

THE teacher of Geography will have need to supplement the text-book's chapter on Africa with the results of Stanley's last expedition. The great explorer will no doubt have much more to tell of the geography of the interior of Africa, when he has had time to arrange and publish his notes. Meanwhile, his letters shed a good deal of light upon the dark land.

"THE teacher is of chief importance in a school. He is more essential than the desk, the book, the cupola, or the façade, to the training and well-being of the pupil." So says some one in an exchange. The words sound very like a truism, yet they contain a truth often overlooked in these days, but a truth which should never be forgotten. Fine buildings, good furniture, costly apparatus, are all very desirable, and a great help to the teacher. But it cannot be too deeply impressed upon the minds of taxpayers, and trustees, and all who have to do with educational matters, that far more important than any or all these things is the living presence and energy of the true teacher. Better, infinitely better, for the boy or girl, is the influence and inspiration of a cultivated, clear-headed, noble-hearted man or woman in a log hut, than the petty routine of a mercenary hireling in the grandest educational palace.

THE day of free education—we fear we cannot say free unsectarian education—in England, seems about dawning. Mr. Goschen, Chancellor of the Exchequer, proposes to devote the larger portion of the surplus of £4,000,000, which he expects to have at his disposal, to making education in the elementary schools free. The proposal will meet with unconditional opposition from an influential Tory section, who regard the system as demoralizing and pauperizing in its tendency. The *Standard*, for instance, maintains that there is no difference in principle between providing the poor with gratuitous knowledge and with gratuitous bread, boots and blankets. If, as is understood, the larger part of the money is to be given to the church schools, without interference with their denominational character, the movement will probably be opposed by Nonconformists, on the ground that it is equivalent to an indirect denominational endowment. As Liberals, most of the Nonconformists would undoubtedly favor free tuition in the Board or Public Schools.

"KNOWLEDGE comes, but wisdom lingers." The Laureate's aphorism is as true of the race as of the individual. The whole history of prisons on the one hand and public schools on the other proves it. The day is near when all intelligent people will look back with amazement, not unmixed with horror, on the manner in which the most enlightened nations, even in the latter half of the nineteenth century, dealt with their street waifs and juvenile criminals. To suffer thousands of orphaned, or worse than orphaned, children in every great city to grow up in sinks of material and moral filth, in train-

ing for lives of vice and crime, is a folly surpassed in depth and culpability only by the infatuation which hands over the youth convicted of his first offence to be branded with the infamy of a jail-bird, and made the constant associate of the most confirmed criminals. Is it any wonder that the prisons are crowded with inmates and the streets dotted with detectives? Is it any wonder that people everywhere are crying out that free schools and universal (?) education are failures, so far as their promised results in annihilating crime are concerned?

WE reproduce as our special article in this number the admirable address given by Mr. R. K. Row, of Kingston, at the last annual meeting of the Ontario Teachers' Association, on "The Development of Character by Ordinary School Exercises." We wish every teacher, especially every young teacher, in the Province, would read it. Of vastly more importance than any formal and compulsory religious exercises or instruction that can be given in the schools is, to our thinking, "the development of character by ordinary school exercises." If the teacher of a given school is a man or woman worthy of the high office; if he or she has a proper conception of the vital truth that Mr. Row has so clearly grasped and presented, that character is being influenced and moulded every moment and by every school exercise and incident; if he or she realizes the tremendous responsibilities of the teacher that grow out of this fact, and works and rules daily and hourly under the influence of these responsibilities, that school will not lack moral and religious instruction of the most effective kind. And a special merit of this kind of instruction is that no one of any religious creed or of no religious creed can object to it.

HAPPY the teacher with whom perpetual cheerfulness is either a natural endowment or an established habit. Happy he or she who knows nothing of those blue days when everything goes wrong in the school room, "when your best pupils seem to be laughing at you, when everything they had ever learned seems totally forgotten, when a fiendish joy possesses the worst boys, in whose bad deeds, for some unaccountable reason, the whole school sympathizes." Those who wholly escape such experiences are, we believe, rare. But let those to whom the blue days are a real, haunting misery, consider whether the cause is not, in nine cases out of ten, in themselves, and very often in their own physical condition. It is well to determine to keep the mind "on top," to make the will master the mood, and to preserve a cheerful demeanor and a cheery voice, in spite of dyspepsia and everything else. It can be done, but the conflict will often be made unnecessary, or, at least, the victory be much more easily won, by a little more attention to diet and a good deal more of fresh air and exercise. The teacher, above almost all workers, needs to spend much of the resting time out of doors.

Educational Thought.

EDUCATION means training for life. Lives, not lessons, are dealt with. Corollary, no system, which battens on books, is true.—*Thring*.

A GOOD education is that which gives to the body and to the soul all the beauty and all the perfection of which they are capable.—*Plato*.

It has seemed to me that the highest range of human talent is distinguished, not by the power of doing well any one particular thing, but by the power of doing well any thing which we resolutely determine to do.—*Francis Wayland*.

It is indeed the fact that human nature has been so adjusted that any system, however defective, will have its apparent success. Nay, the worse the system, the more brilliant may be its outcome in a few stars. But stars, remember, imply night.—*Thring*.

EVERY explanation, every particle of showing, every bit of the pupil's work that the teacher does—whenever, in brief, she does anything for him that he can do for himself, she has not only robbed him of an opportunity to discover, to think, or to do, but she is building up a habit that will result in making him that drone in the world's hive, and that unhappy nuisance in society—a helpless, dependent man or woman.—*Quincey Methods*.

It must be clear that weight of moral character is essential for high success in teaching. The teacher can exercise influence over the scholars only according to what is in himself. He cannot lift them higher than he is himself, or induce them to attempt to reach an eminence which he himself is not striving to attain. Far above every consideration, as a pledge of success in professional work, is the possession of high moral character.—*Calderwood*.

OUR children are side altars in the temples of our lives. Manhood's power of reasoning and calculation are sorry substitutes for their distinct sciences. He who plants a tree does well; he who fells it and saws it into planks does well; he who makes a bench of the planks does well; he who, sitting on a bench, teaches a child, does better than the rest. The first three have added to the common capital of humanity; the last has added something to humanity itself.—*Edmund About*.

THOUGHT can work miracles. Sawdust and the refuse of a soap factory have no explosive power, but thought has transformed these materials into the most powerful explosive known to modern science. There is great force in the remark made to a learner by an eminent artist, "Mix your work with brains!" This mixing process has done wonders, and it will work greater. It is the province of the teacher to do this "mixing." "Think! think for yourself!" is the command now—"Learn!" "Recite!" That day has passed. Let us rejoice and be glad that it has.—*Exchange*.

It was Plato who said in his "Republic" that we never reach our ideals, for as soon as we seem to gain one ideal we find others, which rise higher and higher, urging us on to them. What a pleasant thought! To climb what seems the highest mountain round about us, expecting to survey the country around when on its peak, when lo! its summit gained, other and loftier ranges present themselves to view. Coleridge puts the same thought in another way: "We strive to ascend, and ascend in our striving." Let each of us strive to ascend one peak this year.—*Southwestern Journal*.

THE greatest of all Teachers once said, in describing His own mission, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." And may we not without irreverence say that this is, in a humble and far off way, the aim of every true teacher in the world? He wants to help his pupil to live a fuller, a richer, a more interesting and a more useful life. He wants so to train the scholar that no one of his intellectual or moral resources shall be wasted,

That mind and soul according well,
May make one music.

No meaner ideal than this ought to satisfy even the humblest who enters the teacher's profession.—*Fitch*.