

on business principles, purchase books in this way, unless, perhaps, from writers whose fame was world-wide. Certainly no educational authority should prescribe a work for use in the public schools until its merits have been closely examined and approved by the most competent judges. The interests of public education demand, first of all, that the text-books in every department be the very best that can be procured, and the public should have, and if it is wise will insist upon having, ample guarantees on this score.

A prime object with the true teacher will always be to teach the pupil to think. There is a delight in the conscious exercise of power. Every one knows what a joy the healthy child derives in the exercise of its physical powers, in running, jumping, climbing, &c. There can be no doubt that nature intended that no less delight should accompany mental exertion. In fact the pleasures attendant on mental gymnastics are higher in kind, and keener in degree than any which belong simply to bodily organization. But the difficulty too often is that the thinking faculties are left so long undeveloped that action becomes slow and painful, or that wrong ideas and methods of instruction create a distaste for vigorous mental exertion. Thus study, which should, within healthful limits, be the most delightful of recreations, comes to be associated in the youthful mind with pains and penalties. The teacher's first aim in the case of the dull child should be to stimulate the mind till effort becomes pleasurable after which success is sure.

An American exchange notes with regret that outside the colleges, teachers are not contributing largely to the general literature of the country, and asks, "Why is this so? Is teaching such a grad-grind calling, that the heart and brain are crushed, and the sensibilities dulled, or is there no ambition to improve the opportunities?" We fear the general remarks would hold too true of teachers everywhere. Every teacher who does his best knows full well how exhausting to the nervous system are the wear and strain of five or six hours of the intense work and worry of the school room, and how unfitted one often feels at the close for engaging in anything making fresh demand to any severe extent upon the brain. When to all this that belongs to the normal practice of the profession, there is added the overwork too often imposed by the multiplied "crams" and examinations of our modern competitive methods, it is not surprising that the average teacher has neither time nor inclination for roving in literary pastures. And yet the example of the few proves that even to the teacher, with keen literary tastes and ambition great things are possible. The use of the pen is the best of all helps in the study either of nature or of books, and, rightly pursued, literary work within certain limits may be made a recreation rather than a task. The pupils, the public, and the teacher himself would all be greatly profited in the end.

The *School Guardian* of London, England, thinks there is some danger of zealous educationists over there "running a little wildly in the matter of technical education." It ob-

serves correctly enough that "of the importance of that branch of study there can be no question," and "that it is distinctly a thing apart from ordinary teaching." But when it adds that "it cannot with propriety be made a portion of the curriculum of any Elementary School" we begin to hesitate in accompanying the writer, and when he adds "or be proposed as a subject for which a Government grant should be made," we distinctly demur. It would be hard to allege any sound argument in support of Government grants to the ordinary public schools of a country, which could not be shown to be equally valid in favour of technical schools. If it be said that the public should not be called on to pay for the teaching of trades to certain classes of children, it may with equal force be replied that neither should it be called on to pay for the education of clerks, and accountants, and professional men. The fact is that the thing can be justified in any case only on the ground of public utility. Grants in aid of schools are logical only on the assumption that they conduce to the well being of the nation, commercially, socially and morally. And certainly a strong case could be made in support of the view that widespread technical training would conduce in at least an equal degree to these ends.

The need of more or more effective moral training in the public schools is becoming apparent to thinking people of all classes, especially in the United States. The old and favourite notion that crime is the twin-brother of ignorance, and that all that is necessary to make a people highly moral and virtuous is to make them intelligent is no longer accepted as an axiom. Too often boys graduate from the public schools only to enter upon an apprenticeship in some school of vice or crime. His improved brain, in such cases, makes him only the more successful adept in fraudulent or criminal practices. As a New York paper recently put it in true Yankee style, there is great need that to the three r's on which so much stress is now laid, two others should be added as of at least equal importance, viz.: the teaching of "right and wrong." Such teaching to be more effective, should be largely practical and incidental in its character. Little incidents that are constantly occurring in the school-room, or in the play-ground, can be seized upon and made the occasion of valuable lessons. The true method is always the appeal to the moral sense. Every boy and girl has a conscience, and a judicious teacher can usually get that conscience to utter its voice. Let the habit be but formed of testing all action by the great law of right and wrong, and a most valuable step has been gained. Connected with this the appeal to the manliness or the sense of honour of which not even the child is willing to confess himself devoid, will often produce wonderful effects. There is no doubt, however, that a simple, practical manual, so written as to be within the comprehension of a child of ten or twelve, would be of great service to the teacher who is anxious to do his whole duty, and who regards character as the thing of highest importance. The study of such a book would afford abundant opportunities for awakening that moral thoughtfulness, which is a main element of good character in child or adult.