

INCENTIVES TO STUDY.

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NO subject at the present time is having more said or written about it, by literary men of the highest attainments, than that of education. If this be the case, how difficult is it for us to find a theme in relation thereto that has not already been given every opportunity to divulge its secrets.

I, in my own simplicity, thought such a subject not altogether exhausted. It had presented itself to me as one on which I could dilate at pleasure without treading on the corns of any one; but no sooner had I commenced to dig and delve in search of some matter to help me in the amplification of my skeleton, than I found the subject under consideration, in all its various branches, had been fully treated before I was born. Consequently, anything which I present before you to-day may be found little more than gleanings, if you allow me the expression, out of the full sheaves of those who have written so ably on the matter before us; yet I would fain hope that what I do bring before you may not be entirely void of interest, but that, on the contrary, it may lead some to read more on this important subject, and others to practise what they have already read.

Those who have been engaged in the profession of teaching will have observed that the pupil's attention to study, unless guided by a master hand, or a natural inclination amounting to pertinacity, is as changeable as the wind on the seaboard, though, perhaps, not so regular.

It therefore devolves upon us, as

teachers, to devise some plans or schemes, and prove them by experiment; or better, if already proven and at our disposal, to use them in such a way that the youth under our charge may be as steady in the pursuit of knowledge as a vessel under the favouring breezes of the trade winds.

"Surely," says one, "this is a summation devoutly to be wished. I am afraid your standard is too high." Too high it may be, but I protest that in this case it is better, yea, a great deal better, to err on the side of a high standard than on that of a low one. It is a good horse that never stumbles, and it is about as safe to be thrown from his back clearing a fence as when he stumbles on a stone; in the former you are on your guard—not so in the latter.

But what are those incentives by which we may incite our pupils to study? First, let me direct your attention to that of Approbation, and its opposite, Disapprobation. See that boy, as he wends his way along the public thoroughfare, by the side, it may be, of a brother or a sister. It takes not the eye of a close observer to discern the troubled countenance. He has reached the school. The tear glistens in his eye. Mark the look of yonder teacher. Tenderness is in that face. That glance is friendly. Sympathy is depicted there. Note the effects. The child is assured no harm can befall him. That approving smile has removed from his youthful mind the horror of the strap, so glibly rehearsed at home, never more to be reinstated unless by that monster,