

their parents and friends. Bring forth your very best to entertain your invited guests. Every parent's son and daughter is best to the parent's heart; therefore have general class exercises, in which every pupil in the room shall take a part. Train the pupils and help them to always and ever do their very best; and teach them that the very endeavour, the earnest effort, is in itself ennobling and elevating.

Show to the homes the every-day work of the school-room; the solid foundation which no time nor tide can sweep away,—the wealth of an education which is as free to the poor,—yes, even more so,—than to the rich, if they will but by diligence accept it. Besides the every-day work, have some special work with which to entertain. The good housekeeper prepares a few dainties when she invites company, and why should not the good teacher do the same? Bring forth the best of everything which your school-room affords, prepared in the best manner which your pupils can prepare it.

Do I hear some faint hearted teacher say, "If I should attempt anything out of the usual routine, some of my scholars would be sure to make blunders"? What if they do? Is there a human being in existence who has not made blunders, and who will not again make them? Blunders are often exceedingly amusing. Ignorance is sometimes mirth-provoking; and the humorous things which are unwittingly said and done are quite equal in number and in humor to those which are said or done with a forethought. He who tries to be funny and really succeeds, is never half so funny as one who says or does a funny thing and does not know it. And the teacher should take a philosophic view of any such opportunity, and quick-wittedly turn it to the best account, thereby placing the pupil at once at ease, and the audience in a most happy and appreciative frame of mind. For audience there will surely be if the homes are invited to come in company, and they hear of the preparation being made for their entertainment. At first one parent or another may think his or her going is quite out of the question. But the interest is roused a little; and it increases as they hear the children talk of it from day to day. And as the time draws near, they quite decide to go; "to please the children, if nothing more." And once there, they enjoy it exceedingly. The school room looks pleasant with its bright and animated faces.

The recitations pass off briskly; problems are solved in rapid succession that would cost the parents hours of mental application to arrive at even an indefinite answer. Maps are drawn upon the walls, such as they never dreamed of,—maps that grow as if by magic, under the deft fingers of their own children, showing the form of every country, and locating every important city, river, lake, and mountain, on the face of the globe; yes, locating even the railroads.

The parents begin to appreciate the work being done in the schools as they have never before appreciated it. They begin to see the earnest, faithful, laborious efforts of the teachers as they have never before seen them. And people take a far greater interest in what they see than in what they hear about. They believe what they see, while they do not believe half that they hear about, and ought not to do.

These receptions, this sight-seeing, brings the teacher's work home to the people with a force and conviction of comprehension that nought else can so quickly and so thoroughly accomplish. It is faith by sight, and that is a convincing faith. And ever after these parents and friends have a warmer glow in their hearts for the teacher, a more earnest, helpful, and appreciative interest in her purposes, her aims, and her plans. In one afternoon's time the teacher has taken a strong hold upon the community. She has entered the wedge of her influence in a pleasant and agreeable manner,—in an acceptable manner. And ever after it will be felt and shown, in little things, if not in great. It will rebound to her own pleasure and comfort in the management of her room. She will find her pupils more tractable, more easily governed, if the parents are in earnest accord with her. The pupils will take a greater interest in their lessons, be more conscientious in the learning of them, and be more truthful, honest, and honorable in every act.

The children of to-day are the men and women of to-morrow; and the influence exerted over them to-day is going out into all the active relations of their future life. The moral, financial, and political good of the future of our country depends upon the children now under our care.

The teacher has in her charge the highest of human interests. Let us so recognize her work, and let her see to it that her influence is of the very best, and then strengthen that influence by every means within her power.—*N. B. Journal of Education.*

## Practical Department.

### THE UTILITY OF CLASSICS.

It surpasses belief that the necessity for the classical element in a modern education is not sufficiently met by the study of one dead language. Not only can Greek be spared,—it ought not to be afforded. All desirable linguistic practice, except that for which we must resort to living languages, can be had with Latin. The rest of the pupil's time is too precious to be given to more paradigms, more syntax, more construing of passages. These are easy to teach, but unprofitable to learn.

Those who have assailed the classics, have usually been unwise devotees of science as a separate interest. These advocates of science in the schools have made a great mistake. The Greek declensions and conjugations did no harm in themselves. They simply did no good, and stood in the way of better things. But premature teaching of science is positively injurious. It is too difficult for the youthful mind, and cannot but react harmfully upon the pupil's moral and intellectual attitude toward science itself.

But an excess of dead languages should be objected to by educators on educational grounds; that is, on the grounds that it is not the best for the boy, considering his destiny in this country and in this age; and that a well-grounded training needs all the time hitherto given to Greek for other, very different exercises.

Unskilled teaching makes fewer mistakes with Latin and Greek paradigms and rules than with any other material. Hence the good results conventionally attributed to these studies. Committing to memory and infinite repetition are the order of the day in Latin and Greek. Almost anybody can manage this; nor is a fair amount of it bad for the pupil. Recent graduates from college, who can do nothing else in the world, can teach Latin and Greek well. Primary teaching has intimate relations with questions of psychology and method, and exacts great skill and devotion in the teacher. Not so Latin and Greek.

Because Latin and Greek are thus easily taught,—so far as the schools conceive the learning of them to extend,—they are hard to displace or diminish. They are convenient. With them it is feasible to keep a pupil at work, to mark him, to correct his exercises, to qualify him for prescribed examinations. Pedagogy has assimilated them. It knows what to do with them.

Greek seems like a "fetich" when we consider how pertinaciously the teachers of it close their ears to all suggestion of removing it from the list of required studies. But it is really pedagogic inertia that, in spite of the growing demand for parallel courses without Greek, keeps it compulsory in modern schools. Wherever Latin and Greek are taught, other studies naturally fall into a subordinate rank. The easy supremacy which they maintain throws suspicion upon their right to such preëminence. It should be questioned whether they hold their superiority by virtue of their own inherent quality, or because substitutes for them have not yet been wisely chosen and adjusted to school methods.

In the lack of teachers thoroughly trained in modern languages, ancient and modern literatures, history, upper mathematics, and the mother-tongue; in the absence of a high standard in the ancient languages themselves; and in the fact that the study of method is almost unknown among the teachers in preparatory schools, may, perhaps, be found the reasons for some portion of the pedagogic clinging to both Latin and Greek. Perpetual paradigms and parsing, passages of the old poems and orations, a dreary round of so-called prose composition,—these exact but little attention to method. Copious historical and literary knowledge, and a thorough