

tunities for acquiring almost unlimited sway over those minds. Nay, more, if the teacher is really a man or woman of strong and developed character, and has a moderate share of that personal magnetism, without which no one is fitted to be an instructor and guide of the young, he will inevitably, whether he wills it or not, become one of the most potent influences in the shaping of that child's future. He becomes to some extent his model in thought, in speech, even in gesture. His very face becomes a study, and an inspiration in a vastly better and happier sense than that depicted in Goldsmith's "boding trembler," who sought only premonitions of "the day's disaster." In a word, every child is a hero-worshipper, and the teacher who fails to gain high rank in the list of his pupils' heroes and heroines, may write himself a failure in all that is highest and best in his profession.

But there is a kindred agency still more potent in the moulding of youthful character. For want of a better term I shall call it unconscious imitation. I refer to the tendency, strong in most child natures, and strongest, probably, in the most vigorous and promising, to enthrone and worship ideal men and women. The full force and significance of the ideal tendency in the young is not always, perhaps, so fully recognized as it should be. It is often derided as dreaminess. Sometimes it is deliberately attempted to crush it out, as inimical to the development of the "practical," *i.e.*, the bread-and-butter qualities. A keener insight into the workings of the child mind, and a loftier view of the true office of the educator, would lead us to recognize in this tendency one of the most healthful as well as powerful agencies in all mental and moral culture. The true ground of anxiety is in respect to the source and character of the ideal. Whence are they derived? They certainly are not, and

never can be, created absolutely by the mind itself. All the most vivid imagination can do is to cut and carve, to select and combine. It must use the material furnished to its hand in books, in conversation, and in the incidents of daily life. It seizes with avidity upon the qualities most admired in the men and women of history, poetry, fiction, and of its own little world of observation. The kind of material selected and of the ideal set up will vary largely, of course, with the native predispositions of the individual mind. It may be impossible to determine how far nature and how far education or environment respectively determine what elements shall be chosen and how combined at any given period in the personal ideal. But the elements themselves must be selected from stores actually at command. To those who have free access to books, history, biography, and above all, fiction, are amongst the most prolific sources. But in the case of the majority the materials must be gathered from the walks of every-day life. Parents, neighbours, companions, exhibit traits which win admiration and become insensibly incorporated into the ideal. The tales of the social circle and the domestic hearth fire the imagination until their heroes become transfigured and are fitted into the ideal as concrete embodiments of the qualities they respectively represent. Now in most cases the school teacher is the most learned person with whom the child comes in contact. However the latter may often rebel against the harsh and unsympathetic rule of the "tyrant of his childhood," he is yet constrained to admire whatever in him seems generous, or strong or brave. Very negative or very hateful must be that teacher who fails to enthrone himself in the imagination of his pupil, and to furnish a very large percentage of the constituents of that pupil's ideal.