

be color-starved, when even advertising cards of exquisite workmanship are scattered broadcast as the leaves of the forest. Men and women of genius have long felt the need of revealing to children the beauties of literature and art. Many years ago, Charles Lamb and his sister wrote the charming "Tales from Shakespeare," and to this day hundreds of young eyes open wide with wonder as the great magician's plays are so beautifully told to them in the quaint words of the gentle Elia. What can be a richer treat than to listen to some good mother as she reads the old Greek myths, as told in the "Wonder Book" with Hawthorne's exquisite language? And so with other authors and their works. Longfellow and his "Evangeline," Whittier and his "Snow Bound," Lewis Carroll and the adventures of his sweet, little Alice in "Wonderland," Charles Dickens and his touching pictures of child life, Miss Yonge and her charming histories—these, and many more, are full of entertainment and instruction for little people. Nay, more, all such literature serves to educate the finer feelings, develop the power of observation, and quicken the mind to all that is true and beautiful.

A great deal of this literature must be reserved for more mature years, and yet much more of it might easily be brought within the grasp of children by intelligent parents. Think of the contrast between the artistic skill and workmanship expended upon juvenile literature to-day and that of scarcely twenty years ago! Compare the picture books of this Christmas illustrated by Walter Crane, Kate Greenaway, Rosina Emmett, and a dozen other artists with the ugly daubs of colors which were the best, only a few years ago. There is almost a liberal education in the study of this year's volumes of our two leading juvenile magazines.

It is not otherwise in art and music. On every side there is every opportunity, at a trifling expense, to educate the taste of children to all that is good and beautiful. With the sun as a helper, the works of the world's great artists are reproduced at a nominal sum. It is not enough that our young folks see all these things from the street, in the shop or art gallery, but the best of literature, art, and music should be simplified and given to them daily as a matter of course. The cheap photograph or heliotype print, hung up in the child's bed-room, should suggest stories to be told and retold. Every famous picture, statue, or other work of art, whether seen in the original or in copy, has in itself a story as fascinating as the "Sleeping Beauty," or the melodies of "Mother Goose" herself, if the wise parent will only throw the same glamour over them as he does over the old-time fairy tales. Every statue, every picture, and every fact, or legend of literary or historical interest, in and around one's own town, should be as familiar to every child as his own playthings. All these things must be simplified, and the stories made as interesting as one of Andersen's fairy tales. And then, again, the eyes of little people should be trained to appreciate the beauties of color. Its combinations should always be chosen with care, even in cheap adornments or wall-paper. In these and many other ways, little faces are lighted up with pleasure, and a new zest given to their lives by means within the reach of all.

Only a few more years and our children will become the men and women of the next generation. If, as a people, we are to live up to the principles of true æstheticism, our younger generation must be trained to appreciate, as it grows, mentally and physically, all the beauties of form, color, and sound. The material is all around us. It only remains for us to utilize it.—*National Journal*.

The true test of primary instruction is skill in so teaching that every child looks at the faces of the thought, and not at its clothing; studies the idea, and not its words. The immediate results appear the same; but one is a worthless sham, the other is eternal truth. Give less thought to what you teach, than how to teach it; less to what the child knows, than how she knows it.—*Primary Teacher*.

## ENGLISH IN SCHOOLS.\*

Why should English Literature be taught in our schools? and, What is the best way of teaching it? These are the questions which I propose to discuss.

As preliminary to such discussion, it will, I think, be rightly in place to consider, briefly, what our people are aiming to prepare their children for, and what sort of an education it is the proper business of the school to give, that is to say, what form of mind and character, and what disposition of the faculties, it is meant to impress.

Now I take it that a vast majority of the pupils in our schools are not to pass their life as students or as authors. Their main business in this world is to gain an honest living for themselves and for those dependent on them. And no plan of education is just that leaves this prime consideration behind, in quest of any alleged higher aims. For there really are no higher aims; and all pretence of such is a delusion and a snare. Some men, it is true, do more than gain an honest living; but this is the *best* thing that any man does, as, on the other hand, shining intellectually is the poorest thing that any man does, or can possibly learn to do. Then, too, most of the pupils in our schools, ninety-nine hundredths of them at the least, are to get their living by hand-work, not by head-work; and what they need is, to have their heads so armed and furnished as to guard their hand-work against error and loss, and to guide it to the most productive means and methods. And, for gaining an honest living by hand-work, the largest and best part of their education is not to be had in school; it must be got somewhere else, or not at all. The right place, the only right place, for learning the trade of a farmer or a mechanic is on the farm or in the shop. For instance, Mr. Edward Burnett's "Deerfoot Farm," in Southborough, Massachusetts, is, I undertake to say, a better school for learning agriculture than any "agricultural college" is likely to be. There is no practicable, nay, no possible way of acquiring the use of tools but by actually handling them, and working with them. And this rule holds equally true in all the walks of life—holds as true of the lawyer, the physician, the merchant, as of the shoemaker, the bricklayer, the machinist, the blacksmith.

On this point, our people generally, at least a very large portion of them, have their notions all wrong side up: their ideas and expectations in the matter are literally preposterous. How the thing came to be so, it were bootless to inquire; but so it clearly is. Parents, with us, are manifestly supposing that it is the business of the school to give their children all the education needful for gaining an honest living; that their boys and girls ought to come from the school-teacher's hands fully armed and equipped for engaging, intelligently and successfully, in all sorts of work, whether of head or of hand. And they are evermore complaining and finding fault because this is not done; that their children, after all, have only learnt how to use books, if indeed they have learnt that, and know no more how to use tools, are no better fitted to make or procure food and clothes, than if they had spent so much time in stark idleness or in sleep. But the fault is in themselves, not in the school; their expectations on this head being altogether unreasonable, and such as the school cannot possibly answer. That, say what you please, is the plain English of the matter; and it may as well be spoken.

I repeat that, with very few exceptions, and those mostly applicable to girls, the most and the best that the school can do, or can reasonably be expected to do, is to educate the mind and the heart; as for the education of their children's hands, parents must,

\*By H. N. HUTCHESS, LL.D., author of *Harvard Shakespeare*, *Shakespeare's Life, Art, and Characters*, etc. Ginn, Heath, & Co., Boston.