

The Public Schools

Some Inconsiderate Parents in London.

"Will the Child Pass?" Too Often the Sole Question.

Fathers and Mothers Responsible for Hurtful Rushing.

Visiting Schools in Season Should Be Discouraged.

By a Teacher.

"Infant reason grows and calms, for the mind hand of an angel is care."

Delightful task to rear the tender thought, to teach the young idea how to shoot."

Write Thomson, but he wrote it better the mad whirl of competitive examinations and cram drew everyone, from the tender little child to the grave teacher, into its vortex, or he might have modulated his idea.

Parents are in a great measure responsible for the great ideal in the schools; they have mistaken, if not the aims, at least the means of an education.

This anxiety centers in having their children "keep up with the procession."

Few parents inquire of the teacher, "Is it well with the child?" Is every power of his soul being unfolded, every crude principle of his life started up and nourished, his whole nature cultured, and are impulses on which strength and worth depend being carefully attended to?"

"Will the child pass?" is the vital question, and nothing will bring a parent more promptly to the school than to have a child fail to pass. Then if "passing" is almost the sole desire of the parent with regard to the child, little Johnny must seem as smart as Mrs. Nextdoor's little Willie, or a little smarter if possible.

The teacher, in self-defense, is obliged against his better judgment and his conscience, to adopt the same standard—he must also keep in the procession.

Those who imagine a teacher's life one long summer day, without a cloud to hide the bright sunshine, should spend, say, an hour in the attempt to rule 50 or 60 boys and girls longing for freedom. The chances are that long before the time has expired he will have come to the conclusion that the school day is long enough, without any staying in after 4, or preparing and correcting exercises at home, and that there are not too many pupils.

Or, in lieu of this, let him teach seven or eight ordinary little boys for one hour on Sunday, and he will realize that teaching eight times as many all week means.

More sympathy between parents and teachers would produce better teaching. But the parent who has been an utter failure in controlling his own few children, whose character he has had the privilege of studying from their childhood, is the most exacting tyrant when other attempt such control. A mother will say, "I hope you won't ever punish my little dear. I should die if he ever has to be whipped," and soon he does need punishment—these petted, spoiled darlings always do—and unfortunately the mother is not die. Instead, she comes to why her request was not attended to, and her little boy looked at kindly when he was naughty.

Those untimely visits! What precious hours of the pupils' time are wasted by them. Some say that parents should show their interest by frequent visits to the school. What utter nonsense! It is well known that a late comer or a noisy child in church attracts more attention than the sermon, and this with grown-up people. Then how can we expect the little undisciplined children to give their minds to study when strangers are constantly coming and going? Except in special cases parents should see the teacher when the class is not in session.

There is the parent who wants Freddie pushed on; he can do any amount of home-work, and is so strong, and should get "through" quicker than others, because he is really very smart, etc. Now, it is generally true that Freddie resists this pushing process, perhaps unfortunately for himself, and the teacher is not a clever enough detective to discover how really smart he is. There is also the parent who informs you that he pays enough taxes for his son to get on as fast as he can, and is determined to have him do so, even if he has to "buy him a capacity."

"I don't want my boy taught grammar nor such like; just readin', writin' and figgerin' is all I can afford to give him." Is a desire frequently expressed, and so the teacher is expected to make an exceptional case of that boy, and it is generally useless to inform the parent that the programme of studies cannot be changed for individual pupils—he will not understand.

"Please excuse Edward; I sent him on a message." Armed with this request on a scrap of paper, Edward marches in late and noisily takes his seat, watched by fifty or more pairs of eyes, and has to have the part of the lesson already taken up explained to him. Did the mother who sent that note ever consider the injury she was doing her son in preventing him from forming habits of punctuality? Did she consider that everyone in that room has as much right to the privilege of rendering service at home after school was called as her son? Did she then consider that his coming in late was a very grievous wrong done to

others, and that she, who should have been her boy's best teacher as well as his first, was training him to trample on the rights of others? If she had thought carefully on the matter, the message would have been attended to earlier. It is this lack of consideration that destroys the bond of sympathy between home and school.

A child is sent to school with others, partly that he may learn proper conduct with regard to others, and his relative value in the world. This is just what a father or mother fails to understand. To the parent the child is of the first importance; to the teacher he is only one of many, all equally important. In a class of 50 your son has a right to just one-fiftieth of the individual thought and care of the teacher. You may have discovered the pin feathers of the swan on your own little duckling, but so has almost every other parent (it flatters his vanity to do so), and you cannot expect that more time should be bestowed on your child than on any other, that he should escape punishment for misconduct more than the others, that he should be allowed to be your only treasure, or that he should be rushed at break-neck speed because you want to be the envy of parents with less brilliant sons. Of course, the children themselves "Flood" before "Flood" came, a second article had been commissioned from a source that was believed to be a true value, but when the article came it was found to be worse than the first. A third article was then commissioned, and care was taken to secure its fidelity. If you look for the word "Flood" in the dictionary, you will find a reference to "Noah." Under the name you will find an article written by a distinguished professor of Cambridge, of which I remember that Bishop Colenso said to me at the time, "In a very guarded way, the writer concedes the whole thing."

SCIENCE AND THE SCRIPTURES

Many people seem to think that criticism has destroyed the value of the Scriptures. Dr. White, on the other hand, thinks that criticism has increased their value. The new value is a true value, the old one was limited. Science, he says, has found in our Scriptures a far nobler truth than in literal, historical exactness for which theologians have so long and so vainly contended. More and more, as we consider the results of the great struggle in this field we are brought to the conclusion that the inestimable value of the great sacred books is found in their higher revelation of the steady striving of our race after higher conceptions, beliefs and aspirations, both in morals and religion. Unfolding and exhibiting this long-continued effort, each of the great sacred books of the world is precious and all in the highest sense are true. They are true because they have been developed in accordance with the laws governing the evolution of truth in human history, and because in poem, chronicle, code, legend and prophecy or narrative they reflect this development of what is best in the onward march of humanity. Modern science, in substituting a new heaven and a new earth for the old, has added and is steadily adding a new revelation divinely inspired.

INVINCIBLE TRUTH.

Much of the story Dr. White has to tell is pitiable and sad beyond measure, and the nineteenth century cannot boast itself of clean hands. The stake and the rack are done away with, but there is a moral torture which equals in cruelty the implements of the Middle Ages. The chapter which tells of the evolution of the higher criticism in one of the most important of these 800 pages, and yet is largely a record of the persecution of men who, with Kepler, thought the sun was the center of the universe. The story of the "Pentateuch" will seem almost incredible and yet it is little over twenty years since the bishop's book appeared. Since have loved best what they believed to be true, rather than the truth itself. They have failed to see the superb majesty of living truth, and have spent their lives in a dislike. They have failed to see that what is called science is but the unveiling of the hidden face of the Eternal; that each discovery reveals a new facet of the divine mind, and enables men to know God better, and that only as men know God do they reach to their own full stature. And though men have failed in these failures is pitiable, there is yet a triumphant aspect in it all; for, despite ignorance and stupidity, failure and weakness, crime and malice, the truth has persisted; its growth is irresistible, its trumpet tones rise clear and strong above the howling winds of error; and one day, when the mists have been blown away, when the truth has made manifest, when the vision is keen enough, and hearts pure enough to perceive that everything that is once a thought in the Divine Mind; that there is nothing unclean, nothing which should not be known; in that day they will know that he who enters upon the path of truth, the secret places of the Most High is most after his own heart, and that they who stood trembling without and were most miserable, and of all men most unworthy of the life which is man's for the taking.

RUINS OF DONGOLA.

A Country Wasted by Misgovernment Now Ruled by Britain.

I should like those in England, who would leave the fertile provinces of the Sudan under the rule of the Baggara slave-dealers, to wander through what was once the town of Dongola and ride across the wasted country that surrounds it. Dongola is in ruins; not a house in it remains whole; every building has been gutted, where once were busy streets the paths now rise above the wrecked habitations, and every thoroughfare is choked with a dense undergrowth of thorny bushes and tall, rank grass. The great bazaar, with its covered arcades, one of the chief marts of Africa, is now a heap of rubble.

Of the public buildings and the handsome, well-furnished mansions of the principal merchants the red-brick walls, with gracefully arched doors and windows, alone remain standing, while within these one can still see traces of columned corridors and delicate eastern ornamentation. Where once extended riverside quays swampy ground now slopes to the Nile. The broad avenue where the market used to be held has disappeared; the pleasant gardens of fruit trees and flowers have been destroyed. For twelve years Dongola has been uninhabited for the Baggara declare it to be as the city of the unbelieving Turks—an accursed place, in which no man should be permitted to dwell. Those who knew the Dongola of old find it difficult now to find their way through the wrecked streets, so completely have the houses in which they formerly lived.

It is a scene of wanton destruction; the growth says that what was the Turk's has now been destroyed. He disdains to do any work; by profession he is a roving and destruction is his pastime. He enslave where he does not kill, and in the place of what he destroys he creates nothing. Civil

ization is abhorrent to him; after plundering and destroying the city he left the bodies of the massacred and mutilated inhabitants to rot in the streets, and went out into the desert content to live the life of a savage in one of the squalid hovels of which a Dervish "deryn," or permanent camp, is composed.

Now, as the visitor walks through the melancholy ruins of the once prosperous city and enters the long-abandoned habitations, he comes across strange and sometimes loathsome sights. It is such a city as he has wandered through in dreams, in whose foul, deserted streets and alleys he expects at every step to come across some horrible thing.—London Times Correspondence.

A Laugh--A Smile.

Visitor—That painting is by an old master, I see.

Mrs. McShoddie (apologetically)—Yes, put the frame new.

"What is an accommodation train, papa?"

"An accommodation train, my son, is one that stops at every station that you don't want to get off at."

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"Sir," replied the haughty man, "I am a poet, not a chiropodist."

"A preached asked a college president what he thought of his servant who had been attending one of the public lectures."

"I heard in it what I hope never to hear again."

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"The clock strike twice."

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"Vertically," replied the child, without a moment's hesitation.

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"I don't know about that," she said testily.

"Well, I'm certain of it," he replied so emphatically that she laughed in his face; and he has been wondering ever since what she thought so funny about it.

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"Why not? Don't you think your sex deserves it?"

"I'm not going to discuss that point. Even if we do deserve the criticism, it does not come gracefully from a man who buys hair restorer and asks the good woman: 'Would you rather have a felt or a straw bonnet, Mrs. Wilson?'"

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Mr. Wickwire—All right. Did she give you the money?

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Mr. W.—You—what?"

Mrs. W.—Don't you see? If they are got up in nice style she will stay here until they are all used up. You know how saving she is with anything of her own.

science

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ALL THE SAME TO HIM.

She—Do you think there is any reason why a young lady should not ride a bicycle as well as drive a horse? He—Not at all. It's just as easy to dodge a bicycle as a carriage.

Minard's Lasting Cure Brightens.

Dictionary in Difficulties.

A Good Story Related by Dr. W. B. Carpenter.

Criticism Cannot Destroy Invaluable Truth.

From the New Age.

In the chapter on geology a good story is told of Dr. W. B. Carpenter concerning Smith Dictionary of the Bible.

The idea of the pungent editor, he says, was to give as much scholarship and such results of modern criticism as should be compatible with a very judicious conservatism. There was to be no objection to geology, but the universality of the Bible, when the article came to him, he found that it was so excessively heretical that he could not venture to put it in. There was not time for a second article under that head, and if you look in the dictionary you will find under the word "Deluge" a reference to "Flood" before "Flood" came, a second article had been commissioned from a source that was believed to be a true value, but when the article came it was found to be worse than the first. A third article was then commissioned, and care was taken to secure its fidelity. If you look for the word "Flood" in the dictionary, you will find a reference to "Noah." Under the name you will find an article written by a distinguished professor of Cambridge, of which I remember that Bishop Colenso said to me at the time, "In a very guarded way, the writer concedes the whole thing."

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