

attractive; it should become attractive in virtue of its high use. It is also important that in school the child be brought in contact with knowledge as a living power, and not as a dead form. But we will not now pause to speak of the necessity of making every lesson a means of exercising the intellectual powers, nor press the importance of oral instruction in general. We wish to call the attention of the teacher to the fact that most interesting and useful lessons may be drawn from passing events—lessons which will often be received with keen zest when the facts of science fail to secure the attention he desires. It is a very common remark that we are educated by circumstances, and yet we shut out from the minds of children the influence of those circumstances and events best calculated to arouse the energies and develop the powers of the mind. Our plan is this:—that the teacher impart to his pupils, on some fixed day of each week, a certain amount of general information, concerning important events, prominent men, and great empires,—in brief, a short comprehensive chapter from the history of the present. This will supply the place of the oral lesson for the day, and will be superior in interest to that exercise, as it deals with the great questions of the day—matters which the pupils themselves hear frequently spoken of by the intelligent and educated as of the greatest moment and significance. Not only this, but the teacher will find it of great benefit to himself, aiding him to avoid that stilted style of declamation into which many fall in attempting to address a school.

The careful teacher will know how to conduct these exercises discreetly, and, without laying aside his character of mentor, so to communicate in the most simple style and with the enthusiasm his great subject naturally inspires that the whole attention of his school will be absorbed, and the most lively interest awakened. In a short time the pupils will cease to regard it in the light of labour, and will look forward to it with intense eagerness. This we know from the results of a very imperfect trial. Perhaps an example will render our meaning more plain. To-day we receive the intelligence of the successful accomplishment of some great enterprise—say the laying of the Atlantic cable. Every man speaks of it to his neighbour, and we point to it as a mark by which to measure our growth. Now, when the teacher enters his school he has before him that part of the community to which, as composed of the men and women of the future, this success is really of the greatest importance. The subject is, however, spoken of in such a manner that children cannot understand it, and none, except, perhaps, a few restless inquisitive spirits, would ever ask for explanation, and they with but small chance of procuring an intelligible one. But when the time for an oral lesson arrives, let the teacher, after calling the attention of his school to what he has to say, repeat the intelligence just received. Whether they have heard it or not, it will at once assume an importance from its being placed before them. Let the terms used be carefully explained and misconceptions removed. Then, referring to the map, let the points connected and the distance between them be fixed in the memory, and the lesson closed with a few simple explanations of the principles involved. We believe that in a single lesson a teacher of average ability can render even such an inexhaustible subject as this, so plain to the understanding of children, that it will cease to be an indefinable something in their minds, and they will begin to understand how such a mighty achievement is possible. Even this would confer incalculable benefit by awakening interest and stimulating enquiry, but how much greater the results if every step in the great undertaking had been followed in the same way. The teacher will find no lack of subjects. Every week will furnish them. If there are no great enterprises there will be great movements. We by no means wish to circumscribe. A Mexican empire, or a great Exposition; a European war, or a royal visit; an Abyssinian expedition, or the statesmen of England; the chief men of a country, or a general summary of the events of the past week,—these, and such like subjects, present themselves in constant variety.

Let any man ask himself how much greater his stock of knowledge would have been, if, in his boyhood, he had received such information as this. Let him consider how many grow up without recognizing their interest in the great world around them; to how many simple things remain a mystery, who never understand such constantly recurring subjects as "reform," "constitutional questions," "franchise," the nature of government, and the functions of

parliaments and courts, and he will begin to see why we urge this matter as worthy of notice.

But the information conveyed is one of the least benefits to be derived from this kind of instruction. After employing it a short time, the teacher will discover that the facts communicated by him are week after week received with greater interest, that his pupils begin to talk among themselves of what they have heard, and eagerly to avail themselves of every means by which they can increase their knowledge of these general topics. They will not only come to feel the moment of what is transpiring around them, but gradually to feel their own connection with these events; and thus the teacher will have at his disposal all those lessons of wisdom and knowledge so easily deducible from them.

And as every absorbing interest created in the mind withdraws it one degree further from what is base and grovelling, the wider views and higher sympathies thus imparted will be found no mean aid in securing that state of healthy school life which springs from a manly self-respect. We doubt not that some of our readers will pronounce our views on this subject somewhat utopian. We confess that in our own case the results were quite unexpected, and yet it is not difficult to find an explanation. It is the fact before reverted to,—the contact between mind in its most susceptible state and knowledge as a living power. Hence its use as an awakener, and the value of this kind of teaching in any scheme of education; for when the mind is thoroughly aroused to the pleasures of knowledge of one kind, it becomes a comparatively easy task to place others before it in their true importance. It may seem a very long step from enterprise and achievement to geometry and English grammar, but we are much mistaken if the scholars who have just listened to a description of the manner in which human ingenuity and perseverance cuts a tunnel through an Alp, or constructs a canal across an isthmus, do not turn with new energy to the routine of school exercises, provided only they be made clearly to understand the place and importance of such exercises in the great work upon which they are labouring.

We have thus, very hurriedly, attempted, not to elaborate an idea, but to make a suggestion. We trust that our meaning will be understood by all, and that teachers will give the plan proposed a thorough trial. It recommends itself to our notice, whatever view we take of education. If we regard the amount of knowledge acquired as the principal thing, here is knowledge of a vastly important kind, and yet generally neglected. If we look upon the development of the intellectual faculties as the higher work, we present this as a simple, and yet, powerful stimulant, to intellectual activity. It will, of course, necessitate preparation on the part of the teacher,—considerable reading and research,—but he will be amply repaid by the benefits conferred upon his school, and at the same time will acquire for himself a fund of information of the most valuable kind. We fear that teachers are sometimes quite remiss on this point, though we can hardly understand how it is possible in this enlightened age. Every teacher should consider it a part of his work to make himself familiar with the current information afforded by some one of our newspapers, to which may be added with profit a standard English or American journal, or one of the magazines advertised in another column.

E.

STANDARDS FOR LICENSES.

FOR the information of teachers and future candidates, we publish below the standards for admission to each grade. Each paper submitted by candidates is estimated in parts of 100. The papers are all drawn up within the limits laid down in the syllabus for each grade of license. The number of papers required of candidates in March last was as follows:—Grade A, 31; Grade B, 19; Grade C, 14; Grade D, 11; Grade E, 7.—

GRADE A.

I. The following conditions must be fulfilled in order to entitle candidate to License of the Grade A:

1. Average of all Marks = 50 or upwards.
2. Average in Greek = 37.50 or upwards.
3. Do. Latin = 50 do.
4. No mark in English branches farther below 37.50 than the Average of all marks is above 50.
5. Not more than Six ordinary words mis-spelled