

have found a plant growing on the banks of the Columbia River on a single stem, about a foot high, without fruit or flower, in sprays like rose leaves, that resembles strongly the Virginia creeper in richness of colouring, and that streaks the ground about its locality with brilliant splashes of crimson and gold. The Oregon grape, known in Ontario as the Mahonia, offers a beautiful contrast to these gaudy shades with its low bushes of bright, glossy green leaves and dark blue berries; it grows profusely in all directions, and must be capable of resisting severe frosts in the winter season. Under foot, we have the glow of colour, so that nature seems somewhat reversed; while, overhead, we are surrounded by the dark heavy greens of the firs, pines, and spruces that are indigenous to the soil, with occasional groups of silver birch and white poplar.

The climate is perfect so far as my summer experience goes, and fulfils all that has been said or written of it. We certainly had some very hot days early in July, when I believe a hot wave pervaded the Dominion generally; and I heard that the thermometers in the town ranged at over one hundred degrees in the shade. The air, however, is so rare, one did not feel it at all in the house, and the extreme heat only lasted from eleven till five o'clock; the nights of those days were so cool that blankets were a necessity, and since then the weather has been cool and bracing, except just in the middle of the day, when the sun is directly overhead: it is pleasant to close the windows in the evening and light a small fire. There has never been a single case of sunstroke even among the workmen employed upon the road, which is certainly hard to realize when one feels the power of the sun at noon. The mosquitoes are a sad drawback to Donald; for my own part, I had no idea what a mosquito was or could be till I came here. Out of doors they are a veritable Egyptian plague, and it is an ordinary occurrence to see men walking about, moving first the right then the left hand round the back of their necks in a species of gentle perpetual motion, to ward off the attacks of the insidious insects, and they actually become quite unaware they are doing it; from the force of habit it has become mechanical, and I dare say they continue the practice long after the mosquito itself has departed. A judicious netting of windows, doors, and beds, with a constant renewal of the backwoodsman's smudge, keeps the house fairly free from the nuisance, and I am thankful to say that the present cool and even frosty nights are decidedly abating it.

E. S.

AUGUST IN THE KESWICK VALE.

Now genial August, July's swarthy child,
Comes with the bloom of heather on her cheek,
Rain, cloud, and sun play games of hide-and-seek;
Old Skiddaw frowns, anon is reconciled.
For harvest-home the last hay-cart is piled,
The warm-breathed barns with richest odours reek,
Fresh emerald hues the flowerless meadows streak,
And second Spring upon the vale has smiled.

Sweet second Spring! though all the birds are still,
Yet have we tender life and flutterings,
And innocent new eyes on every spray,
With downy breasts that think we mean no ill;
And while such glimpse of Eden August brings,
We love her better than the tuneful May.

—H. Rawnsley, in the Spectator.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MENTAL ECONOMY.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—Suppose a man of means, desirous to fill some large stables with a grand class of horses, instructs his buyer to obtain a number of fine Clyde colts or Suffolk Punches; that these animals are then thoroughly trained to heavy draught, and work on thus for a few years, vacancies being always supplied by the same class of animals; but that at the end of this period he suddenly changes round and orders all these animals to be at once put in training for the track and taught to trot. Would not such a man receive from every candid friend a warning that his first method of setting to work was not the one likely to make him successful in carrying out his new idea? May we not venture to assume that this would be admitted by the generality of reasonable men? Yet, something closely analogous to this takes place in any national system of education whenever any important radical change is made in the method of examining for certificates for teaching; something analogous has happened within the last few years, in this and other countries, owing to the constant changes that have taken place. As an instance, one might point to the subject of composition, the marks awarded to which were till quite lately so utterly inconsiderable that the class of mind calculated to excel in it was not attracted to the examination, and there was every discouragement to a man's practising himself in it to any appreciable extent. At times, perhaps, some seventy-five marks or so might be obtained for it, while three or four

times as many would go to reward the successful candidate in analysis or parsing, or some kindred subject. The change came; the subject in question was seen to be one of primary importance, both as a practical art and also as a test and developer of mental power. In fact nothing but a sort of semi-natural prejudice could have so long supported the older view of things, for we all knew just as well, when boys of ten years old, that the thing stood as now recognised, as we do to-day. At the present time, therefore, when so many novel expedients, bad and good, are being proposed as the remedy for a confessedly bad state of things, we require a few fundamental canons by which to judge whether a certain subject should be excluded from the ordinary curriculum or be included in it, as needful for all; if included, the rank it ought to take, and whether some plan proposed be feasible or not: the mere creation of a college of preceptors, however great and good the results, will not necessarily make us either more scientific or more common-sense in our ideas on training youth, but is just as likely to concentrate and stereotype present notions. We have the science of political economy, to teach the laws regulating the development and distribution of material wealth; but while the most valuable riches of a country are its intellectual and moral great ones, the noble and heroic among its men and women—what have we done towards the far higher science of mental economy, or towards reducing educational systems to anything like system? We have not yet decided what subjects belong to technical training, and what to the education of the citizen as such, to the education, that is, of all alike; at least we have not done this on any settled principle, or definite ground; we have not noticed the effect of piling on one compulsory subject after another haphazard; we have not decided what is the highest type of mind the examiner can test, or the tutor prepare for examination, or rather we have decided this—we decide it every time we arrange the marks for an examination, only, having done it in a thoughtless, slovenly fashion, we are almost certain to have done it wrong. There is a very simple experiment which any examiner can make in a few minutes, and the results of which, if made public, would throw a flood of light on educational matters. Take any set of papers that have been used in an examination, note the proportion of marks awardable to what may be called 'non-gram' questions, those not to be answered through mere routine grinding. Change the proportion of those marks. If one-third of the whole were awardable to these higher-class questions, try what change would be effected in the order of the candidates by giving two-thirds of the marks to non-routine questions. It is quite possible that the highest man will no longer head the list, quite probable that some who have been rejected will take good places, and some who have taken good places will not pass. How so, you ask? In the one case, you will be rewarding principally mere routine knowledge, which has of course a high value, yet can be over-valued; in the other case you will be paying for the development of originality, teaching power, thought. We have heard of examiners re-reading the papers of rejected candidates to discover originality in them, and so excuse a revision of class list. If ever such an expedient were resorted to it would be proof positive of a radical and terrible defect in the rules for awarding the marks. Originality should be dealt with from the beginning, and be a factor of success with all, from the highest to the lowest, not to be taken into consideration only after a man has been rejected, or to finally re-adjust the class list. As to the experiment I have pointed out, anyone can make it either by conducting an examination for himself, or else by supposing a certain set of questions put, and marks allotable and allotted, and then changing the scale; he will find that a man may be deficient in the musical gift, or in the appreciation of form, the manipulation of figures, the rapid acquirement of the events of history or the roots of words, and yet be a great man even intellectually, nay in some cases a great teacher in the very subject in which he passes a poor examination—though not perfect, he may be greater than many passing as more perfect; that many compulsory subjects lower the standard of intellectual power. If we enquire how this is:—it is because these are not the central faculties of the mind, but technical; and although the central faculties act only in combination with some or other of the subordinate ones, yet we do not need all the minor faculties in any high degree in order that the intellectual faculties should work or work grandly: while a man may be highly endowed with all the technical faculties, and lacking the central ones, he may be unable to turn them to any high purpose. Such a man passes high in the examinations, and then disappoints his friends and tutors. Almost all the marks for spelling, writing, and geography, most of those for history, parsing, and arithmetic are given for mere routine work, or for semi-gram; and as we demand a higher and yet a higher standard in one compulsory subject after another, hoping thus to raise our standard, we are in reality lowering it all the while, because each one tends to exclude from the list men who may otherwise be the more highly gifted—tends to exclude teaching power from the school-room, and originality and power of thought everywhere. If education be the development of the mind, our marking must correspond with its organization; the subordinate faculties must not be allowed to rank as primary. We require most assuredly and urgently a science of mental economy; its nomenclature might approximate more or less to that of present metaphysics, even of phrenology, but should at all events include the field of morals as of intellect, while worked in combination with physical development. The art which tends to put the right man in the right place, is of inestimable value. J. C.

Algoma, August, 1886.

WEIGL, an American composer, had written a quartet which the Emperor Francis felt called upon to lead, only that he played his part all through without taking the slightest notice of accidentals, until the composer, nearly on his knees, advanced and most reverentially said: "Would your Majesty grant my humble prayer for a most gracious F sharp?"