

the circumstances, and to keep it chained there, aye, and until we have exhausted the subject or arrived at some definite conclusion regarding it. And this brings us to the real practical point, viz., what is the education best fitted to develop or draw out this power or condition of the mind, or what are the means that ought to be employed for the purpose of increasing the power of the will over the other faculties?

And here we might enlarge on the relationship subsisting between the mind and the body, the influence exerted by the latter over the former, and the necessity of preserving the body in a sound and healthful condition, in order that the mind may have full and free scope for exercise, and the will possess complete control over the varied mental affections. We might here too speak of the advantages derived from punctuality, that is, from doing every thing at the time and in the place fixed;—how great the achievements accomplished by men of literature and science when they duly appropriated their time to different pursuits or fields of usefulness, and adhered, firmly and steadfastly, to the plan they had adopted. Another means by which the power of attention over the other faculties of the mind is cultivated is the use of the pen—by committing our views to writing upon any given subject, after we have pursued a certain line of study, or diligently perused any book, these views obtain a definiteness or precision which they would not otherwise possess.

But on these and similar themes we cannot dilate. The grand specific, after all, is the exercise of the will itself. "The more constantly," says Wayland, "we exercise it the greater does its power become. The more habitually we do what we resolve to do, instead of doing what we are solicited to do by indolence, or appetite, or passion, or the love of trifles, the more readily will our faculties obey us. At first the effort may yield only a partial result, but perseverance will render the result more and more apparent, until at last we shall find ourselves able to employ our faculties in such manner as we desire. If, then, the student finds his mind unstable, ready to wander in search of every other object than that directly before him, let him never yield to its solicitations. If it stray from the subject, let him recall it, resolutely determining that it shall do the work that he bids it. He who will thus faithfully deal with his intellectual faculties will soon find that his labour has not been in vain." And what, it may now be asked, is the educator to do, that the young under his charge may be trained and disciplined to this use of the will,—to the formation of that habit by which all the powers shall bend to its dictate? This is the most important question the conscientious teacher can propose to himself, involving as it does the very essence of his vocation, the whole matter not of the quantity but of the quality of the education imparted. The rage of the day is in an entirely opposite direction. It is not asked, What is the mode pursued in the communicating of this or that branch of knowledge, so that the particular faculty employed shall be strengthened and developed? but, What is the amount or variety of the subjects taught, what is the progress made, what is the information possessed? We have no wish to depreciate great and extensive acquirements. But these, however valuable in themselves, are never to be compared to the training or disciplining of our faculties, by which we may be fitted and prepared for the right discharge of all the duties of life, and for coping with all the vicissitudes and trials that are before us. And in order to accomplish this to any considerable extent, the teacher must see to it, that in imparting knowledge to the minds of his pupils, that knowledge is imparted in such a way as that their minds

are suitably exercised and strengthened; and more especially as to the point now under consideration, that whatever is learned, is learned thoroughly and at the time fixed. It matters not as to the branch of knowledge communicated, whatever is done, should be done well, clearly understood and accurately mandated. Let the progress of the scholars be what it may, let the nature of the instruction be of greater or less importance, it should be the paramount concern of the teacher to see that there is no imperfection, no superficiality in the recitation. Iteration, reiteration should be his motto, aye, and until every thought is written as with an iron pen on the tablets of their memory, incorporated into the very framework of their mind, made part and parcel of themselves. By this means, in the course of a few years, will the power of the will over the other faculties of the mind, become habitual, and the great and important purposes of a thorough education be subserved. The habit of attention to any particular subject being acquired, the mind will naturally rise to higher and nobler pursuits; from the study of the world without to the world within; from a knowledge of facts to great general principles or laws; from the materials already accumulated to the discovery of new and original truths; from the known to the unknown; from the visible to the invisible; from the finite to the infinite.

II.—PRACTICE OF EDUCATION.

ENGLISH READING OR ELOCUTION.

THERE is, perhaps, no branch of a common school Education so little attended to as that of English Reading. The teachers themselves, in too many instances, are but poor readers, and it need not be wondered at that they fail to awaken an interest in the subject in the breasts of their scholars. The celebrated Horace Mann thus writes, in reference to this branch of learning in the United States:—"I have devoted especial pains to learn, with some degree of numerical accuracy, how far the reading in our schools is an exercise of the mind in thinking and feeling, and how far it is a barren action of the organs of speech upon the atmosphere. My information is derived principally from the written statements of the School Committees of the different towns,—gentlemen who are certainly exempt from all temptation to disparage the schools they superintended. The result is, that more than eleven-twelfths of all the children in the reading classes in our schools do not understand the meaning of the words they read; that they do not master the sense of the reading lessons, and that the ideas and feelings intended by the author to be conveyed to and excited in the reader's mind still rest in the author's intention; never having yet reached the place of their destination. It would hardly seem that the combined efforts of all persons engaged, could have accomplished more, in defeating the true objects of reading." And Page, one of the most impartial writers on American education, assigns this as one of his reasons why so many cease to read as soon as they leave school. It costs them so much effort to decipher the meaning of a book, that it counteracts the desire for the gratification and improvement it might otherwise afford. And yet there is no branch of education on which so much depends,