

any branch of instruction would yield more certain and more abundant fruit.

In my boyhood I never, by any accident, had my attention directed to the beauties or excellencies of English literature. "Paradise Lost" was used only for the odious exercise of parsing; and the noblest lines of Milton are to this day connected with the pattering of conjugations and declensions. No more effectual way could be taken to disenchant the student than by breaking the lines, as upon the wheel, and analyzing the still quivering members by the dull rules of syntax.

In a few modern schools, English literature receives attention, but they are generally high schools. The bulk of our children, however, never reach the high school; and, if they did, there is no reason why the study should not be taken up earlier. Abolish the profitless reading of scrap-books, and let each day's reading be given, in turn, to some branch of natural science, to history, and to literature. The elements of good reading are few and simple; and these can be attended to as incidents. If special practice in elocution is desired, the teacher can make use of a work like that of Legvis' "How to Read." Each pupil will show by his voice and manner whether he appreciates what he is reading. The cultivation of natural and proper tones, the adaptation of manner to the style—as in narrative or descriptive prose, and in humorous, pathetic, or dramatic verse—will come naturally, under the skilful teacher's care.

There cannot be too much reading of good authors. No one ever became an elegant or even a correct writer by following the precepts of grammarians, or the prim examples of literary Pharisees. A knowledge of the structure of our language and the natural relations of its parts, the power of using appropriate imagery, the nice discrimination between apparent synonyms and the easy, fluent motion in which thoughts roll on, can only be acquired by long and intimate acquaintance with the works in which these traits are exemplified.

Experience has proved that even young pupils take up these courses of reading in literature as well as in science with avidity. In schools where they have been introduced, no exercises are so eagerly anticipated or so thoroughly enjoyed.

A WORD WITH SCHOOL TRUSTEES.

The time is rapidly approaching when engagements between trustees and teachers will have to be made for next year, where they have to be made at all. It may not be out of place, therefore, to offer to school boards a little friendly advice, based on a long course of experience and observation in school matters. I take for granted that all trustees who accept the office do so with the intention of discharging its duties with an eye single to the best interests of the school and the boys and girls in the neighbourhood, who depend on it for whatever education they are to receive. The responsibility devolving on a school trustee is no light affair. To my mind, the liability to heavy penalties for neglecting the duties specified in the text of the school law and regulations is the smallest part of it. He has it in his power to make or mar, to a very great extent, the future of the children of his village or section. He can, by carelessness or false economy, deprive them almost entirely of the benefits of a sound and liberal education, just as he can by strict attention to his duties and enlightened liberality confer upon all who like to avail themselves of it, the inestimable boon of a good educational outfit. I would like to be able to believe that all trustees feel their responsibility and act accordingly, but as my present object is to offer advice and not inflict a lecture, I urge upon you:—

1. To engage your next year's teacher as soon as possible. There are good teachers and bad teachers, and you may depend upon it that, in spite of the great progress we have made during the past few years, the bad still far outnumber the good. It is easier to hit upon an inferior teacher than a superior one, and the longer you leave off making a choice the greater is the chance of your failing to make a good one. The best teachers are always sought after. They have a local reputation, it not one still more extensive. They do not require to search for a good school, for a choice of good schools is thrust upon them. Trustees wiser than you, if you keep putting the matter off, will step in ahead of you, secure the very man you had in your mind's eye, and leave you a choice between none at all and one you know to be unworthy of the high trust you are compelled to repose in him. Choose then at once, but choose deliberately and intelligently.

2. Choose for your teacher a well-educated man. It is a great mistake to suppose that because there are in your section no children beyond the third class, a third class teacher is good enough for you. A third class teacher is not well enough educated for any school if a second or a first class teacher can be procured. The higher a man rises in the ranks of educated men the more active and vigorous, as a rule, he will be found, and activity of both body and mind are absolutely essential to success in teaching. And then how can a third class teacher prepare to advantage third class candidates; and if there are a few boys and girls in the neighbourhood anxious to prepare for something higher than third class, how are they to get the necessary training? Every teacher who is worthy of the name will rise through the various grades just as rapidly as possible, and if you get one with a low certificate, try to make sure that he is at all events one who is not contented with his station.

3. Choose one who has shown that he knows how to impart his knowledge to others. Visit the man of your choice in his school. See him at work for a considerable time, and at different times. Notice his methods of instruction in the various subjects of the programme. Observe whether he can keep the attention of his class fixed on the work, and whether his pupils are compelled by his skill to follow him in his prelections. Judge for yourself whether he thoroughly comprehends what he is trying to teach, and whether he is making the children comprehend it too. Notice whether he has to fall back on clap-net devices to secure attention, or whether there is visible either in himself or his little hearers the kindling eye that indicates enthusiasm in the work. If he is cold and lifeless his class will be the same, and you can safely pass him by, whatever his literary qualifications may be.

4. Choose a man who has a good moral character, and is capable of exercising a good moral influence. He must be a thorough disciplinarian, but his dominion over his little subjects must be based on moral and intellectual superiority, not on brute force. A good teacher can govern any school without constantly resorting to corporal punishment, and if on visiting a school you see the switch laid out so as to be easily reached in an emergency have nothing to do with its owner. If a teacher must keep a rod for the child's back he ought at least to keep it out of sight, and use it as rarely as possible. Do not get one who smokes or chews tobacco, or is afflicted with any other bad habit you would like to see kept from spreading in the school. No teacher can afford to check in his pupils what he practises himself, for they cannot be deceived.

5. Choose one who will never forget that he is a man and a gentleman, either in the school room, at the family fireside, or in society. Shun fops as you would blockheads, in fact the terms are often synonymous. Let the man of your choice be one who can exercise self-control, and who will never allow a hasty or a vulgar expression to pass his lips.