

There is no class of buildings, whether residences or out-buildings, which, as a class, show so much neglect, and have about them such an air of dilapidation as our school-houses,—“The People's Colleges.”

“What is everybody's business, is nobody's,” is a saying more applicable to school matters than to any other; and is legibly written by the hand of neglect on nine-tenths of our school-houses.

The place in which children spend the greater portion of their waking hours, the place in which their tastes and manners are formed, their habits and character moulded and fixed, is the place in which the least taste is displayed, and the best calculated to cultivate,—by association—bad habits and boorish manners. Somebody's to blame.

The trouble is, *everybody* is to blame, and as nobody is everybody, Mr. Nobody takes all the blame, and himself sets about the work of reform; and when Nobody undertakes a thing, he always does it.

Every school-house ought to be thoroughly cleaned for the first thing. The seats, desks, doors and windows should all be in working order; that old rusty stove and pipe should be blacked; those unsightly spots of naked lathing should be covered; the ceiling nicely white-washed, and the walls nicely prepared with neat, tasty paper. Who will do all this?

A day's work of a few individuals, in a district, and two or three dollars in money, will do it all. It costs but little—takes but little time. Yet it changes your *dirty*, disagreeable, uncomfortable, and disgraceful old school-room, into a neat, tasty little parlor; makes attractive what was before repulsive, encourages your teacher, and does more towards cultivating good taste and refinement in your children, by association, than can be done in any other way. The trustees ought to see to these things; but trustees are proverbially slack in the discharge of their duties. They need prompting. Now let the first man or woman—that's the word—woman that reads this article, take the matter in hand without delay, and if nobody is there but yourself, go to work; you can do it alone, and feel well paid while doing it, and a thousand times paid thereafter. With how much better spirit a teacher can work when she finds things in shape than when the surroundings upon the first day tell of neglect, and fore-shadow want of interest in, and appreciation of her future labors.

As to the interior of the school-house, we may take a lesson from Upper Canada. In that Province Dr. Ryerson visited England, Scotland, and Ireland, to examine carefully the many maps of the British Government and Dependencies there published, general and particular. These he found executed with great care and correctness. From them he made selections, caused an abundant supply to be sent to Toronto, to be had in deposit for the schools of Upper Canada, of which he is the Crown Superintendent. His influence was then exerted to have *all* the District Schools furnished with these maps. Eminent success attended his efforts. Most of the linings and walls of school-rooms in his Province are covered and ornamented with beautiful maps, not only American, but transatlantic. From these maps, by the aid of text books and the knowledge possessed by the reading and researches of the teachers, these Canadian scholars know more about the geography of America than many of our own scholars do.—*New Hampshire Jour. of Ed.*

### III. FLOWERS AND THEIR TEACHINGS.

All the prophets were devout students of God's works, and warm admirers of the beauties scattered through them: as a proof of which they have hung unfading garlands, which they gathered in their lonely walks, in various parts of that Temple of truth, which they helped, as God's instruments, to rear and beautify. And He to whom they all bear witness, and point out as the “Plant of Renown:” “the Righteous Branch,” “the Rose of Sharon;” he who gave these flowers their lovely tints, and moulded their faultless forms; he talked to man of the flowers, teaching him to “consider the lillies,” and to learn from them to trust that Providence which overlooks nothing, to which nothing is impossible, and which is pledged to fulfil all the purposes and promises of God's excellent loving kindness. Flowers also are emblems of those graces of the Spirit which believers in Jesus derive from him. The sunflower sets forth faith, and bids us be ever looking unto Jesus. The violet is the well-known teacher of humility; it hides from view, yet sheds a sweet fragrance around. The snow-drop, battling with the wintry cold, is the symbol of hope. The honeysuckle, clinging to its strong prop, and filling the air with its odoriferous perfume, sets forth love; while the lily, in softest tones, repeats the words of Him whom it represents, and says, “Trust implicitly your heavenly Father's care.”—*Sketches and Lessons from Daily Life, by Felix Friendly.*

### IV. ARTIFICIAL GLOBES IN EVERY SCHOOL.

It is a well-known fact, to those who have at all investigated the matter, that comparatively but few of our schools are furnished with

an artificial globe of any kind, though it is so simple and useful an instrument. They are generally well supplied with geographies and atlases, and time enough is spent upon this branch of study in *getting and saying lessons*. But, I am sure, one who has not taken the pains to gain the information can hardly imagine how shallow and empty much of this learning is. Geographies and maps are important as far as they go; outline maps, especially, are among the most useful articles of a furnished school; but for a clear understanding of the science something more is required. It will not do to tell a child that a map represents our globe; for he would thus be bewildered and misled. On a map he can see little circles, straight lines, and crooked lines, and without much difficulty can be taught what most of these represent; can point out the boundaries of countries, trace a river from its source to its mouth, tell the extent of lakes, mountain-ranges, etc.; but, if no additional means of investigating and comprehending the shape of the Earth and the relative position of countries is used, he will probably be led astray. For example, the map of the Hemispheres is before him: he sees a straight line extending across the map to represent the Equator. On the Eastern Hemisphere he sees Australia nearly at the extreme east; then in glancing at the Western Hemisphere he discovers New Zealand nearly at the extreme west. He will not wait to calculate the latitude and longitude, but comes at once to the conclusion that the two islands are about as far distant from each other as possible. He sees Asia on the extreme corner on one side, and another little Asia on the opposite side, and, very naturally, concludes that there are two Asias. On the map, also, four poles are represented—two for the Eastern and two for the Western Hemisphere: in fact, most of the representations on the map, from necessity, convey a false impression; and such impressions are too apt to be retained through life. Even the best instruction, with simply the aid of the map, can not supply the place of the artificial globe.

By means of the Terrestrial Globe the pupil can see at a glance where the sun is vertical at any given hour, where it is rising or setting, what is its meridian altitude at any given place and hour; he can find how long it shines without setting and how long it is absent, and with little trouble can ascertain all the places at which a lunar eclipse is visible at any moment. With the aid of the Celestial Globe he can find the latitude and longitude of a star and the position of a star or a planet, the time any of the heavenly bodies rise or set or come to the meridian: in short, much of the various phenomena of the heavenly bodies by the use of the Celestial Globe can be made exceedingly interesting that otherwise would be dry and unintelligible.

Now we ask, Why, when our system of education is so good in other respects, should we neglect a matter of so much practical utility? This is an anomaly that should not be allowed to exist longer. It is stated that there is scarcely a respectable school in Europe that, with other articles of apparatus, is not furnished with a pair of globes. The necessity of these aids is settled beyond a question, and we hope that speedily every school in the State will be furnished with them.—*N. Hamp. Journal of Education.*

## V. Papers on Natural History.

### 1. ADDRESS ON NATURAL HISTORY BY PROF. AGASSIZ.

[The following excellent address was delivered at an Educational Meeting, in the State House, Boston, Mass., by Prof. Agassiz. It is full of instruction. Read and ponder every word of it.—*Ed.*]

“I wish to awaken a conviction that the knowledge of nature, in our days, lies at the very foundation of the prosperity of States; that the study of the phenomena of nature is one of the most efficient means for the development of the human faculties, and that, on these accounts, it is highly important that that branch of education should be introduced into our schools as soon as possible.

To satisfy you how important the study of nature is to the community at large, I need only allude to the manner in which, in modern times, man has learned to control the forces of nature, and to work out the material which our earth produces. The importance of that knowledge to the welfare of man is everywhere manifested to us; and I can refer to no better evidence to prove that there is hardly any other training better fitted to develop the highest faculties of man, than by alluding to that venerable old man, Humboldt, [since dead,] who is the embodiment of the most extensive human knowledge in our day, who has acquired that position, and who has become the object of reverence throughout the world merely by his devotion to the study of nature.

If it be true that a knowledge of nature is so important for the welfare of States, and for the training of men to such high positions among their fellows, by the development of their best faculties, how desirable that such study should form a part of all education! and I