

aim at a wider culture, a more elevated standard of intellectual attainments than ever before. The times demand it, and the children who are now daily by your side, will look back in future years with fond remembrance to those who so carefully and faithfully guided their minds into those paths which have given them keen pleasure and enjoyment at every turn in their journey of life.—*Maine Journal of Education*.

THE SPREAD OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

I notice one striking change in Egypt. This is the astonishing spread of the English language within the last twenty years, resulting both from the number of English and American travellers who visit the East, and the use of the language by travellers of other nationalities. French, which until within the last few years was indispensable, has been slowly fading into the background, and is already less available than English for Italy and all the Orient. I was a little surprised in Rome, at being accosted by a native boot-black with, "Shine your boots?" In Naples, every pedler of canes, corals, photographs, and shells, knows at least enough to make a good bargain; but this is nothing to what one meets in Egypt. The bright-witted boys learn the language with amazing rapidity, and are so apt at guessing what they do not literally understand, that the traveller no longer requires an interpreter. At the base of Pompey's pillar, a ragged and dirty little girl came out of a fellah hut and followed us, crying, "Give me a ha'penny!" All the coachmen and most of the shopkeepers are familiar with the words necessary for their business, and prefer to use them, even after they see that you are acquainted with the Italian and Arabic. The simple, natural structure of the English language, undoubtedly contributes to its extension. It is already the leading language of the world, spoken by ninety millions of people, (double the number of the French-speaking races,) and so extending its conquests year by year, that its practical value is in advance of that of any other tongue.—*Bayard Taylor's Letters*.

A correspondent favours *Galignani* with the following additional list of the curiosities of the English language: "Fowlers speak of a sege of herons and bittens; a herd of swans, cranes or curlews; a depping of sheldrakes; a spring of teals; a covert of coots; a gaggle of geese; a badelynge of ducks; a sord or sute of mallards; a muster of peacocks; a nye of pheasants; a bevy of quails; a congregation of plovers; a walk of snipes; a fall of woodcocks; a brood of hens; a building of rooks; murmuration of starlings; an exaltation of larks; a flight of swallows; a host of sparrows; a watch of nightingales, and a charm of goldfinches."

ASSOCIATIONS OF YOUNG MEN.

The desire of young men for mental improvement is a good indication for their country, as well as for themselves. We therefore observe with pleasure the increasing disposition to form societies for mutual improvement, which has been manifested of late throughout Ontario. These associations are becoming common, not only in the cities and towns, but also in the villages and country neighbourhoods. Young Men's Associations and Literary Societies everywhere show our young men to be alive to the necessity of better fitting themselves for their part in life—life in such a country as this is likely to be. We confess to feeling much interested in every plan for mutual aid in mental exercises, even in cases where the performances are not exactly perfect, and think it the duty of all to extend all possible sympathy and encouragement. Even where the members feel their parts to be not very creditably sustained, they are still in the right way towards gradual improvement and ultimate success. The advantage of political liberty is chiefly the universal activity of thought, begotten of free speech; for though much of the thought must be defective, yet mental activity must of itself produce mental growth, and be prolific of various good. The young men thus engaged are certainly gaining something, and many of them are gaining much. They are educating themselves for life, for society and business, and many will receive from them a start for higher attainments.

Some of the societies are for readings and recitations, for the purpose of attaining to a good elocution, which is surely worth almost any pains. Since most of our colleges and seminaries quite neglect elocution, it is gratifying to see our young men doing their best to gain so beautiful and valuable an acquisition. It is amazing that, while colleges are giving us each year scores of graduates, who may be very well up in elementary knowledge, so few, so very few of these certificated young men, have a tolerable command of their own voices! And, since the majority cannot go to college, it is pleasing to see so many seeking to aid each other in acquiring so valuable an accom-

plishment. No matter how good a person's general education, his power to achieve success for himself, or to advance any good cause, is more than doubled by a good elocution and delivery. Perhaps, too, these more free exercises are favourable to the formation of a truly natural manner of speaking.

We confess, also, that societies of young men for discussion and debate seem to us to be in many ways beneficial. We have a good school system, by which the present generation of youth are prepared to become the next generation of men, and men superior to those who preceded them. But schools alone, mere elementary learning and knowledge, will not secure intellectual wealth. Knowledge in the memory does not of necessity develop the thinking powers, nor does it awaken mental activity. A man may have a store on the shelves of memory, and yet not be a thinking man, not a man who is able to apply his knowledge in the best way, much less to add to it. It is only by thinking habits, not by dead stores of knowledge, that the mind enlarges its capacity, strengthens its faculties, and trains itself to prolific activity. Therefore all and every means of promoting a general activity in the minds of the people, even all tentative efforts of the kind, ought to be encouraged.

These remarks apply also to various other methods of mutual improvement. They apply to evening schools for teaching singing, or any special art or branch of knowledge, for these each show a voluntary effort after mental acquisition of some kind. They are indicative of a desire of improvement, show an enterprising social spirit of an excellent tendency. So, too, when young men combine under the auspices of some good cause, they are sure to be gainers, in heart as well as in mind. It must surely be gratifying, in view of the temptations young men have to wasteful frivolity, to observe an increasing disposition to spend their precious leisure to some valuable purpose; to employ their leisure hours in a wise and profitable way. We have no hesitation in preferring such associations as these, which aim at strengthening the higher nature, to those associations which profess to aim only at strengthening the muscles—a good but inferior aim, and not always reached by the means employed.

While societies of this kind must, on the whole and in the long run, be a benefit of some kind to all, they will give an opportunity and aid to native talent. Many public men, and many men of honoured name, became first known to themselves as well as to others, in the village discussion or in private exercises for mutual mental benefit. How many are there who would never have known their own capabilities, nor have dared the experiment of trying their own powers, have found the young society the very thing they needed! Not from colleges alone, but from the determined possessors of a worthy ambition, whether inside or outside college walls, are to come our future men of mark. However imperfect many of these little societies, however diffident their experiment, they are of some good; they are in a good direction; they will grow better; and they will prepare the way for performances of a higher class.

No subject is more important than the leisure hours of young men. It contains a sure prophecy of the country's future. We hail, therefore, with pleasure, any sign of a growing taste for intellectual engagements, any desire for mental attainments, any ambition after a noble character. Their exercises in their evening gatherings are not mere amusements. They will secure what will be worth more than salary or wages. They will fit them to achieve a good position, and fit them for a good position when achieved.—*London Advertiser*.

NOTES ON THE SCIENCE OF WEATHER.

Professor William Ferrel conducted a series of mathematical investigations on "the motions of fluids and solids on the surface of the earth" (published in 1856, and a second edition in 1860), which resulted in the establishment of the following general laws; regarding the earth as a sphere, and assuming that there is no friction between the atmosphere and the surface of the earth:—

1. The atmosphere cannot exist at the poles.
2. The exterior surface of the atmosphere meets the surface of the earth at the poles, attains its maximum height in about latitude 35°, and is slightly depressed at the equator.
3. In latitude 35° the atmosphere has no motion.
4. Between latitude 35° and the equator the atmosphere moves toward the west.
5. Between latitude 55° and the poles the atmosphere moves toward the east.

Under the same assumption, if we consider a small circular portion of air on any part of the earth's surface and suppose it to rotate, we can establish the following similar propositions:—

1. Air cannot exist at the centre of this rotating portion.
2. The upper surface of the revolving portion is convex, and meets the earth near the axis of revolution.