Sneakers" Kelly, the crack detective of the Central office. He coughed. A blue coated figure appeared at the door.

"Captain," exclaimed Mr. "Sneakers" Kelly, "allow me to present the slickest pickpocket in three states. Captain Burke, Mr. Mickey Walters. Better search him right here, cap. You'll find a gold card tray on him an' a paper cutter an' a pen an' a couple of them there small tin bottles an' a brace of candlesticks from the mantel, an' he's got that there watch, too, an' what's more, he's got two hundred plunks that belongs to me. An', Mickey," he concluded, "it's more than I can afford, an' that's what."

"Dad fetch the luck!" complained Mr. Walters severely. "An' I wanted to go fishin' tomorrow too!"

"Fishin'!" exclaimed the captain. "That's good. I'd like to go myself, but I don't know, Kelly, but that you can say we've been. By the way, Mickey," he inquired, "how much d'you weigh?" "Bout a hundred an' thirty," replied Mickey.

The captain stepped forward. "Say," he inquired of the culprit, "would you mind our sayin' down there now that it's a hundred an' seventy-five? My sergeant's a fisherman, an' weight al-lus counts with him."

When they reached the street, the detective suddenly halted. "Why, Mickey," he exclaimed, "if you ain't gone an' forgot that there book I gave you after all."

Rewards of Honesty. "Yes," said the bald man with the shifty eye, "I tried honesty once, though you might not think it. I was naught but a kid at the time, when one day I happened to see an old swell drop a sixpence. Having been plumped up about honesty, I picked it up and gave it back to him. He was a man who appreciated virtue and told me I was a good boy and should grow up to be a millionaire if I washed me neck regular and wore flannel next the skin, and he gimme a shilling."

"I thought I'd found a paying game, and so a little while later I run up to an old lady with the shilling and says, 'Please, mum, you dropped this, and I am a honest boy,' thinking, of course, that she would give me 2 shillings and a moral lesson, as she ought to have done by rights."

"But she didn't. Will you believe me, mates, she just put that shilling in her pocket and says: 'Thank you, little boy. Here's a peppermint for your honesty.'"—London Answers.

Women and the Mouse. Once upon a time a number of dignified women were holding an orderly meeting in the interest of universal peace and were listening to very interesting speeches on the matter.

The conclusion was reached that there was no sufficient reason why peace should not prevail throughout the world and war and rebellion be entirely unknown. To this end it was considered only necessary that governments should be just to their subjects and to each other and that under the guidance of high reason all undue excitement that might lead to unrest should be avoided.

When this conclusion was reached, a frightened mouse ran across the floor, with the result that the women all jumped to their feet, screaming in a very high key and climbing on to chairs, clutching their skirts in a frantic manner.

Moral.—A very small thing may cause an uprising.—New York Herald.

Native Trees and Wild Fruits

Judge Bell Gives Some Interesting Information in Regard to Both—The Papaw of the Southern States Fruits in McGarvin's Woods.

It is an undisputed fact that very few persons living in Chatham know the native trees of Western Ontario and yet it isn't so very long ago that all the country round was covered with trees before the despoiling hand of the settler levelled the forests to provide fields for his crops. Few representatives of the natural product of the soil are left now when compared with the blanket of trees and foliage that covered this country in the days that have passed. Western Ontario being situated in so mild a climate had perhaps a greater variety of trees and shrubs than any other place in Canada. But time and the necessity of the settler have destroyed the forest growth and many kinds of trees common in this country a quarter of a century ago have all but disappeared. It would be interesting to have an account of the different trees and shrubs, indigenous to Kent, but it is only occasionally among the older men that anyone is found who took sufficient interest in nature to make a study of the forest growth.

Judge Bell, perhaps, has a better general knowledge of the wild fruits and the different trees and shrubs of Western Ontario than any other resident of this city. "It is not generally known," remarked Judge Bell, chatting in the corridors of Harrison Hall, "that the papaw of the Southern States grows in Kent County. I had often seen the papaw growing by the roadside but it was some time before even I learned that they fruited in this country as, on the road-side, they never attain a height much above six feet. In McGarvin's woods, however, the papaw grows 20 feet high and bears fruit. Perhaps many have seen the papaw."

There is any quantity of them growing on the road to Dresden near Vickery Shaw's place. The papaw is the favorite fruit of the colored man of the South. It most resembles the banana in appearance and taste; is about six inches in circumference and contains black seeds. It is sweeter in flavor and more luscious than the banana.

How many people are aware that the Mulberry grew in Kent County? There used to be a tree on the Eberts farm, North Chatham. Henry Eberts told me that the tree was a native and he had seen several in the County. The roots are long and stringy and the farmers used to utilize them for tying bags. The fruit is black and resembles the blackberry.

The Kentucky coffee tree grows on Piles Island. This island is the most southerly point in Canada and the only place where the southern coffee tree grows. The tree produces a berry resembling the coffee berry. Ask the average man how many kinds of maple trees there are and he will say two—hard and soft. The average man is right for there are these two general kinds, but there are a number of varieties of each kind. There is a maple tree in front of the Theodore Nelson property on Stanley avenue that differs both in leaf and bark from the other maple trees on the same street. Examine it when you pass that way. When a boy I often used to notice black barked maples that grew on my father's farm in Middlesex County, but I have never seen any of them in this County. When tapped the sap used to just almost spout out. There are several other varieties of the maple, including the curly maple and the bird's eye maple.

The study of the tree and plant life of this County is very interesting, and a summer could be both profitably and pleasantly spent visiting the various points in the County where specimens of trees and shrubs now almost extinct are still preserved."

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