

I believe that so far as qualifications of school teachers are concerned, mistresses of elementary schools should be graduates of a high school, and the mistresses of high schools should be college graduates.

No one can teach all or one-half of what he or she may know. Teachers should keep at least four years ahead of the pupil.

A hope and dream that I have cherished is that at some time a higher college for teachers shall be started a department similar to the present law and medical departments of universities where nothing but sociology, logic, ethics, educational economy, etc., will be the course, and the course to last two years. I may be too sanguine, but, like Plato, I am a man with aspirations.

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Suggestions on Teaching Literature.

We are told that the way to become a good writer is to write; this sounds plausible, like many other pretty sayings equally remote from fact. No one thinks that the way to become a good medical practitioner is to practice; that is the method of quacks. The best way to indeed to become a good writer, is to be born of the right sort of parents; this fundamental step having been unaccountably neglected by many children, the instructor has to do what he can with second or third class material. Now a wide reader is usually a correct writer; and he has reached the goal in the most delightful manner, without feeling the penalty of Adam. What teacher ever found in his classes a boy who knew his Bible, who enjoyed Shakespeare, and who loved Scott, yet who, with this outfit, wrote illiterate compositions? This youth writes well principally because he has something to say, for reading maketh a full man; and he knows what correct writing is in the same way that he knows his friends—by intimate acquaintance. No amount of mere grammatical and rhetorical training, nor even of constant practice in the art of composition, can attain the results reached by the child who reads good books because he loves to read them. We would not take the extreme position taken by some, that all practice in theme-writing is time thrown away; but after a costly experience of the drudgery that composition work forces on teacher and pupil, we would say emphatically that there is no educational method at present that involves so enormous an outlay of time, energy, and money, with so correspondingly small a result. To neglect the teaching of literature for the teaching of composition, or to assert that the second is the more important, is like showing a hungry man how to work his jaws instead of giving him something to eat. In order to support this with evidence, let us take the experience of a specialist who investigated the question by reading many hundred sophomore com-

positions in two of our leading colleges, where the natural capacity and previous training of the students were fairly equal. In one college every freshman wrote themes steadily through the year, with an accompaniment of sound instruction in rhetorical principles; in the other college every freshman studied Shakespeare, with absolutely no training in rhetoric and with no practice in composition. A comparison of the themes written in their sophomore year by these students showed that technically the two were fully on a par. That is weighty and most significant testimony.

If the teachers of English in secondary schools were people of real culture themselves, who both knew and loved literature, who tried to make it attractive to their pupils, and who were given a sufficient time-allotment to read a number of standard books with their classes, the composition question would largely take care of itself. Mere training in theme-writing can never take the place of the acquisition of ideas, and the boy who thinks interesting thoughts will usually write not only more attractively, but more correctly, than the one who has worked tread-mill fashion in sentence and paragraph architecture. The difference in the teacher's happiness, vitality, and consequent effectiveness is too obvious to mention.—*The Century (Editorial).*

The Cause for Old Maids.

Much time and thought have been spent, of late, in trying to solve the "old maid question," with the result now and again of the thinker being logically forced to the conclusion that possibly the standard of manhood needed to be elevated somewhat before modern womanhood would bow low before her lord and master. This was tersely expressed "by one of them" in the following instance:—

The professor of natural science at Ann Arbor was discussing the process of fertilizing plants by means of insects carrying pollen from one plant to another, and to amuse them told how the old maids were the ultimate cause of it all. The humble bees carry the pollen; the field mice eat the humble bees; therefore the more field mice the fewer humble bees and the less pollen and variation of plants. But cats devour the field mice and old maids protect cats. Therefore the more old maids, the more cats, the fewer field mice, the more bees. Hence old maids are the cause of variety in plants. Thereupon a sophomore with a single eye-glass, an English umbrella, a box-coat, with his "trousers" rolled up at the bottom, arose and asked:—

"I s-a-y, professah, what is the cause—ah—of old maids, don't you know?"

"Perhaps Miss Jones can tell you," suggested the professor.

"Dudes," said Miss Jones sharply and without a moment's hesitation. There was a silence in the room for the space of thirty seconds, after which the lecture was resumed.