

elements of the critic's duty are few. It is convenient to have a series of marks or characters—a sort of critic's Alphabet—whereby faults may be indicated. In rhetorical exercises—school compositions—the errors are about a half-dozen in number, and consist in spelling, capitals, grammar, facts, rhetorical figures, and words. For the correction of these faults good teachers make their perpetrators responsible. They simply mark a misspelled word, under the word thus: *s*; a word wherein a capital is incorrectly used or improperly omitted, thus: *c*; and so on, with the initials of the other four words, *g*, *f*, *r*, and *w*. Some teachers consider this as too much assistance to the student, and simply mark the line in which the error occurs. But in faulty manuscripts this plan is not sufficiently direct.

By the way, I have but little patience with a teacher who has nothing to do with the rhetorical exercises except to look on and listen. They afford an opportunity for a high degree of usefulness on the teacher's part. He should gather the essays in, and give them the benefit of his knowledge in the way of careful and rigid examination, marking them as above or in some other

convenient way, and often having them rewritten to test the effect of his suggestions. The mechanical execution of a letter, simple as it is, is not a bad subject for the study of a lady or gentleman; and the writing of a letter will be worth more as a composition than an essay on "Art Culture" or "The Milky Way."

The point is not to propose a plan, but to argue the value of throwing those who err upon their own resources. The most effective criticism is self-criticism. "To see ourselves as others see us" is the rarest human accomplishment. And the teacher who is well-nigh discouraged by the hopeless task of the school, grieving because the most conscientious endeavors of her life seem unavailing, may take heart and struggle on. For the faithful discharge of her known duties is all the public will demand, especially if the proper effort has been made to find them out; and if in her toils she has taught the erring pupils to take heed to their own ways, although she leaves them all "full of faults," she may be sure her work has not been in vain.—*Prof. Walter S. Smith, in Michigan Teacher.*

MAN NOT DEGENERATING.

There never was a delusion with less evidence for it, except a permanent impression among mankind, which is often the result, not of accumulated experience, but of an ever-renewing discontent with the actual state of things. There is not the slightest evidence anywhere that man was ever bigger, stronger, swifter, or more enduring under the same conditions of food and climate than he is now.

As to bigness, the evidence is positive. Modern Egyptians are as big as the mummies who were conquerors in their day, and modern Englishmen are bigger. There are not in existence a thousand coats of armor which an English regiment could put on. Very few moderns can use ancient swords, because the hilts are too small for their hands. Endless wealth and skill were expended in picking gladiators, and there is

no evidence that a man among them was as big or as strong as Shaw. No skeleton, no statue, no picture, indicates that men were ever bigger. The Jews of to-day are as large as they were in Egypt, or larger. The people of the Romagna have all the bearing and more than the size of the Roman soldiery. No feat is recorded as usual with Greek athletes which English acrobats could not perform now.

There is no naked savage tribe which naked Cornishmen or Yorkshiremen could not strangle. No race exists of which a thousand men similarly armed would defeat an English, or German, or Russian regiment of equal numbers. Nothing is recorded of our forefathers here in England which Englishmen could not do, unless it be some feats of archery, which were the result of a long training of the eye con-

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