

thing and brings order from confusion. It is only after mental discipline has labelled and stowed away all the facts that the man can place his hand on them at any moment, and thus make them available whenever wanted.

It is just here that those who raise the cry against what they call over-education base their strongest argument,—want of practicability. But does not the objection hold with more force against the way in which the subjects are presented than against the subjects themselves? Cannot any branch be so presented that it not only becomes distasteful to the learner, but practically useless? For instance, take geography as it used to be taught, even to within the past ten years. Year after year the poor, unfortunate child was compelled to go over and over the book, committing to memory a perfect labyrinth of words,—names of rivers, mountains, and towns scattered all over the world,—and at the end of a few weeks was unable to tell whether a certain word was the name of a river in Africa or of a town in Indiana. And suppose that by dint of hard studying and the aid of a good memory one could remember these isolated facts for some considerable time, of what value would they be compared with the deductions and generalizations which we now draw from the subject? The reasoning powers were not called into action at all. No conclusions were drawn. And all the patient student could carry away as the result of years of study was a long list of names, which, fortunately, a disgusted memory soon refused to retain. For years a geographical river meant nothing to me but a crooked line on the map, while towns were only black spots about the size of pin-heads. I have always admired the genius of that boy—and I have no doubt but that he became a great man—who described latitude as a black line running one way across the map, and longitude as a black line running the other way.

But now begin in the opposite manner. Show some of the great natural features first as facts, and then by reasoning draw many of the others as necessary results. The contour of the country will decide the position and size of rivers; the junctions and navigable waters of these rivers will determine the location and size of cities. The physical character of the country will determine the leading occupations of the people. The distribution of population, position of cities, and character of peoples, are not the result of caprice or chance: each has its reason, and is governed by some established law.

The certainty with which the climates, both general and local, vegetation, amount of rain, kind of animals, etc., can be determined from known natural laws, presents the once dry and justly hated subject of geography in a new and interesting manner, and clothes it with nearly all the charm of original investigation. In this way the mind of the child is taught to reason from cause to effect, and is delighted with its power of reasoning out conclusions which are sustained by facts. Besides this, the grand truths of the subject become firmly fixed in the mind, and can be reproduced at any time for immediate use. Thus the powers of the young mind are augmented; and, even if the greater part of the facts should escape the memory, the mental discipline which would be gained by this course could not be lost. More than this, the mind has become interested, and has grasped the entire subject in three or four years, instead of being reluctantly dragged over it for eight or ten years, until the pupil has lost all interest in the study.

We often hear a remark like this: "Now, of what use is it for me, as I intend to be a merchant some time, to study geometry? I shall probably never be obliged to solve a geometrical problem in my whole life. Why not study something which will be of more use to me?" Did you ever consider how little of what you learn enters

directly into the computations of business? How much of your all-important arithmetic will you ever use in actual life? Only a few of the simplest rules; and these a backwoodsman, who has never been at school a year in his life, will master in a short time when placed in business relations. Men can talk quite as well, as far as transacting business is concerned, who never saw or heard of a grammar; while any boy of average ability can learn in a week to write a better hand than do half the business men in the country. So, if your idea of the practical is only what is to be used directly in business transactions, you would confine education within narrow limits.

While we call these elementary subjects the directly practical, we may call these others the indirectly practical. Indirectly, as they enlarge the man, and make him capable of greater enjoyment, incite his ambition, place him within range of possibilities of which he before had no conception, keep him out of the narrow ruts of prejudice and illiberality, develop the softer sympathies and finer qualities of his nature, and make the difference between an animated business machine and the noble, whole-souled, generous man.—*Iowa School Journal.*

### Educating Girls.

(BY MISS ANNA M. HOTCHKISS, HARTFORD.)

That girls do not receive just as efficient training in our common schools as boys do, would, I doubt not, be stoutly denied by the majority of teachers and other persons connected with the work of education. But in the face of this anticipated denial, I now unhesitatingly make the assertion that girls are not so well and wisely trained as boys. Sitting side by side in the same school room, having the same instructor, boys are daily deriving more benefit from their schooling than girls. What, you say, "Do not girls receive the same amount of instruction in arithmetic, geography, grammar, and other studies as boys do?" Yes; As far as book-knowledge is concerned, girls get their full share; and, being rather more studious than boys, often win more distinction.

But imparting book-learning is only a part, and by far the easiest part, of a teacher's work. With this come daily and hourly lessons in self-control, perseverance, self-reliance, and industry. Here we see the difference between the training of boys and of girls. To the boys the teacher says, using the language of the world, "Help yourselves; never depend upon any one to carry you over difficult places"—to the girls, "To be dependent is a part of your birthright; independence is not becoming to girls; cry when you hurt your fingers or fall down, and people will pet you." Boys are educated to some purpose, girls to none. Boys are taught the use of their hands and brains in order that they may use them, but girls are seldom taught that whether necessity compels or not, their hands and busy brains are made for good, wholesome toil. They are rarely impressed with the idea that their education is for the purpose of better fitting them for some honest avocation when they leave school.

It is no uncommon thing for a teacher to stand before his class of one hundred or more pupils, half of whom are girls, and talk to the boys for half an hour on the object of their education, how it will help them to become better citizens and members of society, tell them the necessity of cultivating manliness and honesty, of being self-helpful, industrious, and ambitious, if they would