

MAKE YOURSELF WORTH MORE.

H. J. B.

There is an instructive story told by T. S. Arthur of two clerks, employed in the same store, and at the same salary. One was constantly grumbling at the compensation received, and was very negligent of his duties, alleging that his pay was not enough to encourage him to do well. Let him only receive a larger compensation, and he would be active and diligent. His wisecracking companion reasoned that the best way to get a higher salary would be to earn so well the one actually received, and do so well the work required, that his employer should feel that he could not spare so valuable a helper. The result proved the wisdom of his reasoning. The diligent worker was promoted—the idle one lost his situation.

There are many teachers who are teaching simply for the money, with no higher aim than to earn a living thereby. There is another class who have a strong desire to do good in their vocation, and who love their work, but still so much need their salaries for their support, that increased pay is always a highly interesting subject to them. But many teachers who teach for money only, get less pay than they would expect to receive in their occupations, and many who are conscious of faithful and conscientious endeavors, find that success does not follow their efforts to obtain increased pay. Districts in which they have labored long, feel unwilling to increase their wages, and seem rather inclined to keep them at starting point.

Now the same advice will serve for both classes of teachers. If you want more pay, make yourselves worth more. In proportion to your actual market value will be the wages you receive. Not that your pay will rise as soon as you obtain and apply a valuable idea—not that you may not be sometimes disappointed of getting a desirable situation, but there is a demand for good teachers, and the supply is not above the demand. As Webster once said of the legal profession, "There is room enough above, but they are terribly crowded down below." If you wish to rise to the height of your profession, you must work constantly for self-improvement. You must read educational journals to find out what is going on in education elsewhere. You must know what improvements are made in teaching, and be ready to adopt them. You must attend teachers' meetings, and communicate freely with your fellow teachers, and interest yourself largely in their work. Above all, you must know what you are pretending to teach. You must have more than one lesson in advance of your pupils. You must not try to teach Geography with your finger on the map, and be unable to correct a mistake without going to the book. You must be able to teach Arithmetic without a key, or a parcel of note-books obtained from some predecessor in a portable drawer. You must be able to spell without going to a dictionary for ordinary words, and use good English while pretending to teach that language. And if you are correctly informed in all these things, you have additional duties. Your mind must be cultivated with a view to its own improvement. Nothing more enervates mental vigor than habitual dealing with inferior minds, or rather with undeveloped minds. Teachers become weary of their business, because they take little interest in their own mental improvement. Their own elasticity of mind is gone, not because drudgery has impaired its powers, but from mental indolence, indifference or neglect. Constantly study some science, or read some books which are books, especially such books as pertain to your legitimate business. Study to be accurate in everything, and to have your ideas in compact form. Study also to express your ideas in language which a child can comprehend. You may often fail to instruct, because your language is above the powers of comprehension possessed by your audience. Your manners, your personal appearance, your choice of company out of school, everything, in short, which tends to form your character, tends to make your services worth more or less to those who employ you.

Teachers' wages are low enough, but if we examine our common schools we shall find that most teachers get all they earn. They are worth little, because they never tried to be worth much. They can not take a Teacher's Journal, because they could not afford it. They can not write for one—they are not used to composing. They can not go to teachers' meetings, or institutes; that takes time and money. They can not own the books which will give them solid learning; their wages require them to economize. There is a plausibility in this reasoning, but it is short-sighted. A man must serve his apprenticeship to any trade, and during his first few months or years, must give his time in order to secure his trade. Those who stint themselves in means of self-improvement, save a few dollars at the outset, but lose the chance of going up higher. It is a false economy, sure to end in mediocrity or inferiority.

The movement recently made in Massachusetts leads us to hope that teaching may become a regular profession, and we may have licensed teachers as well as licensed preachers. Let this occur, and the salaries of teachers will be sure to rise, for a more thorough education of teachers would lead them to value their services higher. It would keep out the ignorant and the undeserving, who get schools by underbidding, and degrade the profession by their incapacity. There must be a vast improvement in public sentiment before such a movement could be properly appreciated, but teachers ought to be in the van of public sentiment on such matters, and it is their duty to lead the way.—New Hamp. Jour. of Ed.

WRITING "COMPOSITIONS."

BY FANNY FERN.

I have lately received a letter which it would be well every teacher and parent in the land should read. As I shall not betray the name or residence of the distressed young writer, of whom I have no knowledge except what is communicated by her letter, and as it may call attention to the last drop of the bucket misery, inflicted upon children already sufficiently overtasked, who are required to furnish ideas upon a given subject, which it is utterly impossible their young minds should grasp, I shall make no apology for transcribing it verbatim: calling particular attention to its ethical passages:

"Dear Aunt Fanny—You have said you are Auntie to all poor girls in distress. I am in distress, if ever anybody was; and I know that you have been kind to me. Let me tell you about it. I have expected to graduate in about two weeks; but I have no essay to read, and if I don't have one I can't graduate. I would not care so much for that myself, but my father would be so disappointed and he has made so many sacrifices to keep me at school, that I can't disappoint him. Oh! I have worked so hard to keep up with my class, for I am obliged to be absent so much, and now if I don't go through, I shall die, I know. I am not afraid of passing examination, for I know I can do that successfully, but I never could write any kind of a decent composition; and now it seems as though it was worse than ever, for I have tried for four months to write one, but I am further off from it than ever. I know that you will think me very, very dull, and I suppose I am; but oh! Aunt Fanny, do do, pity me. Please, do, and I will do anything in this wide world for you. You can do anything almost; I will bless you forever. Oh, I shall die if I don't have one! Do write me a line, anyway, and direct to—"

Excuse me for writing too, but I am nearly desperate. Oh, for the love of God, do write me one in two weeks, or at most three! I dare not even read over what I have written to you. Oh! Aunt Fanny, don't refuse me."

A better comment than this touching letter, upon the present forcing, hot-house system of education, even I should not desire. Think of this young girl, goaded to the very verge of insanity by those who should know that they are defeating the very object they are trying to attain by forcing the young mind to string together in order, and by the page, words without ideas. In my opinion this "composition" business is the greatest possible nonsense. I believe it to be the baneful root of the style of writing so prevalent. I believe that there are exercises in English, which would serve the purpose, millions of times better without driving pupils mad, and without offering them a premium for doing in a few days, the thoughts of others. Not long since I received a letter from the principals of a school, enclosing "a composition" to which "a prize" had just been awarded, and which some person present at the reading had detected as stolen from one of my books; with a request that I would look it over and pronounce upon the same. I found it word for word as I had written it in my book! Perhaps the moral effect of this system may be worth inquiring into, even by those who seem to be utterly insensible to the wretched spectacle of a young head tossing feverishly, night after night, on the pillow, under the brooding nightmare of an unwritten "composition." Let careless parents, who are quite as much to blame as teachers, give this subject a thought.

LOCKE'S SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

Equally illustrative of the important business of Education are the writings of John Locke, one of the wisest and sincerest of Englishmen. He was born at Wrington, near Bristol, in 1632. He was the eldest of two sons, and was educated with great care by his father, of whom he always spoke with the highest respect and affection. In the early part of his life, his father exacted the utmost deference from his son, but gradually treated him with less and less reserve, and when grown up, lived with him on terms of the most entire friendship; so much so, that Locke mentioned the fact of his father having expressed his regret for giving way to his anger, and striking him once in his childhood when he did not deserve it. In a letter to a friend, written in the latter part of his life, Locke thus expresses himself on the conduct of a father towards his son:—"That which I have often blamed as an indiscreet and dangerous practice in many fathers, viz. to be very indulgent to their children whilst they are little; and as they come to ripe years to lay great restraint upon them, and live with great severity towards them, which usually produces an ill understanding between father and son, which cannot but be of bad consequences; and I think fathers would generally do better, as their sons grow up, to take them into a nearer familiarity, and live with them with as much freedom and friendship as their age and temper will allow."

Locke was next placed at Westminster School, from which he was elected, in 1651, to Christ Church, Oxford. Here he applied himself diligently to the study of classical literature; and by the private reading of the works of Bacon and Descartes, he sought to nourish that philosophical spirit which he did not find in the philosophy of Aristotle, as taught in the school at Oxford. Though the writings of Descartes may have contributed by their precision and scientific method, to the formation of Locke's philosophical style, it was the principle of the Baconian method of

observation which gave to the mind of Locke that taste for experimental studies which forms the basis of his own system, and probably determined his choice of a profession. He adopted that of medicine; which, however, the weakness of his constitution prevented him from practicing.

Of the writings of Locke, it must suffice for us to mention his great work, "An Essay concerning Human Understanding, in which, setting aside the whole doctrine of innate notions and principles, the author traces all ideas to two sources, sensation and reflection; treats at large of the nature of ideas, simple and complex; of the operations of the human understanding; in forming, distinguishing, compounding, and associating them; of the manner in which words are applied as the representatives of the difficulties and objections in the search after truth, which arises from the imperfection of those signs; and of the nature, reality, kinds, degrees, casual hindrances, and necessary limits of human knowledge. The influence of his work, written in a plain, clear, expressive style, upon the minds and habits of philosophical inquirers, as upon the minds of educated men in general, has been extremely beneficial. Locke also wrote "Thoughts upon Education," to which Rousseau is largely indebted for his Emile. The following passage on the importance of Moral Education is very striking:—

"Under whose care ever a child is put to be taught during the tender and feeble years of his life, this is certain, it should be one who thinks Latin and languages the least part of education; one who, knowing how much virtue and a well-tempered soul is to be preferred to any sort of learning or language, makes it his chief business to form the mind of his scholars, and give that a right disposition; which, if once got, though all the rest should be neglected, would in due time produce all the rest; and which, if it be not got, and settled so as to keep out all and vicious habits—languages and sciences, and all the other accomplishments of education, will be to no purpose but to make the worse and more dangerous man."

SCIENTIFIC VS. PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION.

A recent number of *Silliman's Journal* contains the following testimony of Liebig, as to his famous school at Giessen: "It is worthy consideration in these days of practical science:—The technical part of an industrial pursuit can be learned; principles, alone, can be taught. It is only after having gone through a complete course of theoretical instruction in the lecture-hall that the student can, with advantage, enter upon the practical part of chemistry. He must bring with him into the laboratory a thorough knowledge of the principles of the science, or he cannot possibly understand the practical operations. If he is ignorant of these principles, he has no business in the laboratory. In all industrial pursuits connected with the natural sciences—in fact, in all pursuits not simply dependent on manual dexterity—the development of the intellectual faculties by what may be termed school learning constitutes the basis and chief condition of every improvement. A young man, with a mind well-stored with solid scientific acquirements will, without difficulty or effort, master the technical part of an industrial pursuit; whereas, in general, an individual who is thoroughly master of the technical part may be altogether incapable of seizing upon any new fact that has not previously presented itself to him, or of comprehending a scientific principle and its application."

CLEANLINESS.—Compare the dirtiness of the water in which you have washed when it is cold without soap, cold with soap, hot with soap. You will find the first has hardly removed any dirt at all, the second a little more, and the third a great deal more. But hold your hand over a cup of hot water for a minute or two, and then, by merely rubbing with the finger, you will bring off flakes of dirt or dirty skin. After a vapor-bath you may peel your whole self clean in this way. What I mean is that by simply washing or sponging with water you do not really clean your skin. Take a rough towel, dip one corner in very hot water—if a little suds be added to it; it will be more effectual—and then rub as if you were rubbing the towel into your skin with your fingers. The black flakes which will come off will convince you that you were not clean before; however much soap and water you may have used. These flakes are what require removing. And you can really keep yourself cleaner with a tumbler-full of hot water and a rough towel and rubbing, than with a whole apparatus of bath and soap and sponges, without rubbing. It is quite nonsense to say that anybody need be dirty.—Patients have been kept as clean by these means on a long voyage, when a basinful of water could not be afforded, and when they could not be moved out of their berths, as if all the apparatuses of home had been at hand. Washing, however, with a large quantity of water has quite other effects than those of mere cleanliness. The skin absorbs the water, and becomes softer and more permeable. To wash with soap and soft water is, therefore, desirable from some points of view than that cleanliness.—(Notes on Nursing, by Florence Nightingale.)

SEEING AND HEARING.

It has been a fault in our schools that pupils have not been taught to see and hear. Hence, we have hundreds of men who "having eyes, see

not, and having ears hear not." They live and move in the midst of the most beautiful scenery and surrounded by the wonders of nature, and yet if they see at all, it is as "through a glass darkly." They discern no beauties in the works of creation, and the most enchanting landscape is to them simply a collection of pasture, woodland, field and meadow, attractive only as a source of profit. They see no God in nature—nothing to awaken devotional feelings, nothing to excite admiration. The lofty mountains and the flowing river, are often regarded as mere obstacles to man's progress,—or as the means of contributing to his material resources. Every object is viewed only with a dollarish eye, and every flower is snuffed for its copperish worth.

How different is it with the man who has been trained to see and who in beholding the works of nature, is led to adore as he looks "through nature up to nature's God." To such an one, every mountain, hill and valley, every forest and river is radiant with the smiles of infinite goodness and wisdom. The babbling brook no less than the majestic river, and the mighty cataract proclaim the power of the hand that made them. The springing grass, the waving grain, the stately forest and the opening flower, alike speak of the goodness and omnipotence of God. If he looks upward and beholds the "glittering stars that gem the sky, he is ready to exclaim:—

"Forever singing as they shine,
The hand that made them is divine."

The man of untrained ear hears no sounds except those of a discordant or utilitarian nature,—while for him who has been taught to hear aright, the world is full of music and sweet sounds. All animated nature is ever changing in soul-stirring notes the wonderful goodness of Him at whose command they sprang into existence.

We may find in every community, men who have ears and eyes, and those who are virtually deaf and blind of both. The former revel in beautiful scenery, listening to nature's sweet and varied music, while the latter grope their way as in darkness—hearing no harmonious sounds; the former are happy, ever breathing and diffusing a spirit of cheerfulness, the latter are and censorious—ever complaining of the present, and casting a gloomy horoscope of the future. We have all seen men of the latter class, and know what a chilling and depressing influence their mere presence impart.

A man with trained eye and ears, a man of refined tastes and cultivated judgement is a prize to any community. Happy influences emanate from him and his spirit of cheerfulness ever makes him a welcome companion, a cherished neighbor. We know of a man whose correct taste and well-trained eye have done much towards beautifying the village in which he resides—all unconsciously and in part, and to a great extent, on the part of others. It is the result of his silent but correct example, by which many have been led to decorate their grounds and to cultivate flowers and shrubbery. Many such men there are in the land, and their worth is inestimable.

We hope their number is increasing from year to year. That such may be the case, we would urge upon teachers the importance of training their pupils to observe and to hear. This may be done in many ways and on various occasions. Let them frequently be called upon to give an account of objects of interest that may have attracted their attention on the way to or from the school-room. If they take a holiday walk let that be made the subject of familiar conversation, with a view to learn what was seen and heard. If a journey has been made by a pupil, take special pains to interrogate him as to what of interest he saw, and thus by your own spirit of inquiry you will awaken in him a desire to afford you gratification, and make him ever watchful to note objects of interest and to catch the sounds of sweet music. In fine, it should be the constant aim and wish of the teacher to train up his pupils to move about with open eyes and listening ears, and also so to cultivate the senses of vision and hearing; that only beautiful scenes shall be treasured up—only sweet and harmonious sounds remembered. Then may we hope to meet with more men who possess a genial nature and in whom the true spirit of observation and investigation is properly developed. Teach a child to see properly and to hear properly, and you have prepared him to receive instruction on any part.—Conn. School Journal.

THE TRULY GREAT MAN.—The truly great man is he who has added something to the sweetness and worth of human life. Ten thousand mines would by this time have been blackened corpses, had not Sir Humphrey Davy invented patent safety lamps. Ten thousand lips are speaking of the great use of the mariner's compass, which was simply an adaptation of natural laws or properties of matter, to a benevolent human use, and is one of the happy inspirations of genius.

NEW REMEDY FOR NEURALGIA.—The "Journal de Chemie Medicale" contains an account of the discovery of a new and powerful active in neuralgia, just discovered by Dr. Field.—The substance used is nitrate of oxyl and glyuile, and is obtained by treating glycerine at a low temperature with sulphuric or nitric acid. One drop mixed with 20 drops of spirits of wine, constitutes the first dilution. A case of neuralgia in an old lady, which had resisted every known remedy, was completely cured by this new agent.