

with the "persistent questionings of things unseen." The wearied brain—wearied with inaction except in that direction in which it most resembles the brain of lower animals, viz., memory—never suggests anything new. The teacher must suggest, and even the response is not the result of the pupil's thought or work. A book of reference is consulted overnight, and in the morning a set of words, conveying no idea to the pupil, is accepted by the teacher as a satisfactory answer to his question.

If I were asked what is the keenest pleasure that the human spirit can know, I would say—It is what Columbus felt when, after years of effort steadily directed towards the solving of a problem which antecedent periods of study had suggested to him, he perceives at last the shore of the New World so often seen in dreams before; what Leverrier felt when he received word from Berlin that the planet Neptune, till then unseen, had been discovered in the very spot where months of toilsome calculation had assured him it lay; in short, the pleasure experienced as a result of work done by ourselves, leading to a conclusion which increases the sum of our knowledge. The pleasure of the discoverer is perhaps the keenest and purest which the human heart may know. 'Tis a noble joy, since it is a step in the direction of the comprehension of God's thought expressed in the universe. How little of this joy do our pupils feel! Let us analyze the motives which prompt their work.

1st. The certainty that if work be not done to-day, either corporal punishment will be the result, or detention after hours till the work be done—which is only a corporal punishment of a worse kind, since body and mind are together involved in it.

2nd. The desire to please parent or teacher.

3rd. The desire to win good places in the class.

4th. The desire to win a prize.

5th. The disgrace of occupying a low position in the school.

6th. With slow pupils, the consciousness that a familiarity with textbook work will count in the race for a teacher's certificate, a college entrance examination, or something of the kind.

Now, look over that list again, and see which of these motives you could select as a truly noble one. To which of them can the epithet "grand" be applied? Is not the whole thing contemptible? Does it not awake the bitterest scorn in the mind of any cultivated person to have to grant the list practically complete?

Where is the "Amor discendi?" Where the "Divinus furor?" Where the thirst of knowledge for its own sake? Where the adult analogue of that curiosity which was so powerful an incentive to childish endeavour? If you find one in every hundred of our boys and girls, of twelve years, who shows a genuine pleasure in following up an investigation, in any direction at all, from no other motive than the pleasure of the chase, you are more fortunate in your search than I have been. And the reason is not far to seek. If a limb be never exercised it must grow feeble and become atrophied. No child is born without a thirst for knowledge; and this curiosity which is so characteristic of children is only another name for the "Amor discendi." But no care is taken to cultivate it—no pains to keep it alive. It is left unsatisfied, while the troublesome questioner is on his parents' hands to nourish itself with the promise of a future satisfaction; and when in the fulness of time we hand him over to the professional teacher, the already weakened impulse is quickly annihilated by a regimen of