

To some extent this defect is physical. It requires a greater degree of bodily exertion than is sometimes realised to sustain accurate attention for a long time. But there has hitherto been a most lamentable want of any adequate attempt to remedy this besetting evil of the female mind. The education of women has, on the contrary, been arranged so as rather to foster than to check it. They have been encouraged to cultivate brilliant accomplishments, and intelligence, "lively and clear as far as it goes," in a degree out of all proportion to the simple and solid elements of learning. We must add that many who are now most active in promoting female education are not the least to blame in this respect. It is much easier for young women in London to attend attractive lectures by brilliant philosophers and historians, than to obtain patient and quiet instruction in the elements of their own language and literature. It is for parents, for husbands, and public opinion to insist on a better apportionment of time between the elements of English learning and the accomplishments of a liberal education. But the lack of thoroughness may, in great degree, be attributed to the absence of any such test as is now afforded by the Cambridge examinations. Women as yet have been scarcely subjected in any degree to the discipline of literary examination, and we may hope for better results from the extension of the system now set on foot. We need the establishment of a stricter rather than of a higher standard, and the whole tone of the female intellect may in time be beneficially affected by a training which has been brought to bear for centuries on the faculties of men.—*Times*, Nov. 8.

Parents and Teachers.

Very few know how difficult a thing it is to teach with success. Indeed, with the exception of those (and they are exceedingly rare) who have an intuitive appreciation of the obstacles which lie in the teachers' way, there are scarcely any who give the matter a thought. Yet there is really no employment by which a livelihood may be gained which is so wearing on mind and body, which requires so much tact and patience, so much endurance and perseverance, as that of the instructor of youth. To our conscientious, hard working teachers too much aid and sympathy and encouragement cannot be accorded. And most especially ought parents to cooperate with them, and lend them their assistance. They ought to know what wearisome drudgery it often is, to train the minds of those who are bound to them by the nearest and dearest of ties even for a little while; and, knowing this, they ought to consider how the difficulties which they experience are enhanced in the case of the teacher. He has to deal not with a few minds, but with many. He has to study a great variety of dispositions and characters. He has to distinguish between appearances and reality, and to get to the core of those natures which it is his aim and duty to cultivate and develop. For on the right knowledge of the characters with which he has to deal depends, in a great measure, his success.

Now, we wish to impress upon such of our readers as are parents that this duty of assisting the teacher by means obviously at their disposal is neglected at the expense of their children's welfare. If they choose to leave the teacher in the dark as to any glaring faults of which they are aware in their children who are under his charge, they make the whole intercourse between him and them one long misunderstanding. The teacher is working with moral material, so to speak, of whose quality he is ignorant, and which strive as he may, he can but slightly improve—which, in some respects, he may unconsciously injure. How often does an ill feeling arise in the breast of a scholar towards his teacher, whose place might have been very differently occupied had the parents only vouchsafed a word of timely warning! How often is this growing antagonism fostered by the injudicious partisanship which, in all cases, takes it for granted that the complaining pupil is in the right! The mischief done in all our schools, both in city and country, through this really unkind indulgence is almost incalculable. Grudges kindled in

this way by the stupid fondness or malignant prejudice of parents often smoulder and blind and fester for long years. A pupil takes offence at some word of admonition or act of discipline. He informs his parents of his grievance. Without inquiry they fix the whole blame on the teacher. The pupil triumphs in his success, but henceforth his days, under a master or mistress, whom he has been taught to despise, are worse than wasted. Or a boy or girl is deceitful, or has some other serious failing which the teacher endeavours to remove from his pupil's character. The parents are indignant at the very notion of their child being faulty. He is encouraged to continue in the practice of what is destroying his moral life. The teacher is made little of, and his influence set at naught.

We might multiply instances, and give abundant examples of the evil of which we are speaking. Several cases of the kind have of late occurred in our leading schools, to the annoyance of the teachers, to the infinite detriment of the taught, probably to the future sorrow of the parents or guardians concerned. It is time that the real interest of the children, not the mere pettish vanity of either them or their parents, were made the guiding principle in our schools. When those who now obstruct the great work of education in this silly way are dead and forgotten, the children of to-day will have grown up to be a blessing or a curse to the community. Whether of the two it is now for all interested to decide.

We repeat that parents ought to cooperate with teachers, knowing, or if they do not know, informing themselves of, the difficulties which they have to overcome in the discharge of their—it is not too much to say—sacred duties. There is need of the utmost candour and mutual confidence and help and sympathy, so that those most concerned, the children themselves, may really derive benefit and have their minds and characters developed and made strong for the business.—*Montreal Gazette*,

Lord Derby on Education.

Lord Derby's speech at the opening of the new Manchester Grammar School gives fresh proof of the practical turn of his mind. Few men would have taken, or if they had taken would have cared on such an occasion to express, the views contained in that address. Yet it is certain that no forecast could be more sensible or opportune than that represented in the remarks before us. We are educating the people of this country at a rate which will quickly become prodigious. Partly, as Lord Derby observed, by the utilization of old endowments, but to a far greater extent by the liberality of the present generation, good schools of various grades are springing up all over the kingdom; each institution is brought into connexion with other institutions above it, and all are now in communication with the two ancient Universities. The result is that "no boy of real talent need be kept back by mere poverty from whatever chances of distinction may be open to him," and we may add that a vast number of boys of moderate abilities will receive an education of such a character as has hitherto been reserved for the fortunate or wealthy alone. All this, of course, has been seen and said before, but what has not been seen, or, at any rate, not been said till Lord Derby said it, is that the end of all this must be the cheapening of the commodity produced. Intellectual ability in its various grades is now highly valued, because it is comparatively scarce; when it is rendered plentiful its value must fall. "If," said Lord Derby to his Manchester audience, "you succeed in what you intend to do, you are going to make the educated man a very cheap article in the market." Exactly so; and what will the "educated man" think then of his position? What, in a few words, will be the advantages of education when it no longer confers any "advantage" at all being shared by so many, and in such lavish proportions as to represent no available superiority whatever?

It is much to Lord Derby's credit, and eminently characteristic of the speaker, that he kept this rather uncomfortable