

Cleanings.

TEACHING BY EXAMPLE.

Besides the instruction which the teacher gives directly and intentionally, and for which he is supposed to make special preparation, he also teaches many things indirectly and unconsciously, by the force of his example and his character. He is no less responsible for the lessons imparted in this way than for those given in the recitation, and a sense of this responsibility should direct him in the formation of such habits and such a character as shall exert an influence for good—silent but powerful—upon those with whom he comes in contact.

The following are some of the lessons that may be taught. (The thoughtful teacher will extend the list beyond those mentioned in this article.)

Cheerfulness.—Let the teacher begin the morning with a face "as long as the moral law," and he must expect a cloudy day; but let him enter the school-room with

"A sweet, soul-lifting cheerfulness,
Like spring-time of the year,"

and he will have sunshine. There is a contagion in a cheerful disposition, which the teacher can send into many a dark home, where it will lift the clouds and lighten burdens.

Politeness.—This includes all those acts of civility and courtesy which makes one person truly agreeable to another. It involves the treatment of every person with all the consideration that is due to one who is endowed with every attribute of the ideal man or woman. The teacher may deliver daily lectures on the subject, or conduct recitations from the best text-book on "morals and manners," yet, if in his intercourse with his pupils he is morose, boorish, or clownish, his direct instruction will be largely lost. His actions will speak louder than his words. If he gives respectful attention to the questions and recitations of his pupils, he teaches them politeness. If his movements about the room are quiet, dignified and graceful, he teaches politeness. If when he sits he does not lounge, if when he walks he does not drag, if when he speaks he does not drawl or scowl, he teaches politeness. The highest and best type of politeness is but the outward manifestation of genuine goodness of heart. If the teacher, therefore, be a true gentleman or lady, the pupils will receive effective lessons in politeness without effort on his part, and without study on theirs.

Correctness of Speech.—A very large proportion of our people do not use their mother tongue in its purity; their enunciation and pronunciation are bad; their sentences are fragmentary; their language is ungrammatical and often ambiguous; in their speech there is little of cogency or perspicuity, and much of slang. A reform is needed in the use of language, and the teacher should give line upon line and precept upon precept; but these must be supported and enforced by a consistent example. Many persons have such bad habits in the use of language that, though they may recite accurately rule after rule of grammar, yet in their next original sentence they will set all rules at naught. If all our parents and teachers used the English language in its purity, the study of grammar as an art would soon drop out of our course of instruction, and the study would be pursued only as a science. "Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished," and how, but through the teacher, shall it ever be realized?

Industry.—If the teacher is lazy, if he habitually begins school late or closes it early, if he frequently omits part of the recitations, if he lounges about while out of school, he teaches habits of idleness and thriftlessness. If, on the contrary, he is active and energetic, if he always begins and closes school on time, if he fills every recitation hour full of cheerful work, if out of school he engages in useful employment, and in proper recreation at proper times, he teaches lessons of industry, economy, thrift, regularity and punctuality.

Honesty and Integrity.—If on examination days and in the presence of visitors, the teacher calls on the brightest pupils to recite the difficult points, and frames questions for the dull ones which they cannot fail to answer, he is practising deception, and his pupils will know it. If afterwards he finds them attempting to deceive him, he ought to blame himself more than he blames them. If he habitually avoids even the appearance of evil, and his pupils know him to be what he seems to be, if his promises are always kept, if he means what he says and says what he means, if he does not affect knowledge which he does not possess, nor try to cover ignorance which he does possess, he teaches honesty.

If he is a man of incorruptibility and soundness of heart, if he is always loyal to his sense of right, if his adhesion to principles of rectitude is so strong that nothing can break it, if no motive is sufficiently powerful to move him from the strict line of duty, his pupils will see it, will admire his character, and will strive to imitate it. Example is a most powerful teacher, and

"Our lives,
In acts exemplary, not only win
Ourselves good names, but do to others give
Matter for virtuous deeds."

Common School Teacher.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE AIM OF THE MODERN TEACHER?

As soon as physiologists had discovered that all the faculties of the intellect, however originating or upon whatever exercised, were functions of a material organism of brain, absolutely dependent upon its integrity for their manifestation, and upon its growth and development for their improvement, it became apparent that the true office of the teacher of the future would be to seek to learn the conditions by which the growth and the operations of the brain were controlled, in order that he might be able to modify these conditions in a favorable manner. The abstraction of the "mind" was so far set aside as to make it certain that this mind could only act through a nervous structure, and that the structure was subject to various influences for good or evil. It became known that a brain cannot arrive at healthy maturity excepting by the assistance of a sufficient supply of healthy blood—that is to say, of good food and pure air. It also became known that the power of a brain will ultimately depend very much upon the way in which it is habitually exercised, and that the practice of schools in this respect left a great deal to be desired. A large amount of costly and pretentious teaching fails dismally for no other reason than because it is not directed to any knowledge of the mode of action of the organ to which the teacher endeavors to appeal; and mental growth in many instances occurs in spite of teaching rather than on account of it. Education, which might once have been defined as an endeavor to expand the intellect by the introduction of mechanically compressed facts, should now be defined as an endeavor favorably to influence a vital process; and, when so regarded, its direction should manifestly fall somewhat into the hands of those by whom the nature of vital processes has been most completely studied. In other words, it becomes neither more nor less than a branch of applied physiology; and physiologists tell us with regard to it that the common processes of teaching are open to the grave objection that they constantly appeal to the lower centres of nervous function, which govern the memory of and the reaction upon sensations, rather than to those higher ones which are the organs of ratiocination and of volition. Hence a great deal which passes for education is really a degradation of the human brain to efforts below its natural capacities.—*From "Science in the English Schools," in Popular Science Monthly for September.*

I hold it as a great point in self-education that the student should be continually engaged in forming exact ideas, and in expressing them clearly by language. Such practice insensibly opposes any tendency to exaggeration or mistake, and increases the sense and love of truth in every part of life. Those who reflect upon how many hours and days are devoted by a lover of sweet sounds to gain a moderate facility upon a mere mechanical instrument, ought to feel the bluntness of shame if convicted of neglecting the beautiful living instrument wherein play all powers of the mind.—*Professor Faraday.*

LETTER TO A TEACHER.—Miss Q.—Don't teach my boy no more sounding of his a b b's I'll learn him that at home. And don't waist your time over the jinnasticks—he gits enuf of them over the back gate. You hav too much foolin goin on I'm aferd your skolars dont learn much. his mother mis M—

—Reading furnishes the mind only with the materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough for us to cram ourselves with a great load of collections,—we must chew them over again.—*Channing.*