

too thankful for the advantage that they received from them ; but still examinations were to be considered only as whetstones, which, more than anything else perhaps, sharpened the intellect. The tendency of the age, he feared was to put excessive faith in examinations, both on the part of those who wished to test educational results, and on the part of those who wished to be tested. Many years ago Aristotle made this point very clear when, at the beginning of his *Ethics*, he spoke of the great variety of ends, some things being ends in themselves, whilst other ends were simply the means to higher ends. Now, he would strenuously impress on his young hearers that examinations belonged to exactly the latter class of ends, being simply instrumental to something higher and better ; and for boys and girls to work under the pressure of an approaching examination, would be fatal to any true intellectual life, for if, indeed, examinations ever took that place in people's minds, they would become paralyzing instead of stimulating. Therefore, though pupils should go through their work with a thorough cordial goodwill, in view of the examination immediately before them—for that which lay straight before one in the work of life was always the most important—still it should be remembered that the examination was not the final end to be looked to. The end of the examination was to make clear to the pupil what point he had attained ; its use was then at an end, and it was only from that point that true culture began. The only training or culture really worth having was something spontaneous—something which was not tested by any examination, but was the result of that love of learning, that desire for self-culture, that ardent zeal for self-improvement, which lay at the root of all real success in examinations, but which could never be created by them. He trusted, therefore, that those who had passed their examination successfully would bear in mind what he had said, and look forward in the far future to making a hearty, energetic use of whatever talents their Maker had given them, for the good of the public and the glory of God.—*The Educational Times*.

Science of Teaching.

When Democritus was asked what wit is, he replied, "Tis that which we all see and know." And, however unsatisfactory a definition this may seem to be, when we have pondered the subject, we shall arrive at precisely his conclusion—that one will apprehend the nature of wit better by an acquaintance with it, than from any description possible. So were we to inquire what is that which is the vital essence of successful teaching, we should finally be answered, that it can better be seen and known than be told. You can know a good school, as you can good wit, without the aid of a showman ; it makes itself known. The successful teacher knows better than any one else when she truly succeeds, although she may be too modest to say so, and too aspiring to be satisfied ; and she knows it far better than she could explain whence her success originates. Let me state parenthetically that I here use a pronoun of the feminine gender because teaching seems to me a natural office of woman ; man seems to have been called to occupy that portion of her sphere, which she, lacking the endurance or the incentive, has failed to hold.

But cannot success in teaching be partially, if not wholly, described by means of some distinctive marks ? and cannot its origin be sufficiently well pointed out, for the help of those who would enter the profession ? Is not school-teaching a science, as well as an art ? I

doubt if it has been regarded as largely a science by many outside of the circle of those who may be called professionals. The great majority, both of teachers and of school officers—we might add citizens—think that one who is not a teacher born can acquire the faculty of teaching, only by its exercise, just as one learns to skate, to swim, or to dance. And, as instruction aids one in acquiring these accomplishments (and who would risk his reputation as a dancer before he had practised, under a master, the steps and graceful evolutions which he aspires to execute in the ball-room ?), so is instruction in pedagogy valuable, and, I believe, generally essential, to the highest success in teaching. Why is it that any are so presumptuous as to attempt the practice of the art before they have studied the science ? It is not difficult, I think, to find the reason. The applicant for the teacher's place has attended school, and this affords occasion, though not the reason, for her over-confidence. For, having seen her teacher go through the duties of the school-room day after day, with that grace and naturalness which practise gives, it seems to her an easy matter to teach. The same person, looking upon a company of dancers whirling through the elegant mazes of the ball-room, might think dancing very easy ; but she would hardly venture, unpractised, upon the floor—for, she says, there are so many looking on, and one might fail. It were, indeed, fortunate, if this self-distrust, which is manifested with regard to an accomplishment that is not over-difficult of acquisition, were felt in presence of an undertaking so infinite in its demands as is school-teaching. Moreover, if one had to enter upon teaching under the eyes of many beholders—critics and judges, as well as spectators—who had come to know the difference between grace and awkwardness, between ability and incompetency, she would go to her work very modestly, or, most likely, go prepared. But even "recognition," as Ruskin remarks, "is no proof of real and intrinsic resemblance. We recognize our books by their bindings, though the true and essential characteristics lie inside." Teachers are too often judged by unimportant characteristics. This one is approved, "because she keeps her hours," or "because the scholars don't laugh and shout at recess time." If, then, teachers enter upon their work without due qualification, the fault is as much the public's, who would laugh at an awkward dancer, and who cannot judge whether a school-teacher is really well-fitted for her duties or not.

A knowledge of the branches taught at school is not a mastery of the science of teaching. If it were so, then every one who knows how to read, write, or cipher, is competent to instruct others in those branches. People will generally admit that there is a vast difference between knowing and telling ; but they are not fully impressed with the fact that the faculty of telling may be acquired. If it does not come naturally to one, they say : "It is of no use,—she never will be a teacher." Nevertheless, as the district has hired her, and she has passed the requisite examination, let her go on. No glaring fault appears. The order is good—in fact, the school-room is as still as the grave and as lifeless. The scholars do not learn much. They are indifferent and slow—that is, of course, they are dull. The teacher knows enough. Such is the popular verdict. Alas ! as a teacher, she is ignorant. One might know colors well, and yet not be able to paint a fine landscape. There is all this difference between knowing and teaching ; and, until "normal" methods of recitation are adopted in all our schools, one should not pass immediately from the pupil's place to the teacher's station. To justly appreciate this last statement, let any teacher take the brightest member of her class in arithmetic ; one who could readily perform any problem