

superstition which worships the symbols of apprenticeship is needful. Is it, then, that the knowledge instead of the knowledge itself, they do not see that only when his acquaintance with the objects and processes of the household, the streets and the fields is becoming tolerably exhaustive—only then should a child be introduced to the new sources of information which books supply: and this, not only because immediate cognition is of far greater value than mediate cognition, but also because the words contained in books can be rightly interpreted into ideas only in proportion to the antecedent experience of things. Observe next, that this formal instruction, far too soon commenced, is carried on with but little reference to the laws of mental development. Intellectual progress is of necessity from the concrete to the abstract. But, regardless of this, highly abstract subjects, such as grammar, which should come quite late, are begun quite early. Political geography, dead and uninteresting to a child, and which should be an appendage of sociological studies, is commenced betimes, while physical geography, comprehensible and comparatively attractive to a child, is in great part passed over. Nearly every subject dealt with is arranged in abnormal order: definitions and rules and principles being put first, instead of being disclosed as they are in the order of nature, through the study of cases. And then, pervading the whole is the vicious system of rote learning—a system of sacrificing the spirit to the letter. See the results. What with perceptions unnaturally dulled by early thwarting, and a coerced attention to books; what with the mental confusion produced by teaching subjects before they can be understood, and in each of them giving generalizations before the facts of which these are the generalizations; what with making the pupil a mere passive recipient of others' ideas, and not in the least leading him to be an active inquirer or self-instructor; and what with taxing the faculties to excess, there are very few minds that become as efficient as they might be. Examinations being once passed, books are laid aside; the greater part of what has been acquired, being unorganized, soon drops out of recollection; what remains is mostly inert—the art of applying knowledge not having been cultivated—and there is but little power either of accurate observation or independent thinking. To all which add, that while much of the information gained is of relatively small value, an immense mass of information of transcendent value is entirely passed over.

Thus we find the facts to be such as might have been inferred *a priori*. The training of children—physical, moral and intellectual—is dreadfully defective. And in great measure it is so because parents are devoid of that knowledge by which this training can alone be rightly guided. What is to be expected when one of the most intricate of problems is undertaken by those who have given scarcely a thought to the principles on which its solution depends? For shoe-making or house-building, for the management of a ship or a locomotive-engine a long

preparation whatever? If not—if the process is with one exception more complex than any in nature, and the task of administering to it one of surpassing difficulty—is it not madness to make no provision for such a task? Better sacrifice accomplishments than omit this all-essential instruction. When a father, acting on false dogmas adopted without examination, has alienated his sons, driven them into rebellion by his harsh treatment, ruined them, and made himself miserable, he might reflect that the study of Ethology would have been worth pursuing, even at the cost of knowing nothing about Æschylus. When a mother is mourning over a first-born that has sunk under the sequelæ of scarlet fever—when perhaps a candid medical man has confirmed her suspicion that her child would have recovered had not its system been enfeebled by over-study—when she is prostrate under the pangs of combined grief and remorse, it is but a small consolation that she can read Dante in the original.

Thus we see that for regulating the third great division of human activities a knowledge of the laws of life is the one thing needful. Some acquaintance with the first principles of physiology and the elementary truths of psychology is indispensable for the right bringing up of children. We doubt not that this assertion will by many be read with a smile. That parents in general should be expected to acquire a knowledge of subjects so abstruse will seem to them an absurdity. And if we proposed that an exhaustive knowledge of these subjects should be obtained by all fathers and mothers, the absurdity would indeed be glaring enough. But we do not. General principles only, accompanied by such detailed illustrations as may be needed to make them understood, would suffice. And these might be readily taught—if not rationally, then dogmatically. Be this as it may, however, here are the indisputable facts: that the development of children in mind and body rigorously obeys certain laws; that unless these laws are in some degree conformed to by parents death is inevitable; that unless they are in a great degree conformed to there must result serious physical and mental defects; and that only when they are completely conformed to can a perfect maturity be reached. Judge, then, whether all who may one day be parents should not strive with some anxiety to learn what these laws are.

To be Continued.

Florence Marryat has a new lecture on "What Shall We Do with the Men?" Leave them alone, Florence; that's the way. Let all the women go to heaven, where they belong, and leave the earth entirely to the men, who want it all to themselves.

Three Georgia weekly newspapers are edited by women.

"THOS."

CHAPTER XVIII.

It is Christmas morning, calm and clear, the beautiful fresh-fallen snow covers the ground like the pure mantle of charity, which should this morning envelope our hearts.

The house resounds with the happy voices of children, for Santa Claus has brought many wonderful treasures.

"Oh, yes; a merry Christmas surely, when we are all spared to see it," said Grandmamma, after we had exchanged greetings, and taken our places at the breakfast table.

"What a pity Tom could not get away," said I.

"Yes, we should be jollier if he were here," said Len.

"I think my 'man swallowing the goose' is nicer than Tommy's soldiers," remarked Charlie.

"No, me sholders am nicer," cried Tommy.

"No, they nar not," replied Charlie.

"Yes, I say *dey am nicer*," shouted Tommy, who still inclined to assert himself.

"You are surely not going to quarrel on Christmas, children," said I.

"Who can that be ringing the bell so early?" exclaimed Len, and then the dining-room door opened.

"Why, Thos!"—"Uncle Tom!"—"Onkey Tom!"—"Merry Christmas!"—"So glad you've come!"

"There, have I kissed everybody? Hallo! has the baby been promoted to the breakfast table?"

"Only for to-day, Tom. How long can you stay?"

"Can't say just yet," replied Tom, "I guess I have some things in my trunk for you boys. I met an old gentleman on the cars named Santa Claus."

"Why he has been here!" cried Charlie.

"Dess, tummed down timney, binged lots of sings," added Tommy.

"You don't say so. He got here before me after all. Well, he sent some things by me also."

"We are to have a little dinner to-night, Tom," said I. "You will see some friends."

"Yes, who's coming?"

"Say 'who are' coming," said Len. "We shall have more than one, although you may be interested in one only."

"Don't be so smart," said Tom flushing, but looking very happy.

"You have had Miss Latour in Toronto again, I believe," said I.

"Yes, she was up for a month. Florrie had them over to dinner very often, and as Mrs. Moir was away part of the time, I had the pleasure of escorting them to evening entertainments. But there was another conceited ass of a fellow—"

"Another one!" exclaimed Len.

"Oh, bother, I didn't mean that. This fellow was awfully conceited, but I took him down once. He is a little bit of a fellow, very rich,