

of thought and passion involved in the original works. I am disposed, however, to think that if any teacher were to plead ignorance of the delightful literature of his native language—however learned in the literature of other lands and ages—the appropriate answer would be that which the mother of the accomplished scholar Sir William Jones was in the habit of giving her son, when he put his questions to her: "Read and you will know." Read those precious creations of genius and the mist and the darkness will pass away, and the glorious light will break forth and the knowledge will come, and with the knowledge will grow the taste, and delight, and strength with which the conceptions of genius ever reward those who drink deep enough from the hallowed fountains.

Finally, it may be objected to this kind of training, that it is too ambitious and aims far higher than the purposes of especially common school education. My reply is, that it is the education of the mother tongue I advocate, and that you shall give to its culture that finish and preparation for the future of life which you bestow upon penmanship and arithmetic, for example. But this culture has a special claim. In the common school our English tongue is the only language taught, and in after life it is to be the language of the people. Whatever may be the necessities of certain professions and more fortunate classes, the universal language of the common people is the language whose highest degree of culture I claim. It is the language of home, of labour, of the mart of commerce, of the councils of the nation, and of the holy ministrations of religion. The sentiments of the tenderest affection, the appeals of the loftiest patriotism, the invocations of heart-felt prayer, the songs of praise and the lessons of wisdom and truth shall be uttered in its sonorous and expressive words. We have a noble literature, embracing all that is great in philosophy, history, eloquence and poetry of which the great body of the people are ignorant, and whose influence for their elevation has scarcely yet begun. I believe that good reading will be found to be one of the most effective means of advancing that influence. A good reader will throw light, and life, and beauty into passages that, from frequent repetition and cold, inexpressive delivery, appeared to have lost all interest, and the gifted actor has often realized the marvelous power and beauty of the conceptions of Shakspeare better than all the tribe of critics and commentators. Now, I wish to send out of our public schools, of every grade, good readers; such as may, by the intonation of the voice, the witchery of the eye and the mastery of conception delight, not the audiences of the theatre, but the family and the social circle, and instruct and elevate the congregations of the church. You know not what high office you are preparing your pupils to fill—for in the school-room as in the household—men have sometimes unawares entertained angels. It is admitted that the reading and the delivery of the ministers of religion are defective and injurious to the exercise of their high functions. The reform is not to be accomplished in theological halls, when bad habits have been deeply formed and other studies occupy the mind. The remedy must begin in the humbler sphere of the Common and Grammar Schools of the country; and systematically pursued on a scientific basis, its fruits will

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