

and Catholic children to St. Patrick's Home. These institutions are doing good work but they are not in all respects suitable places for children whose only offence may be perhaps a constitutional dislike for the confinement of the schoolroom. Consequently the law is not enforced as strictly as it would be if there were proper parental schools provided by the government,—such schools for truants as we find in England and in Massachusetts. The commissioners select for prosecution only the most conspicuous examples of youthful depravity. Every month or oftener some of these are sentenced by the stipendiary. Their fate serves as a warning to others who are inclined to neglect school, and the result is decidedly beneficial.

The school board employs a truant officer, to whom it pays \$500.00 a year. He assists at the prosecutions, takes a yearly census of the children of school age during the months of July and August. During the rest of his time he is occupied in visiting the homes of truants, or of those likely to become truants. He advises careless parents, explains the law to them, and ascertains the genuineness of their excuses. All this helps to keep parents alive to the necessity of having their children decently educated.

One of the most useful provisions of the law is that which compels all children from fourteen to sixteen years of age to attend school, unless they are at work. Idle boys of this age soon form habits that lead them to become the city toughs a few years later. Another excellent provision is that by which children under fourteen are not allowed to work in factories.

The school board has shown great judgment and tenderness in dealing with any cases where the carrying out of the law might work more injury than good. Indeed it may be truly said that as yet there has been no case in which even the convicted parties felt that an injustice had been done to them.

### The Study of History.

History has become discredited as a school study. Although once it played the title role in the educational drama, it has been relegated to the background, and now plays a very subordinate part. There are several reasons for this. It has shared in the neglect shown generally to the humanities. Science has directed the attention of thinkers to man's environment rather than to his mental and moral endowments, to the objective rather than the subjective; and since educational methods and aims must conform to the spirit of the times, more stress has been laid on the natural sciences,

and of necessity less on the other subjects of the curriculum. History, also, has become discredited as a subject of study, because the modern principles of teaching cannot readily be applied to it. Observation and experience are not of the same value as in other studies. There is too much memory work to suit modern ideas of what education should be. Moreover, absolute accuracy is impossible in treating many periods of history, and too many opportunities are given for the special pleader.

But if the study of history has been neglected, it is not from any defect in the subject-matter, but because of the methods adopted in teaching it; and there are several reasons why it still deserves a place on the school curriculum. It shares with literature in developing the imagination. Abnormally active in early life, this faculty has become largely dormant before the school life is completed. Yet it is one of the creative faculties, and its absence means a lack of originality and a bar to progress. History would provide a field in which this faculty might be exercised and developed both in its constructive and its reproductive phase.

History also provides a means of training the judgment and developing the reasoning powers. The mathematics give a training in pure reasoning, but are not sufficient guides for what we might call practical reasoning. Logic and life do not always agree. History, properly studied, exercises the judgment on matters of character, conduct, social and political affairs, resembling those which will occupy the student's serious attention in after life.

Again, history should be studied because it is one of the highest of sciences, the science of conduct, of the relations of man to man when gathered into communities and nations. The natural sciences teach us how to conduct ourselves with reference to our surroundings, so that we may make the best of our physical life, live long, be healthy, happy and successful. History would teach us how to conduct ourselves with reference to other human beings, so that all might work together for the best good of all. Science emphasizes the selfish, individual tendencies of our nature. History would develop the altruistic and co-operative tendencies.

History is valuable for the training it provides in citizenship and for developing patriotism. It also provides an antidote to the narrowing tendencies of our present day employments. Whether for good or ill, we are losing the broad, general culture that used to be one of the products of education. The study of former times and of other peoples would do much to make us broad-minded and liberal in our views, and remove the class and race jealousies and the prejudices which are such a bar to progress in the present day.