

To the Editor of the Journal of Education:

REVEREND SIR,—

A man who has a hobby is ever grateful to those who have kindly permitted him to trot it out before them. His gratitude is likely, however, to verify the proverb that it is a lively sense of favors to come, and to show itself in a ferocious determination to give his benefactors additional opportunities of viewing the performances of his favorite little animal. You were liberal enough some months ago to allow me space for some observations on the facility with which instruction of a very valuable kind might be given by teachers sufficiently energetic and well read to follow the events of any great contest, such as that which, *Caus Deo!* has been closed by the capitulation of Paris, and explain their effects and recall their associations for the good of his more advanced scholars. I attempted to show how much financial, social, geographical and historical knowledge might be pleasantly and profitably imparted in the way I have indicated.

Permit me once again, for positively the last time, to return to that subject. I am not all incompetent to treat of it, since I have practised my own method with a success that makes me sanguine of its further success with other and more competent persons.

Since I wrote my last letter how great have been the changes, how immense the calamities, how astounding the successes, how sudden the fall, of constitutions, peoples, armies and cities, in the war-torn plains of Central Europe. The seeker after analogies and coincidences and lessons of one kind or another was overwhelmed with the multitude of them, that week after week of charge and battle, and seige and sortie, brought to his feet. When your readers were casting their eyes over the number of the JOURNAL containing my letter, the telegrams were coming in fast, and filled full with historic names of rivers and cities that were again to be made the strategic points, and the fields of a new and most terrible conflict. There is a species of secret writing what requires to be struck with a glove to bring out the impression. I have always thought of it in connection with the historic places of Germany and of France. There they stood, the great cities, by the sea and on the banks of the stately flowing rivers; there they clustered, the little villages, in the shade of the friendly hills, in the peaceful days, and few men thought of them as mines of historic memories, immortal in the pages of historical writers. The ships came and went with their riches to the great marts, the ploughs were driven and the harvest reaped, aye! and the church bells rang out day by day calling men to worship God and pray for the peace of princes, in the villages—and the millions of growing associations were hidden in them, were like secret writing on the fair page. But suddenly they were smitten by the iron gauntlet of war, and then the historic associations came out in splendid and sparkling numbers. Antwerp revealed the story of her sieges in the dark days of the Spanish Philip. Strasbourg told us many a tale of war, and many a romantic legend, and many a weird fable about her splendid cathedral spires. The Rhine flung up, as it were, upon its banks the hidden associations of centuries. Paris called us to witness to her glory that had been growing since Clovis. All these things, besides the more material effects of the war, were open when I wrote last, to the curious eye and brain of the student or the teacher, who is only a more advanced student to utilize in the way I have mentioned.

Since that time the store of learning in history and legend and fable, as well as in economic science, has been lavishly increased by the events of the past months. The throne of the Napoleonic dynasty was overthrown, and its overthrow (like the overthrow of the cruel giant in the usual story, which releases brave knights and fair, sweet ladies) disclosed nothing that was fair or sweet, but the supports that had propped it up, the intrigues that had gathered about it, the traditional policy of which it had been the agent, and called up to one's mind the events of the preceding changes, and added one more chapter to the revolutionary history of France. The value of the lesson to be learned from such an event, happening in our own time, and heard of with such miraculous rapidity, that ere the shouts of the Parisians have died away the echo has crossed the channel and the ocean and startled us here in our quiet northern and western homes, is far greater than the lesson to be learned from the study of any past

revolution, for those who are too young to be intimately acquainted with the minute occurrences in history. But for those who do know something of past history, the lesson of the events of 1870 are increased infinitely in value. That fair and tender lady who gathered up her robes and fled to the yacht of the chivalrous, loyal-hearted English gentleman—surely the finest of all gentlemen—does she not remind the student of that other fair and infinitely more unfortunate lady who was also a queen of the French and whom the French, to their shame, murdered; and does she not remind him of the other flights, the flights of Louis XVIII., of Louis Phillippe, of Charles X.; and the lesson of it all is, in part, that the "mob"—not the people—the great city mob is ever the same,—brutal, bloody, selfish, riotous, factious, *rerum novarum cupidi* forever—and that the weaknesses as well as the vices of kings bring punishments upon nations.

But there are also lessons to be learned (I am but hinting at them) from other events, subsequent to the downfall of the empire, which those who are teaching history should seize upon, to impress these every day lessons more deeply on their pupils' minds. For instance, it is easy to give to smart, advanced pupils an excellent comprehension of the revolutionary period of 1848, by referring to the newspapers of to-day in which even the young take so deep an interest. For the rising of 1870 was just as complete a copy of the rising of 1848 as could be expected from the difference of time and the changes wrought in twenty eventful, progressive years. Just as the Empress fled last year, so King Phillippe fled in '48. Just as the Republican government of 1870 was compelled to seize dictatorial powers and impose heavy taxes and make levies, so with the government of 1848. Just as the Reds of to-day are disaffected, so were they in 1848. Just as they violated the churches and raised barricades in 1870, and had to be shot into submission, so with them also in 1848. Just as the Republican movement of 1848 ended in a monarchy, so also in 1871 things are tending, also, monarchy-wise in France. In this way one imagines an interested teacher might impress his most advanced and brightest pupils with knowledge that they would never forget, because it was so brought home to them by the vivid illustrations before their own eyes, in their own time. We teach children to read easily by the help of pictures—to do as I suggest is only the same system applied to advanced pupils with far greater chances of success. We neglect the events of our own day too much. How many advanced pupils, how many who are not pupils, are intimately acquainted with the government and condition of countries in this very time? Not a very great many, compared with the number who know of the campaigns of Cyrus and Cæsar. In fact, until very lately, it was next to impossible for the average pupil to obtain a knowledge of modern matters. School life was too short, is too short yet, to carry people from Adam to Baron Hausmann over the historical high-roads; and yet the knowledge of modern affairs affords most pleasure and profit to the average young scholar. The only remedy I can see is to begin differently—to begin with Baron Hausmann and to go gradually back, to Adam if time allows, if not, as far as is possible. I think a young person who wishes to get a knowledge of say English political history, will do best to begin with Mr. Gladstone and go back through the Palmerstons, and Pitts, and Granvilles, and Walpoles, and Cecils, and Wol-singham, back to Becket, and to Anselm, if he wishes. Beginning with Gladstone, he has a deep, living interest in the subject of his study. The solemn, triumphant sounds of the great premier's reform speeches are yet in his ears. The signs of the great political struggle are yet plain to his eyes. He will carry back with him into the earlier times the interest he began with, to his manifest gain. If one wishes to obtain a knowledge of the religious legislation of England for Ireland, where can he begin his studies with such absorbing interest and such hope of success as at the period of the Dis-establishment, January 1, 1871. If he wishes to obtain a knowledge of modern Roman history, where can he begin with interest better than at the date of the recent invasion. Beginning with Victor Emmanuel, he will have interest enough to carry him back to Carom, to Joachem Murat, to Barbarossa, "the gay, the brave, the wise, the relentless and the godless Frederic," who was the dreaded of infidels and the cursed of popes, the terror of the German lords and at last the meek suitor for peace; and back, if he will, to Arnold of Brescia,