

Literature and Science.

SCHOOL STATISTICS.

"TWAS Saturday night, and a teacher sat
Alone, her task pursuing ;
She averaged this and she averaged that,
Of all that her class were doing,
She reckoned percentage, so many boys,
And so many girls all counted,
And marked all the tardy and absentees,
And to what all the absence amounted.

" Names and residences wrote in full,
Over many columns and pages ;
Vankee, Teutonic, African, Celt,
And averaged all their ages,
The date of admission of every one,
And cases of flagellation,
And prepared a list of all the graduates
For the coming examination.

" Her weary head sank low on her book,
And her weary heart still lower,
For some of her pupils had little brain,
And she could not furnish more.
She slept, she dreamed, it seemed she died,
And her spirit went to hades,
And they met her there with a question fair,
' State what the per cent. of your grade is.'

" Ages had slowly rolled away,
Leaving but partial traces,
And the teacher's spirit walked one day
In the old familiar places ;
A mound of fossilized school reports
Attracted her observation,
As high as the State House dome and as wide
As Boston since annexation.

" She came to the spot where they buried her bones,
And the ground was well built over,
But labourers digging threw out a skull
Once planted beneath the clover.
A disciple of Galen wandering by,
Paused to look at the diggers,
And picking the skull up looked through the eye
And saw it was lined with figures.

" ' Just as I thought,' said the young M.D.
' How easy it is to kill 'em'
Statistics ossified every fold
Of cerebrum and cerebellum.
' It's a great curiosity, sure', says Pat,
' By the bones you can tell the creature?'
' Oh, nothing strange,' said the doctor, ' that
Was a nineteenth century teacher.'"

TURNER AS AN ARTIST.

AS an artist Turner may be said to have blossomed in 1800. Up to that time he had been making acquaintance with his tools and training his hand to their use. He had been a pupil of Sir Joshua's for a time and had acquired enough facility in the use of oil to paint his own portrait, and he had been steadily drawing English landscapes and English architecture and doing it with a care in which much restraint of hand and fancy

is traceable. Suddenly, in 1800, he seems to have lifted his eyes from his paper and fixed them finally on the shifting beauty of the world. Up to this time his thought has been given to the balance and truth of his results, but from henceforth he seems to live in the nature at which he gazes. In the process of digestion and selection he is now, and for the rest of his life, governed by a notion diametrically opposed to that of all great painters before him. He selects, rejects, and simplifies, as every painter must, but he does it on a principle that was new to art. He does it, not to enhance the unity of his picture, but to increase its comprehensiveness. His method is not to remember the material limits of his instrument, and so to bring nature within its easy reach, but so to stretch and expand the powers of paint as to give hints, at least, of beauties which had never been put on canvas or paper before. When he sets up his easel before Kilchurn Castle for instance, he sets his mind to work, not to select from the scene before him those characteristics which tend toward a single expression, but rather to introduce foreign elements ; to take features from a distance, to bring in forms which had caught his fancy the day before or the day before that. In short, his " Kilchurn " is not an impression from the scene, in which some one effect is forced to its highest power by selection and simplification, but a short epitome of the Highlands, into which genius has put as much of its encyclopedic knowledge as the space would hold. Here we have the principle which Turner followed for thirty years of his life. It is one upon which none but a phenomenal mind could work with success. It requires the eye of a hawk, a limitless memory, and a sensibility so deep as to be dangerous to its owner. All these it found in Turner, and it found besides a material environment which allowed a long life to be wholly devoted to its illustration. All these conditions came together to give to the man who enjoyed them a position apart from all other painters and to earn for him the quasi-worship he enjoys in his native country. But we cannot blind ourselves to the facts that it finds but a slight echo in the Latin mind, and that this worship comes mainly from those whose artistic training has been considerable rather than severe. The cause of this will be discussed in a moment. To put Turner's achievements, then, as shortly as I can, it was, I think, the gift to civilization of a new world to master. He opened the gates and explored what was beyond them, but he did not finally conquer, organize, and administer. He led the way from the gray fields, the solemn seas and woods, of the old art to the jeweled colour, the teeming distances and palpitating sunshine of the new, but he left the conquest to be completed in a future which may never come. — *The National Review*.

FRENCH AND ENGLISH SAWS.

WE English seem to have selected the mouse as an emblem in our " As dumb as a mouse ; " the French have preferred a glass, for they say " As dumb as a glass." We say " As deaf as a post ; " the French " As deaf as a pot." " As dull as ditch water " Gallicized becomes " As sad as a nightcap." " Don't count your chickens before they are hatched " is changed into " Don't sell the skin of a bear before having killed it." Instead of " Biting off one's nose to spite one's face," a similarly useless experiment is illustrated by " Spitting in the air that it may fall on one's nose." The self-evident impossibility in the words " You can't get blood out of a stone " is represented by " One could not comb a thing that has no hair." (This last also " goes without saying," which, as literally translated from the French, now forms a proverb in our own language.) In the proverb, " One man may lead a horse to the water, but a hundred can't make him drink," our neighbours have not inappropriately selected an " ass " as the illustrative animal. " When you're in Rome, you must do as Rome does," every Englishman will tell you ; though few, perhaps, could say why Rome was chosen as an example, and whether it is more necessary, when in Rome, to follow the general lead, than in anywhere else, is to us a matter of doubt. To the Frenchman the idea is sufficiently well expressed, however, by impressing upon you the necessity of " howling with the wolves." " Easy come, easy go," though terse and to the point, is in itself scarcely so intelligible as the somewhat longer sentence, " That which comes with the flood returns with the ebb." That " a burned child dreads the fire," is perfectly true, as every one will admit ; our neighbours go further than this, and in choosing a " scalded cat " as the object of consideration, speak of it as being in fear of " cold " water even, thus expressing the natural distrust of the cat, after having once been scalded, as extending even to " cold " water. " Money makes the mare to go," and " For money, dogs dance." — *Chambers's Journal*.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR gives this example of Carlyle's vigorous and reckless speech. Carlyle being ill one day Lady Ashburton insisted that a certain Dr. Wilson should visit him. The doctor went into his room, and presently came flying out again. His account was that Carlyle had received him with a volley of invectives against himself and his profession, saying that " of all the sons of Adam they were the most eminently unprofitable, and that a man might as well pour his sorrows into the long hairy ear of a jackass." Such good stories of the Chelsea Sage are well worth reading. They give us some insight into the character of the great man.