

Miscellaneous.

THOROUGHNESS IN TEACHING.

Extract from the Hon. Horace Mann's Speech, at the close of the Convention of the friends of Education, held in Philadelphia, October 17th, 18th and 19th, 1849.

We have before us the practical teachers,—men who devote themselves to the business of the school-room, who do not exercise a very diffusive influence in a broad sphere, but an intense influence in a narrow sphere,—points of strong light thrown upon a small space, rather than wider radiations of a flame that is weakened by its expansion. What are the duties of the school teachers? I have not time to enumerate or define them. I cannot even mention the names in the long catalogue; but I will call your attention to one which comes very near to embracing all. By this one, I mean *thoroughness*, in every thing you teach. *Thoroughness thoroughness*—and again I say, *THOROUGHNESS* is the secret of success. You heard some admirable remarks this morning from a gentleman from Massachusetts. (Mr. Sears,) in which he told us that a child, in learning a single lesson, might get not only an idea of the subject matter of that lesson, but an idea how lessons should be learned,—a general idea, not only how that subject should be learned, but how all subjects should be studied. A child in compassing the simplest subject, may get an idea of perfectness, which is the type or archetype of all excellence, and this idea may modify the action of his mind through his whole course of life.

Be thorough, therefore, be complete in every thing you do; leave no enemy in ambush behind you, as you march on, to rise up in the rear and assail you. Leave no broken link in the chain you are daily forging. Perfect your work so that, when it is subjected to the trials and the experience of life, it will not be found wanting.

It was within the past year that I saw an account in the public papers of a terrible gale in one of the harbors of the Chinese seas. It was one of those *typhoons* as they are called, which lay prostrate not only the productions of nature, but the structures of man. In this harbor were lying at anchor the vessels of all nations, and among them the United States sloop of war Plymouth. Every vessel broke its cable but one. The tornado tossed them about, and dashed them against each other, and broke them like egg shells. But amidst this terrific scene of destruction, our government vessel held fast to its moorings, and escaped unharmed. Who made the links of that cable, that the strength of the tempest could not rend? Yes! Who made the links of that cable that the tempest could not rend? Who was the workman, whose work saved property and human life from ruin, otherwise inevitable? Could that workman have beheld the spectacle, and heard the raging of the elements, and seen the other vessels as they were dashed to pieces, and scattered abroad, while the violence of the tempest wreaked itself upon his own work in vain, would he not have had the amplest and purest reward for the fidelity of his labor?

So, in the after periods of your existence, whether it be in this world or from another world, from which you may be permitted to look back, you may see the consequences of your instruction upon the children whom you have trained. In the crises of business life, where intellectual accuracy leads to immense good, and intellectual mistakes to immense loss, you may see your pupils distinguishing between error and truth, between false reasoning and sound reasoning, leading all who may rely upon them to correct results, establishing the highest reputation for themselves, and conferring incalculable good upon the community.

So, if you have been wise and successful in your moral training, you will have prepared them to stand unshaken and unseduced amidst temptations, firm where others are swept away, uncorrupted where others are depraved, unconsumed where others are blasted and perished. You may be able to say that, by the blessing of God, you have hoped to do this thing. And will not such a day be a day of more exalted and sublime joy than if you could have looked upon the storm in the eastern seas, and known that it was your handy-work that saved the vessel unharmed amid the wrecks that floated around it?

Would not such a sight be a reward great and grand enough to satisfy and fill up any heart, mortal or immortal?

From the New-York Commercial Advertiser.

VOCAL MUSIC IN GERMANY,—HOW TAUGHT.

BY WM. M. BRADBURY.

Vocal music is, in Germany, deemed of such importance to all classes that, for generations, it has been introduced by Government as a prominent Branch of popular education. The child enters school at the age of eight years, and remains in the same school until fourteen or fifteen.

There seem to be three paramount reasons for making music a branch of school education in Germany and Switzerland. 1st, its power as a direct means of mental and moral discipline. 2d, Its attractiveness as an amusement or relaxation from laborious study. 3d, Its advantages in after life to the pupil, both as a social and a religious being. In all of these particulars it is considered of great importance; and in the best schools I have visited, viz: those of Leipzig and Dresden in Saxony, Zurich and Berne in Switzerland, the popular course has been to adapt each music lesson to one or the other or all of these branches. To be more explicit. The music teacher either gives at one season of the year his particular attention to instruction in the elements of music and music reading; at another to rehearsal or singing for relaxation or amusement; and at another to practicing the music of the church; or else, as is more generally the case, he combines the three departments in one, and each lesson has its share, viz, 1st, practice of the music of the church (choral singing); 2d, instruction in musical notation; 3d, singing of cheerful and lively juvenile songs, for recreation. This arrangement pleased me much. It affords great variety and does not become tiresome to the pupils.

The pupils begin to study note singing at the age of nine or ten years. Previous to that they sing chiefly or entirely by note. This is considered advantageous until the musical ear is sufficiently trained and cultivated. The scale is first presented to the pupil, not by sight but by sound. The teacher sings it slowly and distinctly till all seem to understand, or at least to get some idea of its construction, and of the comparative relation of sounds, one to another. After explaining something of the formation of the scale, its intervals, &c. the teacher writes it upon the black-board, or calls their attention to it in the book, observing particularly the situation of the semi-tones. He now tells them that these characters (the notes) represents the sounds they have just sung, and that each sound has a name taken from one of the letters from the alphabet. This method is very thorough, although somewhat lengthy. The pupils sing almost entirely from books, the black board being used merely for illustration. The more advanced classes of pupils are improved by the frequent introduction and regular practice of new and interesting music, rather than by dry and unconnected exercises. Much time is spent, in the best schools, in practising the vowels, merely articulating them for the purpose of obtaining a good delivery, both in singing and speaking.

But one of the pleasantest features of all this is that the pupils are not wearied by too hard study, or if they become a little fatigued at any time, they know that some delightful recreation is to follow. Variety and entertainment are mingled with instruction, and the pleasure of half an hour's social singing is a sufficient reward for persevering in any of the more laborious and less interesting exercises. I was much amused and delighted, on one occasion, to see the young countenances beam with a smile of approbation, amounting to "I thank you, sir," when the teacher, after a lesson of close elementary study, said, "Now we'll sing something lively," for it is natural to children to love that music best which is most like their own natures—light, joyous and free. Now they sing briskly, merrily, heartily, because naturally. The little mill-stream, that has so long been dammed up that it may accumulate strength to drive the heavy wheel, when once more set at liberty goes leaping, and dancing, and singing along its sparkling way, rejoicing in its freedom. So do these little singers pass from the heavy and useful, but not dull choral practice and elementary confinement, to the merry "song of the cuckoo" and "the lark," to the singer's song, and the "song of father's birth day;" to the songs of the season—of the sun, and stars, of the "beautiful world and the blessed giver God," with the ever dear and welcome songs of "Vaterland." These are the daily occurrences of the "school room," and if you