

favourites, would, from time to time, stray from the roof of their protector and turn up unexpectedly in the bedrooms and parlours and kitchens of the adjoining houses. Even his parents could not look with favour on the irrepressible propensity of a son who, ere he had reached his fifth year, on one occasion brought a wasps' nest, wrapped up in a shirt, into the bosom of his family. They spared no pains, but resorted to the severest measures, to cure the boy of such dangerous tendencies: they applied the rod, they tied him to the table, they bound him hand and foot, they even took away his clothes. But all to no purpose; he disentangled himself from his bonds, and, attired in the first article that came to hand, he was soon with the snails and worms and centipedes. So at last they sent him to school, and he took his "beasts" with him. In the course of a few months he was turned out of three schools successively: from the first, for bringing in a jackdaw, which "cawed" at prayers; from the second, because his horseleeches, which were probably inadequately fed, crept out of the bottle, and began to draw the blood of the nearest pupils; and from the third, because on a desk a centipede or Maggie Monyfoot was found, which Thomas was falsely accused of introducing into the school. For denying the charge he was caned and expelled. "Go home," said the master of the third establishment to the wretched boy, "go home and tell your father to get you on board a man-of-war, as that is the best school for irreclaimables such as you."

Now, it is far from difficult to picture to ourselves a school-master who, discovering the secret of such a propensity, should not only prevent its becoming a nuisance, but should direct it to the attainment of high, useful, and even noble results. Some men, like Faraday, have been brought by accident into contact with men who could perceive and direct the natural bent of their genius; others, like Edwards, have it discovered too late for it to be made much use of; no doubt, in some cases it is never discovered, that is to say, there are men who have never been induced to develop the power that in early life was innate within them. But it would be easy to prove that, in hundreds of cases, the true worth of the men has been discovered, and their energies have been directed into profitable channels by the schoolmaster.

Again, there are the watchfulness and care requisite to keep in view the highest and best ideals,—to maintain what is called a high tone. The difficulty of governing boys and youths is always great enough; but what must be the labour it has cost the master of a school where admirable discipline is maintained with ease, where cordial relations exist between master and scholars, and where the majority of the pupils are characterized by a straightforward manly bearing, free from forwardness on the one hand, as from timidity on the other. These qualities are to be found in some schools, but in no schools where they are found do they come by accident. Assuredly, in ennobling and purifying what formerly was in many establishments an unhealthy moral atmosphere, the schoolmasters of our day have made no small contribution to the general welfare. This has been and is part of their unexamined work. Where they labour to produce breadth of view and mutual sympathy, their work will bear good fruit in the next generation, producing social harmony among different classes, amongst men of different occupations and devious if not conflicting interests. It is no easy matter to correct the little errors and faults of a boy at school by the application of principles which may with equal reason be applied to the corresponding errors and faults of the grown man, yet the work of the schoolmaster cannot be said to be well done until this is the case. To shape a boy's conduct in

life, to lead him to be industrious and thrifty, to respect property, and to be faithful in the performance of engagements, are certainly of not less importance than to supply him with information.

Further, there is the physical training necessary to give health, vigour, and activity to the youth committed to our care. This is an object not secured without thought and exertion on the part of the master. There is one kind of physical training which does not come under the head of unexamined work,—I refer to such trials of strength as we see in the Eton and Harrow Cricket Match, the Universities' Boat Race, Football contests, &c. All these exhibitions of strength and skill are exposed to the same danger as that we have pointed out in the examined work of the schoolmaster,—I mean, that they are liable to be pushed too far; instead of being subservient to the purposes of a complete and perfect education, they sometimes tend to usurp its place. The development of the body either aids or impedes the development of the mind. To give power to the muscle and suppleness to the limb, to promote animal health and vigour, to secure purity of bodily habit, is to assist education. But to spend the whole of the energies of youth in the attainment of animal attributes, is to rival the brute and the savage. It is therefore another difficult task of the schoolmaster to secure the fit and proper care of bodily health, while at the same time restraining within proper bounds the admiration for physical training. Corporeal health must receive attention, for mental vigour cannot exist long without it. The roots of a tree must be respected for the sake of the tree. If the roots fail, the tree will fall.

As we proceed, the field of inquiry so enlarges that we cannot see where it ends. Many are the topics which might be embraced under our title, some of which the schoolmaster mentions only with hesitation and bated breath. For instance, who will examine the work involved in managing the parent,—Herculean task involving great labour for small results. Mr. Lake, in a humorous paper read at one of the Education Conferences, classified parents under many heads—careless, busy, fidgetty, wavering, anxious, fond, sanguine, earnest, sensible, and so on; but nearly all alike were unreasonable. I have heard a schoolmaster say—and I believe the opinion is shared in by many teachers—that children are often reasonable, but parents never. The only consolation I can offer on this point is, that when the unexamined work of the schoolmaster is well done, we shall give to the next generation a better legacy than we received from the past; and the parents of that generation will assist rather than impede the educator.

I can imagine some of my hearers saying, "Surely you have taken too wide a view of our work. If we could do all this with children, they would indeed be well trained and equipped for the crusade of life; then every duty would be conscientiously fulfilled, every difficulty and danger would be surmounted, and there would be no height of virtue or intelligence which would be inaccessible. But see how little of what we attempt can be accomplished,—look at the hindrances we encounter on every hand. If your description of our work be correct, then it is to be feared it is beyond the power of anyone of us adequately to execute it."

Now, in reply to such comments, I have to admit that it is probably beyond our power fully to work out the problem we have to solve; but I believe at the same time, that we shall all succeed in proportion as we take a wide view and a high aim. By keeping the true goal in view, we shall be able to draw nearer to it. There are, fortunately, both men and women in this vocation who do not need to be cautioned against narrowness of