

should embark in it to be lifted into a more genteel and intellectual circle. Its successful prosecution preeminently demands a constitutional fondness for instruction, a natural or acquired tact at governing and stimulating mind. It affords fine opportunity of usefulness to such. But to undertake its tasks just to be 'a master,' and to be thought literary, is a very unworthy mark of attainment."

ART AND ARCHITECTURE.

"A few branches of artistic culture, as music, painting, designing, require a gradually increasing supply of pupils; but these are rather the side dishes than the substantial fare of life. Nor are they, in their best estates, very promising ways of sustenance, that too many of our boys should be devoted to their pursuits. It will do for some of them to drive around a photograph saloon, or to profess sweet sounds for a living whether vocal or instrumental. If one has a turn that way, a fine, a manly thing is an artist-architect's life, for which, it is to be hoped, an improving taste in building private and public edifices will make a much increased demand. But it will not do for parents to think that boys are all to carry portfolios, to be artists, professional men, or merchants. There is not room for this; not recompense enough; not natural talent enough of the requisite kind."

AGRICULTURE AND MECHANICS.

"The main dependence must be found, to meet this demand—in agriculture, mechanical and manufacturing occupations. These are the indispensable employments of society, and must also be its chief labor in a healthful condition of the community. I think it is the duty of parents to select, with as much judgment as possible, a son's respective business, his aptitudes being consulted more than his transient wishes, and kindly to endeavor to shape his preferences towards that pursuit."

THE SEA.

"But my boy wants to be a sailor," says some anxious mother, with the tear of apprehension trembling in her eye; "and I cannot persuade him out of it, nor consent to grant his strange propensity. Strange! I do not know about that. God made that glorious sea; it is full of beauty, power, life; some body must dwell on it; noble spirits have, and all its voyagers are nearer, it always seemed to me to the eye and care of the Viewless, Eternal Spirit than any others. One would scarcely wish to encourage a child to become a sea-faring man: but where that passion for salt water exists, and years show that it does not lessen, it is far wiser for the parent not to oppose it, but to assist, with a hopeful spirit, to gratify it in a way to make it as safe to morals as possible. A boy of this roving, adventurous disposition, who stays on dry land with about the same pleasure that an eagle would feel in your poultry yard, should not be too strongly tempted, by parental objections, to run away from home that he may indulge his proclivity. That desperate step must be most painful to both parties. It often makes a hard boy irreclaimably harder. Many mothers and fathers have been sorry when too late, that they did not provide a good captain and ship for their son to make his trial trip, instead of allowing him to slip off from their reach with some wild set of rovers to contaminate his morals and to utterly wreck his soul."

"A word concerning the moral perils of the sea. With all its reckless wickedness, I am quite convinced, that, in far circumstances, as on board our regular marine, and under masters of average character, the risks are by no means so great, as to send a lad of seventeen or twenty to New-York or Boston, to be tempted to theft and all manner of dissipation by theaters, gambling hells, and houses of assignation. The sea itself is a grand temple of elevating suggestion and devotion. Its silent waters lead to thought. Its boundless reaches remind of eternity and God. To be in port at the intervals of months cannot be so dangerous as to be within ten minutes walk of theater alley every evening. There is many a worse place where a bold, spirited youth might be than the deck of a round-the-world cruiser, 'rocked in the cradle of the deep.'"

"A single further advice; whatever you do with your boy, do something substantial with him. Put him into contact with his fellow men, through some power of aiding the real progress of society by helping to supply its wants, physical, or spiritual. Do not make a mere fancy man of him, good for nothing but to soil kid gloves and pick up ladies' handkerchiefs. If there be a righteous ground of offense to man and man's maker, it is found in such a perversion of humanity."

TUCKER.

(*The Happy Home.*)

The Study of Natural History in Common Schools.

A series of educational meetings was held in Boston, at which distinguished persons were called upon to discuss the requirements of common schools, and the best method of meeting them. The following extracts, from the address of Prof. Louis Agassiz, on the study of Natural History, will, we think, be found interesting to our readers.

Address of Prof. Agassiz.

I wish to awaken a conviction that the knowledge of nature, in our days, lies at the very foundation of the prosperity of States; that the study of the phenomena of nature is one of the most efficient means for the development of the human faculties, and that, on these accounts, it is highly important that that branch of education should be introduced into our schools as soon as possible.

To satisfy you how important the study of nature is to the community at large, I need only allude to the manner in which, in modern times, man has learned to control the forces of nature, and to work out the material which our earth produces. The importance of that knowledge to the welfare of man is everywhere manifested to us; and I can refer to no better evidence to prove that there is hardly any other training better fitted to develop the highest faculties of man, than by alluding to that venerable old man, Humboldt, who is the embodiment of the most extensive human knowledge in our day, who has acquired that position, and who has become the object of reverence throughout the world merely by his devotion to the study of nature.

If it be true that a knowledge of nature is so important for the welfare of States, and for the training of men to such high positions among their fellows, by the development of their best faculties, how desirable that such study should form a part of all education! and I trust that the time when it will be introduced into our schools will only be so far removed as is necessary for the preparation of teachers capable of imparting that instruction in the most elementary form.

The only difficulty was to find teachers equal to the task; for, in his estimation the elementary instruction was the most difficult.

It was still a mistaken view with many, that a teacher is always sufficiently prepared to impart the first elementary instruction to those entrusted to his care. Nothing could be farther from the truth; and he believed that in entrusting the education of the young to incompetent teachers, the opportunity was frequently lost of unfolding the highest capacities of the pupils, by not attending at once to their wants. A teacher should always be far in advance of those he instructs; and there was nothing more painful than for a teacher to feel that he must repress, if possible, those embarrassing questions which the pupils may wish to ask, but which may be beyond his reach.

He conceived that nothing but the inexhaustible thirst for knowledge which is imparted in human nature, enables children to sustain their interest in study, when the elements are imparted to them in the manner they are. Could anything be conceived less attractive than the learning of those twenty-four signs which are called letters, and to combine them into syllables, and then into words; and all taught in the most mechanical and hum-drum way, as if there was no sense in it! And yet, there is a deep sense in it, and there is, in those very letters, material for the most attractive and instructive information, if it were only in the head of the teacher when he has to impart it. Let him show his young pupils how men have learned to write their thoughts in words; how the art of writing was invented; in what way it was done in the beginning; how it has been shortened in its operations, which are now so rapid that the writer follows the words of the speaker with as great certainty as if he saw them already written, and had only to copy them; and then the child will be eager to emulate that, and will be ready to avail himself of the advantages which a possession of the art will give him over those who have it not.

But then, I say in order to create this interest in the child, it is not sufficient that he be taught mechanically, that such a figure is A, and that B, and C, and so on, but he is to be shown how men came to write the letters in that way, and that the earliest and simplest ways of representing these thoughts was by showing objects as they are. This point the Professor very happily illustrated and enlarged upon, and in connection with his general principle of imparting knowledge by the agency of things, he referred to an incident in his personal experience: I have been a teacher since I was fifteen years of age, and I am a teacher now, and I hope I shall be a teacher all my life. I do love to teach, and there is nothing so pleasant to me as to develop the faculties of my fellow-beings who, in their early age, are intrusted to my care, and I am satisfied that there are branches of knowledge which are better taught without