

once they see, as sooner or later they will see, that the avenues to the highest and best in education should be freely open to them, they will have it so. And when once they see that they have a right to the best and most cultivated talent for the instruction of their children, they will have that at

any cost. Would that that day might be hastened by the wisdom of our universities. Would that they might take the first step toward the formation of that organic union which sooner or later must come. Let it come from the higher source that the fitness of things may be preserved.

LIMITS OF EDUCATION.

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THE word "inspiration" reminds me of one limit in education which I may shortly dismiss here: the limit of faculty, or natural gift. *Non omnia possumus omnes*. "We cannot all do everything." Nay, more, few of us can do many things well. We recognize this in poetry and painting, and it is no small gain that since the spread of higher education among women, its recognition in music has rid us of much distracting thrumming of pianos; but we need to recognize it in all branches of education. Teachers may not rashly assume that the pupil has no turn for a subject: every one has a turn for something, and that something must be discovered; but, when the teacher is sure that the natural gift is lacking, then instruction in that subject should be dropped (I do not speak now of very early education) or confined to what will give intelligent appreciation only of the work of others.

Close akin to the danger of acquiscent absorption of the thoughts of others ruining individuality and originality, is the neglect of the limit of assistance which the teacher may give the student. "Overhelp," that enervating error, springs also from excess of power and care on the part of the teacher, and from the desire to secure rapid progress. It is a real and a present evil. Notes, vocabularies, introductions, translations have their

bad as well as their good side. Do you know what the French call "*la vache enragée*"? If you do not, I will only tell you that it means "cudgelling one's brains," and I will ask you to listen to some witty remarks on the excellence of the practice, or, to adopt the French metaphor, on the virtues of that particular form of diet for the young, by Madame Emile Girardin. "Oh, tender-hearted mothers!" she says, "mistrust easy methods: easy methods make lazy brains, and lazy brains make fools. Love your children, smother them with kisses, spoil them, give them a thousand indulgences, but do not smooth away the difficulties of life for them. Watch them, don't help them overmuch, don't let them break their necks, but do let them break their heads against the obstacles of learning."

Let them vex their souls, grow discouraged, make mistakes, ask themselves questions, gauge themselves, make mistakes again, train themselves, in fact. Spare them heart-aches if you like, and if you can, but never spare them the aches and pains of the brain; stuff them with dainties, cakes and sweets, but never omit from their daily fare the generous dish that gives strength and courage, the magic food that transforms the simpleton into a Ulysses, the coward into an Achilles, the bitter ambrosia