

"tonies and platitudes of that "original composition" which "school reformers dislike."

And again; from the same volume.—

"I have allowed the efficacy of *translation* in teaching English expression; it must also be said that it develops very sufficiently the sense of one kind of excellence of form in all the more intelligent and appreciative minds: I mean of minute excellence, the beauty of single words and phrases. It does this simply because it enforces a reverent examination of masterpieces."

In my school, and in most schools in Canada, the study of the French language is all but universal. There is great stress laid upon it by teachers and parents who know its value in after life both in business and society. But the difficulty of imparting a good knowledge of French without damage to the English subjects is too generally admitted to need insistence here. I began to ask myself as I reflected upon what I had been reading, whether I had made the most of my opportunities. *Translation* at all events had by no means had fair play. This exercise is looked upon as easy; beneath the attention of advanced French scholars, but a slight examination will prove that exact and minute differences are unheeded, provided that a general approximation to the sense is attained; and that the so called *English* version is very far indeed from elegant. If the instructor is a native this should not astonish any one. It is not the part of a Frenchman to write *elegant* English. Translation to be useful must be carried on under the guidance of an English master who has a good and sufficient knowledge of French. It should indeed form part of the English course.

Almost all female teachers in the present day have some knowledge of French. I have often heard those, called upon by circumstances to confine themselves to branches of education carried on in their own language, lament that for want of exercise, they were fast forgetting the little French they had gained at school. If they had sufficient inducement, they would give more time and thought to it and classical French scholars would soon be neither few nor far between. Nor would this interfere with the interest of native teachers, on the contrary, the French classes would be really French and not as they are at present from necessity, more than half English.

Translation, verbal or written, disciplines the mind in no small degree. If literal, it teaches precision; if liberal, it exercises the student in the choice of words and induces an easy use of language. Under the guidance of a good teacher, it may be made to lead to beauty of expression, to condensation or expansion, and all this without wandering from the foreign text. I determined to make the "*amende honorable*" for long years of neglect, and at once to give *Translations*, the place vacated by the weary theme-writing. As in a vision I saw my French classes gain life and vigour while English composition assumed a new and interesting character. My dream is still a dream. I have only had time to set the reality on foot. It would not become me to speak with too much assurance of that which I have not tested, but so far as I have watched the progress of my translation classes, I have reason to believe that there will be no rude awakening to a sense of failure when the Christmas Examination shall try the work.

I am of course aware that if translation from the French monopolises all the methods for imparting a good knowledge of written and spoken English, no very brilliant results must be looked for. I have dwelt upon it now to the exclusion of all else; first because I think its great merits and powers have been overlooked, and second because I desire to confine the application of my remarks to education as carried on in girls' schools. I by no means imagine that I have discovered the whole solution of the problem. No one method is of universal application nor suitable for continuous use even in the same place. Besides, I believe there is a general want of that which I have called elocution in every subject taught. It is the fault of modern instruction that the teacher exerts herself too much and the pupil too little. The teacher speaks the pupil is silent; the teacher asks elaborate questions, the

pupil answers in monosyllables, too frequently merely "yes or no." This is not always the result of over-anxiety and industry on the part of the teacher, it is sometimes inexperience and sometimes impatience. She will not wait until the pupil has well thought, and she will not take the trouble to direct that thought until the right answer is reached. We should have fewer worn-out teachers and more sprightly pupils if *manner* were more cultivated by instructors of elementary classes. The catechetical method is doubtless the best for young minds, but they should be encouraged as soon as possible to prepare their own answers. In the higher classes instruction by lecture may be introduced; but in all, care must be had that the pupil shall be able to express in clear intelligible English the substance of what is learned. The idea which cannot be rendered in words is of little value to its owner and of none at all to any one else. The amount of matter which children can take in without any definite notion of its meaning is quite marvellous. Evidence of this may easily be found by questioning a child upon the Scriptures. The knowledge is gathered at random at home, in the school, in the church, and from books, and is accepted without question or reflection. For the want of explanatory geography, history, and chronology the incidents lack reality, and strange and wrong ideas find permanent place in the mind. The beautiful story of the gospels, and the wonderful history of the old testament, lose half their practical uses and all their interest.

However much, or however little, instruction is given, whether the lessons be planned for a year, a day or an hour, let every word be used with intelligence, then whether you have taught a sentence or a volume, you will have imparted that which is substantial and of real worth.

The school-girl thus trained, be she clever or dull, will be true; for true thought and speech lead to true action in life. The every-day intercourse will be habitually upright and just, and she will instinctively command the love and respect of all she meets.

Even as one has written:—

"Think truly, and thy thoughts shall the world's famine feed;
"Speak truly, and each word of thine shall be a fruitful seed;
"Live truly, and thy life shall be a great and noble creed."

But I must trespass on your time no longer. Permit me to close abruptly with a question. What can we do to improve the "Elocution" of our schools without adding to the curriculum? Like Brutus in the market place at Rome, "I pause for a reply."

SCIENCE.

Geology.

Notes on the Geology of Southwestern Ontario, by T. Sterry Hunt, F. R. S., of the Geological Survey of Canada.

(Read before the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, at Chicago August, 1868.)

The palaeozoic strata of the southwestern portion of the Province of Ontario (late Upper Canada), are generally covered by a considerable thickness of clay, which has made their study extremely difficult. During the last few years, however, numerous borings have been made over a wide area in this region, in search of petroleum, and have disclosed many facts of geological interest. By frequently visiting the localities, and carefully preserving the records of these borings, I have been enabled to arrive at some important conclusions as to the thickness and the distribution of the underlying Upper Silurian and Devonian strata, to which I now beg to call the attention of the Association.

The rocks of the New York series, from the Oriskany sandstone to the Coal, which are regarded as the equivalent of the old world, were shown by Prof. James Hall, in 1851, to constitute three natural groups. Of these, the first and lowest, sometimes called the Upper Helderberg, and consisting of the Oriskany, with its overlying Corniferous limestone (embracing the local subdivision known as the Onondaga limestone) constitutes what may be provisionally called the Lower Devonian. The second group has for its base the black pyro-