

task. Young persons might thus be led gradually to appreciate power and beauty of language, a very important point to reach, because without such appreciation there is little security that they will continue to study at all when they are their own masters, and still less that they will study good books. It is not possible to educate children, in the full sense of the word, who commonly leave school under thirteen years of age; but foundations may be laid which may be built upon afterwards. For a teacher, under the modern system of instruction, command of language, self-possession, facility of illustration, insight into character, quickness in taking advantage of any remark or trifling incident to make an impression, a perception of what ought to persuade and influence children, and a certain logical order in the development of a subject (always made more effective by questions and answers which excite interest, than by haranguing a class, which comparatively excites little,) are all essential qualifications as well as knowledge. He is required not only to know what he is talking about, but to have the skill to use what he knows; and this the possession of knowledge does not always imply. The school authorities, in deferring certificates until the teacher has given some practical proof of what he can effect in the management of children, have sanctioned the opinion, which continually derives further support from experience, that the proof of the teacher is the school. Grammar, if so studied as to prepare the way for inquiry into the best methods of reasoning and persuading, when a teacher may have leisure and energy to enter upon either, seems better calculated to promote correctness of thought and fluency of language than any other elementary subject.

"In teaching history to children who constantly leave school before they have begun to think, it is very difficult to do anything more than communicate the knowledge of a limited number of facts; and yet these facts seldom excite much interest, and are likely to be soon forgotten, unless some perception can be conveyed of their bearings and relative importance. I apprehend that, in many cases, little can be inferred from good answers to historical questions beyond the possession of a good memory. It is assumed by pupil-teachers and others, that certain questions, admitting very extensive answers, will be asked, and text-books are read over till they are almost got by heart accordingly. Consequently, in such answers there is no keeping—no selection of facts. All, whether doubtful or certain, trivial or material, are supposed to be equally useful for the immediate purpose. The preference, at Oxford, of a minute knowledge of some brief but interesting periods to a superficial outline of the history of several centuries, seems calculated generally to detect those who depend exclusively upon their text-books, without any self-reliance. A candidate, with a multitude of minute facts before him, must exercise some discrimination as to those which it concerns him most to remember. In a mere abridgment he may safely assume that the selection has been already made, and his object is simply to commit as much as he can to memory. Abridgments are further uninteresting, because the characters are mere shadows, appearing and passing away without being known; and the events abstractions, divested in a great measure of the special circumstances which distinguish one battle or the foundation of one city or kingdom from that of another; whereas a man is not really wiser or better for knowing the names of many men, or that a certain act was done at a certain time; but to know what sort of persons the men were, and consequently to think about them, and to know how and by what means certain events came to pass, may exercise a real and permanent influence over the reader's own character, at least in youth. Abridgments are also mischievous, because they must want relief; they cannot give due prominence to important facts; they can show little moral sensibility, from want of space, (unless, indeed, the writer should possess the condensed power of a Tacitus,) little love of truth, little impatience of error, little sympathy with virtue and heroism, little indignation against vice and crime. Abridgments may be useful for reference, but can form neither the intellect nor the heart; and it is quite possible that a young person, fresh from the use of them, may give an answer to a question put to him, correct as far as it goes, without understanding either the question or his own answer. If, for example, the question should be, 'Give an account of the feudal system,' the answer might run thus: "In the feudal system there were lords and vassals; the vassal had a fief; the rights of the lord were reliefs, fines upon alienation, escheats, aids, wardship, and marriage." Such an answer, though imperfect, is not incorrect; but there is no proof that a single technical word is understood. This is not an answer actually given; but the following recently was to the question, 'Mention the principal English metres, with examples;'—Answer: 'Dimetre, tetrametre, hexametre, hypermetre,' &c. It will be observed that the character of both these answers is the same, with the addition, in the latter instance, of incorrectness and bad spelling."—*English Journal of Education.*

### STONE OF EXAMINATION.

An examiner ought not to require the answer in a tone of command, authoritatively, but simply as an interrogation, not leading but following the train of thought of the person examined, and, as it follows, guiding it. Some teachers seem to think that all that is required for a good examination is to question rapidly, unhesitatingly. The teacher should specially be upon his guard against an abrupt and over-confident manner in teaching, and a tendency to contradict the children, for no other assignable cause than self-assertion, when they have answered rightly. His mind should be entirely upon the children, and away from himself.—*Canon Moseley.*

### THE TRUE DIGNITY OF THE TEACHER'S PROFESSION.

In the teacher's profession, as in every other, we are not to judge of the possibilities or the limitations of the calling by its common aspects or its every-day repetition of task work. I protest against the superficial and insulting opinion, that, in the education of children, there is no room for the loftiest intellectual enterprise, and no contact with divine and inexpressible wonders. Any teacher that so judges his vocation by its details belittles it. The schoolroom, no less than the philosopher's laboratory, the studio, or the Church itself, opens upwards into God's boundless heaven. Each of these very sciences I have named has moral relations, and terminates in spiritual mystery. And when you awaken a feeling of that great truth in your pupil by the veneration, the earnestness, and the magic devotion of your own mind, you have done him a service no less essential to the completeness of his education, than when you have informed his understanding of certain scientific facts. Arithmetic, for instance, ascends into astronomy, and there you are introduced to laws of quantity, which make the universe their diagram—to the intellectual magnitudes of La Place and Newton,—to the unsearchable empire of that religion which feels after the God of Arcturus and the Pleiades. The rules of grammar are only intelligible formularies that lie in the outmost boundary of an inexhaustible study. And the government of your pupils,—what is it but the faint and erring endeavour to transfer into that little kingdom you administer, the justice and the love which are the everlasting attributes of the Almighty himself, applying them even there to immortal souls? Let us not wrong the dignity of such an employment by denying its connection with things unspeakable.—*Prof. F. D. Huntington.*

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\* \* Parties in correspondence with the Educational Department will please quote the number and date of any previous letters to which they may have occasion to refer, as it is extremely difficult for the Department to keep trace of isolated cases, where so many letters are received (nearly 600 per month) on various subjects.

## CIRCULAR TO THE CLERK OF EACH COUNTY, CITY, TOWN AND VILLAGE MUNICIPALITY IN UPPER CANADA.

SIR,—I have the honor to transmit herewith, a certified copy of the apportionment for the current year of the Legislative School Grant to each City, Town, Village and Township in Upper Canada. This apportionment will be payable at this office to the agent of the Treasurer of your Municipality, on the 1st of July, provided that the School Accounts have been duly audited, and together with the Auditors' and other reports have been transmitted to the Department.

I am happy to inform the Council of your Municipality, that I have been enabled this year, through the liberality of the Legislature, to add several thousand pounds to the apportionment over that of last year; I have, moreover, appropriated a few hundred pounds from the Poor School Fund, and divided it among those new and thinly settled Counties where