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# EDUCATIONALIST.

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"Knowledge is Power."

[AFTER THREE MONTHS, ONE DOLLAR

VOLUME I.

BRIGHTON, CANADA WEST, MAY 1, 1861.

NUMBER 16

## Poet's Corner.

### THE LITTLE BIRDS.

BY REV. G. G. FERGUSON.

Who divides the little birds,  
Giving to each home a share;  
Some to warble in the woods,—  
In the fields and every where?

Who directs them as they fly,  
Over mountain, mead and plain;  
Over countries far away,  
To their little homes again?

On the poplar, by our door,  
Where two branches clasp their hands,  
Bullded nice, with curious floor,  
There a little palace stands.

One year now has passed and gone,  
Since two little travellers came,  
Built there a tiny home,  
Calling it some pretty name.

Day by day; I saw them work,  
Tolling late, and tolling long,  
How can little hearts like thine,  
Know so much, and know so well?

And they turn their little eyes,  
To the fields above, untrod—  
To the crystal of the skies,  
Warbling ever, "It is God."

Through the long, warm summer months,  
I did mark with how much care,  
They did teach their little ones  
How to walk upon the air.

Autumn came with banners red,  
Waving 'mid the harvest sheaves,  
And the ground was thickly spread,  
With the dead and dying leaves.

When the winter coming on,  
Fleecy shadows cast before;  
Then they sang one farewell song,  
And I missed them from my door.

When the violets in the spring,  
Caught the azure of the skies;  
Then the little couple came,  
Giving me a glad surprise.

And I ask no many a time,  
Who directed them this way,  
Guiding safe, through many a cime  
To the self-same poplar tree?

Need I ask, while musing thus  
Of the number every where,  
Who divides the little birds,  
Giving to each home a share?

Camden, N. J.

### SINGING-BIRDS AND THEIR SONGS.

Those persons enjoy the most happiness, if possessed of a benevolent heart and favored by ordinary circumstances of fortune, who have acquired by habit and education the power of deriving pleasure from objects that lie immediately around them. But these common sources of happiness are opened to those only who are endowed with genius, or who have received a certain kind of intellectual training. The more ordinary the mental

and moral organization and culture of the individual, the more far-fetched and dear-bought must be his enjoyments. Nature has given us in full development only those appetites which are necessary to our physical well-being. She has left our moral appetites and capacities and in the germ to be developed by education and circumstances. Hence those agreeable sensations that come chiefly from the imagination, which may be called the pleasures of sentiment, are available only to persons of a peculiar refinement of mind. The ignorant and rude may be dazzled and delighted by physical beauty, and charmed by loud and stirring sound; but those more simple melodies and less attractive colors and forms that appeal to the mind for their principal effect act more powerfully upon individuals of superior culture.

In proportion as we have been trained to be agreeably affected by the outward forms of Nature, and the sounds that proceeded from the animate and inanimate world, we are capable of being made happy without resorting to expensive and vulgar recreations. It ought, therefore, to be one of the chief points in the education of youth, while teaching them the still more important offices of humanity, to cultivate and enliven their susceptibility to the charms of natural objects. Then would the aspects of Nature, continually changing with the progress of the seasons and the sounds that enliven their march, satisfy, in a great measure, that craving for agreeable sensations which leads mankind away from humble and healthful pursuits to those of a more artificial and exciting life. The value of such pleasures consists not so much in their cheapness as in their favorable moral influences, which improve the heart, while they lead the mind to observations that pleasantly exercise and develop, without tasking its powers. The quiet emotions, half musical and half poetical, which are awakened by listening to the songs of birds, belong to this class of refined enjoyments.

But the music of birds, though agreeable to all, conveys positive and durable pleasure only to those who have learned to associate with their notes, in connection with the scenes of Nature, a thousand interesting and romantic images.—To many persons of this character it affords more delight than the most brilliant music of the opera or the concert. In vain, therefore, will it be said, as an objection, that the notes of birds have no charm, save that which is derived from association, and that, considered as music, they do not equal that of the most simple reed or flageolet. It is sufficient to remark, that the most delightful influences of Nature proceed from these sights and sounds that appeal to the imagination and affections through the medium of slight and almost insensible impressions

made upon the eye and ear. At the moment when these physical impressions exceed a certain mean, the spell is broken, and the enjoyment becomes sensual, not intellectual. How soon, indeed, would the songs of birds lose their effect, if they were loud and brilliant, like a band of instruments! It is their simplicity that gives them their charm.

As a further illustration of this point, it may be remarked that simple melodies have among all people exercised a greater power over the imagination than louder and more complicated music. Nature employs a very small amount of physical sensation to create an intellectual passion, and when an excess is used a diminished effect is produced. I am persuaded that the effect of a great part of our sacred music is lost by an excess of harmony and a too great volume of sound. On the same principle, a loud crash of thunder deafens and terrifies; but its low and distant rumbling produces an agreeable emotion of sublimity.

The songs of birds are as intimately allied with poetry as with music. The lark has been aptly denominated a "feathered lyric," by one of the English poets; and the analogy becomes apparent when we consider how much the song of a bird resembles a lyrical pallad in its influence on the mind. Though it utters no words, how plainly it suggests a long train of agreeable images of love, beauty, friendship, and home! When a young person has suffered any severe wound of the affections, he seldom fails, if endowed with a sensitive mind, to listen to the birds as sharers in his affliction. Through them the deities of the groves seem to offer him their consolation. By indulging this habit of making companionship with the objects of Nature, all pleasing sights and sounds gradually become certain anodynes for his sorrow; and those who have this mental alchemy for turning grief into a poetic melancholy, can seldom be reduced to a state of absolute despondency. Poetry, or rather the poetic sentiment, exalts all our pleasures and soothes all our affections by some illusive charm, whether it be turned into the channel of religion or romance. Without this reflection of light from the imagination, what is the passion of love? and what is our love of beauty and of sweet sounds, but a mere gravitation?

The voice of every singing bird has its associations in the minds of all susceptible persons who were born and nurtured within the precincts of its untutored minstrelsy. The music of birds is modulated in pleasant unison with all the chords of affection and imagination, filling the soul with a lively consciousness of happiness and beauty, and soothing it with romantic visions of memory,—of love, when it was an ethereal sentiment of adoration and

[Continued on page 124.]



## THE EDUCATIONALIST.

MAY 1, 1861.

## SOCIETY FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF THE DEAF AND DUMB AND OF THE BLIND.

The Report of this excellent organization for the year 1860 has been sent to us by the head master Mr. J. B. McGann. The Report shows a thriving state of the Institution and gives some interesting statistics of its progress. In order to excite an interest in so benevolent a scheme, the Society has adopted the method of sending a portion of the pupils through the country to various localities for an exhibition of their acquirements, and the plan has had a most beneficial effect. Subscriptions have been largely given, and there is every prospect that the institution will go on increasing in usefulness and stability, until it becomes one of our most flourishing charities, and ranks first not only in utility but in permanency. Misplaced benevolence is to be deprecated, but here is an opportunity for the charitable to contribute their mite in a cause which aims at the elevation and improvement of a certain class of unfortunates whose benighted condition commend them most strongly to the compassionate regards and merciful efforts of their fellow creatures. The cause of the deaf and dumb and of the blind cannot but be a proper one for the exercise of a pure and unostentatious benevolence.

Any contributions will be cheerfully received by the Treasurer Wm. McMaster Esq., Toronto.

## CONVENTION OF THE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION FOR THE EASTERN RIDING OF THE CO. OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

This Association met at Hilton, on Saturday, the 23rd March, forty-seven members being present.

The proceedings were commenced by Mr. Perry, who explained his method of teaching the National Reading Books.

Messrs. Blackmore, of Brighton, and Bell, of Campbellford, conducted the exercises in Grammar, the extract chosen for analysis being that by Arkenside, on "Taste," in the 5th Book. Considerable discussion took place on some passages.

An exceedingly interesting Lecture, on the Early History of the World, was delivered by Mr. Macoun, of Belleville.

After a short intermission, the Convention took up the subject of Arithmetic; Mr. Scarlett lecturing on Vulgar Fractions, and Mr. Blackmôté on Decimals.

Messrs. O'Sullivan, of Percy, and Ruth-erford, of Asphodel, lectured on Algebra.

After the conclusion of the lectures, considerable interest was displayed by the members as to the place for the next Convention, which it was ultimately decided should be held in the Village of Brighton, on Saturday, the 6th of July, the following subjects and instructors being chosen:—

*Grammar*—Fourth Book, Section 1, Lesson 20, p. 77—Detached pieces—Messrs. Bell and O'Sullivan.

*Arithmetic*—Arithmetical and Geometrical Progression—Messrs. D. McColl and I. Squier.

*Algebra*—Factoring and Simple Equations—Messrs. J. Macoun and Wilmot Squier.

*Geometry*—E. Scarlett Esq. Doctor. C. M. Gould will deliver a Lecture on "Animal Chemistry."

Mr. Paul Blackmore having stated, that, as he was about to leave Canada, he wished to resign his office as Corresponding Secretary to the Association.

It was proposed by E. Scarlett Esq., seconded by T. S. Gillon Esq., and unanimously resolved,—

That the talents, education, and gentlemanly deportment of Mr. Paul Blackmore having gained for him the esteem and confidence of those who have become acquainted with him since his arrival amongst us, it is a source of regret to the friends of this Association to lose so valuable a member. That we wish our esteemed friend a favourable voyage to his native country, and assure him, that if, in the arrangements of an all-wise Providence, he may deem it his duty to return to this colony, he will at least ever meet with a warm reception among his friends in the County of Northumberland.

On motion of Mr. Scarlett, seconded by Mr. Macoun, Mr. B. Brisbin was appointed Corresponding Secretary in the room of Mr. Blackmore.

Moved by Dr. Gould, seconded by Mr. Blackmore, and resolved—

That the thanks of this Convention are due to Messrs. Webster, Richmond, Potts, Gillon, Thorpe, Phillips, Fiddick and others, for the kind and generous

hospitality shewn by them to the Teachers and Members of this Association.

The Convention then closed; the members appearing well pleased with the proceedings of the day, which were calculated to increase the growing interest in the cause of Education, and to excite the emulation of Teachers, by bringing the various branches of their professional duties prominently before them.

T. S. GILLON,  
*pro Secretary.*

## REFLECTIONS.

Far back in the unfathomable depths of the "beginning" was conceived the creation of the universe, and, touched by the hand of Omniscience, myriads of worlds came forth, vying with each other in rendering homage to Him "who spake and it was done." The "morning stars sang together" in the joy of their new existence. The Creator beheld the beauty, the harmony, the glory of His work, "and it was very good."

Indelibly written on every leaf was the character of its Author, but it was not complete until mind pre-faced the great book of Nature—the likeness of Divinity. Fallen spirits read and envied, and with "malicious leer malign" they sullied the purity of that likeness, and sin, with all its hideous forms, marred the symmetrical beauty of the greatest work which ever emanated from the hand of the Divine Artist.

Man, eager to solve the mysteries of obscurity, strives in vain to unravel the intricate purposes of God which He has wisely hidden from his dependent creatures. Although man has made great discoveries in regard to the laws which govern the material world, and has made the elements obedient to his will, spanning the waters of the deep, and looking into the starry heavens to measure other worlds, there are boundaries to knowledge which he may not pass. The finite is lost in the infinite, and in the incapacity of his soul, he sees the distance between the creature and the Creator. But this strange part within, struggling to break the fetters that bind it as it roams through radiant fields of thought in search of something to answer the inspiration of its existence, is it never to soar at pleasure beyond the confines of its material abode? Yes, we thank our Maker for the immortality He has given us. There will be a time when

the child of God will traverse the golden streets of the New Jerusalem—when, washed in the pure water of the River of Life, his soul shall mount on wings of immortality to fathom eternity, then to bask in the sunshine of eternal truth, which folds in its wide embrace the majesty of creation, and the purposes of Divinity.

Who art thou, O man, that boastest of thy wisdom or thy might? Look out upon the starry worlds above and then consider, that, with all the glory thou wilt have in thy future home, still, thou mayest be least in the kingdom of Heaven. If each orb is peopled with intelligent beings, as we have every reason to believe, then, at the consummation of all things, will a myriad of intelligences surround the throne to give all the glory to the Creator of the universe. Of the capacity or condition of mind possessed by the inhabitants of other worlds we can form no correct estimate. It is a beautiful thought which we have seen expressed, that perhaps they have never sinned and are constantly enjoying the presence and the smiles of God. Perhaps their capacity of mind increases in proportion to the splendor and magnitude of their respective abodes.

If the Creator had given us a more beautiful, or a larger dwelling place, with our present powers of mind, our knowledge and comprehension of the same would be proportionally less. So we may suppose that the inhabitants of many other globes have arrived at a greater degree of development and advancement in knowledge than ourselves. Hence, when all are gathered together, from one end of Heaven to the other, they will be capable of enjoying more, and will occupy higher seats in the place prepared for all the righteous. Then, mortal, humble thyself in the dust, for "that is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?"

#### GLACIERS.

Among the most remarkable objects on the surface of our earth are the great rivers of ice that are forever slowly creeping down the valleys of the Alps. The globe on which we live is sweeping through a region of intense cold, the warmth which is essential to animal life extending at farthest but a few miles from its surface. The rays of the sun, which produce the heats of summer, pour through the cold space above without leav-

ing in it any traces of their power. The water which is evaporated from the ocean and rivers, as it floats upward into the cold region, is there condensed, and, falling upon the summits of the mountains, covers them with deep layers of perpetual snow. As the snow accumulates in vast masses in the valleys which furrow the steep sides of the mountains, it is pressed downward by its own weight along the valley, and when it reaches the boundary of perpetual frost, it is converted into clear solid ice. From what we know of the properties of ice we should suppose that a mass of it hundreds of feet in thickness, wedged in between the rocky sides of a crooked valley, would remain immovably fixed in its position; but careful repeated experiments show that this is not the case. Professor Forbes, of Edinburgh, by placing rows of stakes across a glacier and observing them carefully with a theodolite, ascertained that the whole mass was moving slowly and steadily downward, at the rate of a few inches only in 24 hours.

Within a few years glaciers have been thoroughly investigated by Agassiz, Forbes, Tyndall and many others, and hundreds of observations of their motions and phenomena have been made with suitable instruments. It is found that the motion is more rapid in the middle than at the sides, at the surface than at the bottom, in the summer than in the winter—and like rivers of water, glaciers move the most rapidly in the steepest part of their course, the motion becoming very slow indeed where the ice spreads out to fill a broad part of the valley. When the earth falls down from the sides of the valley upon the edges of the glacier, it rests there, forming long lines or walls, which are called *moraines*. When two streams of ice unite, the moraines upon the contiguous edges come into the middle of the combined stream, and thus the glacier in the lower part of its course becomes marked with rows of earthy matter and broken rocks extending lengthwise along its surface. When separate masses of rock roll down from the sides of the valley and rest upon the ice, they protect the ice directly beneath them from the action of the sun's rays, and as the surface around is melted away, these rocks remain lifted up on short pillars, presenting a very singular appearance. Isolated masses of gravel also protect the ice from melting, and when that around melts away, the mass falls into a conical form, and thus the

glacier becomes dotted with cones of gravel the hearts of which are of ice.

As the glacier moves down the mountain into the warm regions, it is melted on the surface, and thus its vertical depth diminishes at its lower portion, though it generally terminates abruptly with an end of considerable thickness, a stream of water usually flowing out of a deep cave in the end. In summer this end melts more rapidly than the glacier moves down, and the terminus retreats up the valley; but in winter the head of the frozen monster is pushed downward along the valley, plowing up the ground, tearing trees from the earth, and sometimes crushing in the walls of houses.

The Himalayas and other mountains which rise into the regions of perpetual frost produce glaciers, as well as the Alps. Near the pole, the glaciers are sometimes pushed quite into the sea, when their ends break off and float away, forming the icebergs, which are occasionally encountered on the voyage from this country to Europe.—*Scientific American*.

#### MECHANICS AT A PREMIUM.

Notwithstanding the fashion of the would-be considered aristocracy to put on airs and turn up their noses at the idea of associating with mechanics, they are beginning to be valued at what they are worth, as all men should be, and if they do not attain position in society and in the world, it is not because they are mechanics. If they do not conduct themselves in a manner to be worthy of it they have no right to expect it. The learned professions are so crowded not that it takes a man of more than ordinary talent to acquire anything more than a competency. Men are beginning to train their sons, and very properly, for other things beside law and medicine. And we find young men who have received the advantages of a liberal education turning their attention to farming and mechanism, as more likely to secure their independence. That man shall work, is a decree of heaven, and that a man who works for a living is not entitled to as much respect as the man who gets a living without for it, is an idea which, if it ever really existed, is very fast vanishing from the mind of men.

**SERENITY OF MIND.**—A good wife, roast beef and a cold water bath, will make most any man healthy, wealthy and wise.

not a passion, and of friendship, when it was a passion and not an expedience,—of dear and simple adventures, and of comrades who had part in them,—of dappled mornings, and serene and glowing sunsets,—of sequestered nooks and mossy seats in the old wood,—of paths by the riverside, and flowers that smiled a bright welcome to our rambling,—of lingering departures from home, and of old by-ways, overshadowed by trees and hedged with roses and viburnums, that spread their shade and their perfume around our path to gladden our return. By this pleasant instrumentality has Nature provided for the happiness of those who have learned to be delighted with the survey of her works, and with the sound of those voices which she has appointed to communicate to the human soul the joys of her inferior creation.

The singing-birds, with reference to their songs, may be divided into four classes, first, the Rapid Singers, whose songs are uninterrupted, of considerable length, and uttered with fervor, and in apparent ecstasy. Second, the Moderate Singers, whose notes are slowly modulated, but without pauses or rests between their different strains. Third, the Interrupted Singers, who seldom modulate their notes with rapidity, and make decided pauses between their several strains, of which there are in general from five to eight or nine. Fourth, the Warblers, whose notes consist of only one or two strains, not combined into a song.

The canary, among foreign birds, and the linnet and bobolink, among American birds, are familiar examples of the first class; the common robin and the veery of the second; the wood-thrush, the cat-bird, and the mocking-bird of the third; and the blue-bird, the pewee, and the purple martin, of the fourth class. It may be added, that some birds are nearly periodical in their habits of singing, preferring the morning and evening, and occasional periods in other parts of the day, while others sing almost indifferently at all hours. The greater number of species, however, are more tuneful in the early morning than at any other hour.

June, in this part of the world, is the most vocal month of the year. Many of our principal songsters do not arrive until near the middle of May; and all, whether they come early or late, continue in song throughout the month of June. So nearly simultaneous is the discontinuance of the song of this species, that it might seem as if their silence were preconcerted, and that by a vote they had, on a certain day, adjourned over to another year. If an unusually genial day occurs about the seventh of July, we may hear multitudes of them singing merrily on that occasion. Should this time be followed by two or three successive days of chilly and rainy weather, their tunefulness is so generally brought to a close during this period, that we may not hear another musical note from a single individual after the seventh. The songs of birds are discontinued as soon as their amorous dalliances and the care of their offspring have ceased. Hence those birds that raise but one brood of young during the season, like the bobolink, are the first to become silent.

No one of the New England birds is an autumnal warbler; though the song-sparrow often greets the fine mornings in October with his lays, and the shore-lark, after spending the summer in Labrador about the shores of Hudson's Bay, is sometimes heard in autumn, soaring and singing at the dawn of day, while on his passage to the South. The bobolink, the veery, or Wilson's thrush, the red thrush and the golden robin, are silent after the middle of July; the wood-thrush, the cat-bird, and the common robin, not until a month later; but the song-sparrow alone continues to sing throughout the summer. The tuneful season of the year, in New England, embraces a period of about four months, from the middle of April to the middle of August.

There are certain times of the day, as well as certain seasons of the year, when the birds are most musical. The grand concert of the feathered tribe takes place during the hour between dawn and sunrise. During the remainder of the day they sing less in concert, though many species are very musical at noonday, and seem, like the nocturnal birds, to prefer the hour when others are silent. At sunset there is an apparent attempt to unite once more in chorus, but this is far from being so loud or so general as in the morning. The little birds which I have classed in the fourth division are a very important accompaniment to the anthem of dawn, their notes, though short, serving agreeably to fill up the pauses made by the other musicians.— Thus the hair-bird (*Fringilla Socialis*) has a sharp and thrilling note, without any modulation, and not at all melodious, when heard alone; but in the morning it is the chief harmonizer of the whole chorus, and serves, more than any other voice, to give unity and symphony to the multitude of miscellaneous parts.

There are not many birds whose notes could be accurately described upon the gamut. The nearest approach we can make to accuracy is to give some general idea of their time and modulation. Their musical intervals can be distinguished but with difficulty, on account of the rapidity of their utterance. I have often attempted to transcribe some of their notes upon the musical scale, but I am persuaded that such sketches can be only approximations to literal correctness. As different individuals of the same species sing very differently, the notes, as transcribed from the song of one individual, will never exactly represent the song of another. If we listen attentively, however, to a number of songs, we shall detect in all of them a *theme*, as it is termed by musicians, of which the different individuals of the species warble their respective variations. Every song is, technically speaking, a *fantasia* constructed upon this *theme*, from which none of the species ever departs.

It is very generally believed that the singing-birds are confined to temperate latitudes, and that the tropical birds have not the gift of song. That this is an error is apparent from the testimony of travellers, who speak of the birds in the Sandwich Islands and New Zealand as singing delightfully, and some fine songsters are occasionally imported in cages

from tropical climates. The origin of this notion may be explained in several ways. It is worthy of notice that within the tropics the singing season of different species of birds does not occur at the same time. One species may be musical in the spring, another in summer, and others in autumn and winter. When one species, therefore, has begun to sing, another has ceased, so that, at whatever time of the year the traveller stops, he hears but few birds engaged in song.

In the temperate latitudes, on the contrary, as soon as the birds arrive, they commence building their nests, and become musical at the same time. If a stranger from a tropical climate should arrive in this country in the spring, and remain here during the months of May and June, he would hear more birds singing together than he ever heard at once in his own clime; but were he to arrive about the middle of July, when the greater number of our birds have discontinued their songs, he would probably, if he knew the reputation of the Northern birds, marvel a little at their silence. If there are as many birds singing at one time during the whole year, in the hot climates, as we hear in this country in the latter half of summer, the greater average would appear to be on the side of the former.

It may also be remarked, that the singing-birds of the tropics are not so well known as those of temperate latitudes which are inhabited by civilized men.— The savages and barbarians, who are the principal inhabitants of hot countries, are seldom observant of the habits or the voices of the singing-birds. A musician of the feathered race, as well as a harpist or violinist, must have an appreciating audience, or his powers can never be made known to the world. But even with the same audience, the tropical singing-birds would probably be less esteemed than songsters of equal merit in the temperate latitudes; for, amid the stridulous and deafening sounds made by the insects in warm climates, the notes of birds would be scarcely audible.

We are still inclined to believe, however, that there is a larger proportion of musical birds in the temperate than in the torrid zone, because in the former region there are more of those species that build low and live among the grass and shrubbery, and it is well known that the singing-birds are mostly of this latter description. In warm climates the vegetation consists chiefly of trees and tall vines, forming together an umbrageous canopy overhead, with but a scanty undergrowth. In temperate latitudes the shrubbery predominates, especially in the most northerly parts. Moreover, the grasses, that furnish by their seeds a great proportion of the food of the smaller birds are almost entirely wanting in the torrid zone.

The birds that live in trees are remarkable for their brilliant plumage; those that live upon the ground and in the shrubbery are plainly dressed. This is a provision of Nature for their protection, as the ground-birds must have a predominance of tints that resemble the general hues of the surface of the earth. I do not know a single brightly-plumed bird

that nestles upon the ground, unless the bobolink may be considered an exception. They are almost invariably colored like sparrows. The birds that inhabit the trees, on the other hand, need less of this protection, though the females are commonly of an olive or greenish yellow, which harmonizes with the general hue of the foliage, and screens them from observation, while sitting upon the nest. The male, on the contrary, who seldom sits upon the nest, requires a plumage that will render him conspicuous to the female and to the young, after they have left their nest. It is remarkable, that Nature, in all cases in which she has created a difference in the plumage of the male and female, has used the hues of their plumage only for the protection of the mother and the young, for whose advantage she has dressed the male parent in colors that must somewhat endanger his own safety.

The color of the plumage of birds seems to bear less relation to their powers of song than to their habitats; and as the birds that live in trees are commonly less tuncful, they are more brilliantly arrayed. The bird employs his song in wooing his mate, as well as in entertaining her after she is wedded; and it is not unlikely that Nature may have compensated those which are deficient in song by giving them a superior beauty of plumage. As the offices of courtship devolve entirely upon the males, it is the more necessary that they should be possessed of conspicuous attractions; but as the task of sitting upon the nest devolves upon the female, she requires more of that protection which arises from the conformity of her plumage with the general hue of the objects that surround her nest. While she is sitting, the plain hues of her dress protect her from observation; but when she leaves her nest to seek her companion, she is enabled by his brilliant colors the more easily to discover him. The male is diligent in providing for the wants of the offspring, and hence it is important that his dress should render him conspicuous. When the young birds have left the nest, upon seeing the flash of his plumage, they immediately utter their call, and by this note, which might not otherwise be sounded at the right moment, he detects them and supplies them with food.—Should a bird of prey suddenly come into their neighborhood, he overlooks the plainly-dressed mother and offspring, and gives chase to the male parent, who not only escapes, but at the same time diverts the attention of the foe from the defenceless progeny.

But the birds that build low, either upon the ground or among the shrubbery, are exposed to a greater number and variety of enemies. Hence it becomes necessary that the males as well as the females should have that protection which is afforded by sobriety of color. Not being made conspicuous by their plumage, they are endowed with the gift of song, that they may make known their presence to their mate and their young by their voice. I have often thought that the song of the bird was designed by Nature for the benefit of the young, no less than for the entertainment of his mate. The sounds uttered by birds on account of their young always precede the period of incubation.

The common hen begins to cluck several days before she begins to sit upon her eggs. In like manner the male singing-bird commences his song when the pair are making ready to build their nest.—While his mate is sitting, his song reminds her of his presence, and inspires her with a feeling of security and content, during the period of her confinement. As soon as the young are hatched, they begin to learn his voice and grow accustomed to it, and when they fly from the nest they are prevented by the sound of it from wandering and getting bewildered. If they happen to fly beyond certain bounds, the song of the male parent warns them of their distance, and causes them to turn and draw near the place from which it seems to issue. Thus the song of the male bird, always uttered within a certain circumference, of which the nest is the centre, becomes a kind of sentinel voice, to keep the young birds within prudent limits.

It is not easy to explain why a larger proportion of the birds that occupy trees should be destitute of song, except on the supposition that in such elevated situations the young are more easily guided by sight than hearing. Still there are many songsters which are dressed in brilliant plumage, and of these we have some examples among our native birds. These, however, are evident exceptions to the general fact, and we may trace a plain analogy in this respect between birds and insects. The musical insects are, we believe, invariably destitute of brilliant plumage. Butterflies and moths do not sing; the music of insects comes chiefly from the plainly-dressed locust and grasshopper tribes.

#### SLEEPLESSNESS.

It is the result of over bodily or mental effort. When a man works beyond his strength, or thinks or studies more than rest can restore, then, sooner or later, comes that inability to sleep soundly, that wakefulness which is more weary even than bodily labour, and which feeds the debility which first gave rise to it. The result is that a man is always tired; never feels rested even when he leaves his bed in the morning; hence he wastes away and finds repose only in the grave; if, indeed, insanity does not supervene. It is too often a malady remediless by medical means. Avoid it then as you would a viper or a murderer; all over effort of mind or body is suicidal. Whatever you do, take enough rest to restore the used energies of each preceding twenty-four hours; if you do not, you may escape for a few months, and if possessing a good constitution, years may pass away before any decided ill result forces itself on your attention; but rest assured, that the time will come when the too often baffled system, like a baffled horse, will refuse to work, it will not take prompt and sound sleep; it will not be rested by repose, and that irritating wakefulness will come upon you, which philosophy cannot conquer, which medicine cannot cure; and, wasting by slow degrees to skin and bone, rest is found only in the grave.—*Dr. Hall.*

#### PATIENT WORKERS.

Who does the most good? This question is not easily answered. Such men as Luther, and Wesley, and Edwards, and Wilberforce, and Howard, are prominent among the great workers in the world.—But who knows that they really excelled thousands of others whose names have never been mentioned in history? They were made prominent by the circumstances around them; and perhaps their success depended more upon the agency of unknown persons, than upon their own power. Very likely their position depended more upon others than upon the success of their own efforts. It is not always the man who applies the torch to the loaded cannon, who deserves the honor of the execution which it does. Most of workers must have toiled long, hard, skillfully and successfully before him, or his torch, and flash, and the smoke, and the noise would have amounted to nothing. To him who stands out the most prominently, who stirs up the greatest excitement, and makes the most noise, the least credit is often due for the result attained.

If we look at the surface of things men would seem to be pitched into life, as vast heaps of wood, coming down by mighty rivers, are brought together in rafts, pitched and tossed every whither,—no harmony, no apparent relation among them. Everything in life seems to be jumbled together, if we look at the fitness of things. Men of fine and tender feelings are placed in circumstances where there is nothing to satisfy their wants; men of aptitude for learning and thought are compelled to remain in ignorance; men of feeble minds are called to stations where strong wills are needed, and strong men are placed where their strength is of no avail. In the midst of all these difficulties and discordances, what a fierce and fiery time men would have of it, if it was necessary that they should worry over disagreeable duties; if there were no way of their avoiding to fret and fume over every ledge of difficulty which lay across their life.—*Beecher.*

#### REV. SIDNEY SMITH ON ENJOYMENT.

—Mankind are always happier for having been happy—so that if you make them happy now, you make them happy twenty years hence by the memory of it. A childhood passed with a due mixture of rational indulgence, under fond and wise parents, diffuses over the whole of life a feeling of calm pleasure, and in extreme old age is the very last remembrance which time can erase from the mind of man. No enjoyment, however inconsiderable, is confined to the present moment. A man is the happier for life from having once made an agreeable tour, or lived\* for any length of time with pleasant people, or enjoyed any considerable interval of innocent pleasure; which contributes to render old men so inattentive to the scenes before them, and carries them back to a world that is past and to scenes never to be renewed again.



## SPRING.

A flush of green is on the bough,  
A warm breath panteth in the air,  
And in the earth a heart pulse thro  
Throbs underneath her breaths of snow.

Life is astir among the woods,  
And by the moor, and by the stream,  
The year as from a torpid dream  
Wakes in the sunshine on the buds;

Wakes up in music as the song  
Of wood bird, wild, and loosen'd rill,  
More frequent from the windy hill  
Comes, greening forest aisles along;

Wakes up in beauty as the sheen  
Of woodland pool the gleams receives,  
Through bright flowers, over braided leaves,  
Of broken sunlight, golden green.

She sees the outlaw'd winter stay  
Awhile, to gather after him  
Snow robes, frost-crystal'd diadem,  
And then in soft showers pass away.

She would not love rough winter well,  
Yet cannot choose but mourn him now;  
So wears awhile on her young brow  
His gift—a gleaming icicle.

Then turns her, loving, to the sun,  
Upheaves her bosom's swell to his,  
And, in the joy of his first kiss,  
Forgets for aye that stormier one.

Old winter's pledge from her he rears—  
That ice-cold, though glittering spar—  
And zones her with a green cymar,  
And girdles round her brow with leaves.

The primrose and wood-violet  
Ho tangles in her shining hair,  
And teaches elfin breezes fair  
To sing her some sweet canzonet.

All promising long summer hours,  
When she in his embrace shall lie,  
Under the broad doom of bright sky,  
On mossy couches starr'd with flowers.

Till she smiles back again to him  
The beauty beaming from his face,  
And, robed in light, glows with the grace  
Of Eden-palaced cherubim.

O Earth, thy growing loneliness  
Around our very hearts has thrown  
An undimmed joyance all its own,  
And sunn'd us o'er with happiness.

## MARIAN CROSS.

All that dark, cloudy November day I had been listlessly gazing out at the sullen looking sky, vainly hoping to get a glimpse of a single ray of sunshine, or at least one little, bright cloud to relieve the general dreariness,—but no, it still kept raining, raining. Turning moodily from the window, I caught up the fragment of an old newspaper, and as I read the words, blotted and almost effaced by age and use, I forgot the day was “dark, and sad, and dreary.” In thought I went back to the time when I made one of the merry group at the old red school-house upon the hill. I had seen the fading leaves of only twelve Autumns then, the days all seemed bright, and very joyous to me, yet I had learned that it was not so all, I knew that among the youthful band who gathered

there day after day there were some who trod the life-path wearily—despairingly. And as I read

“She was not beautiful, poor girl,  
Her figure or her face  
Had none of all the charms that giv'd  
To maidenhood its grace,—  
One of those beings upon whom  
All sorrows seem to fall,  
Deformed and homely, poor and sad,  
And mind to feel it all,”

the pale, sad, thoughtful face of Marian Cross, came up before me, as, seated alone at her desk, she industriously committed to memory lesson after lesson, heedless of the busy hum around her; or, standing a little apart, watched us in our noisy sports at play hours. Now and then our lively sallies would cause a faint smile to light up her face, but it quickly faded, and the same mournful look would again take its place. We sometimes wondered *why* she was sad, yet never paused to consider whether *we* could do aught to make her life more pleasant.

Once, at her request, I went with her to her home, and from that hour her sad face was no mystery to me. I will not attempt to describe that home,—I felt that its very atmosphere was enough to chill every joyous impulse. I wondered if the sunshine ever entered there,—sure was I that the sunshine of love never did, or it would have been a happier one.

Her harsh, unfeeling, intemperate father; rough, clownish brothers, and careless, selfish sisters, had no sympathy for the timid, sensitive child; and her patient, over-tasked mother had no time to devote to her, and from others

She never sought a smile  
To cheer her lonely heart,  
But by herself, with shrinking step,  
She struggled on apart.

After a time the gloomy old house she had so long called her home was exchanged for a pleasanter one, but more agreeable associations, or all the glowing beauties of earth that surrounded her, had no power to bring happiness to her desponding heart. There came also a change in the household, some had found other homes, death had removed the mother and a sister, leaving of the group that once gathered at the homestead only Marian and her father.

Many a long, long day—yes, even weeks,—she spent them alone, sorrowful and disheartened. Friends endeavored to cheer her with words of kindness and encouragement, yet her pale cheek grew paler, her step slower, and her slender form bowed beneath the crushing weight of sorrow which rested upon her young heart, slowly, surely wearing her life away.

The look of quiet, patient endurance which was ever upon her face, we felt, as we stood beside her last resting place, came not from a meek, forbearing spirit, or she would have waited patiently until God called her to a happier world.

Poor Marian! she was alone in the hour of death; none knew when it came. A friend hearing that she had been many days alone, and wishing to spend a little time with her, entered the house on a beautiful autumn morning, and found her sleeping—sleeping the peaceful, dreamless slumber of death. By her side stood the cup that had contained the deadly draught; the hand that prepared it yet remained clasped over the heart, which had ceased to beat; around the cold lips still lingered a smile,—the weary one was at rest.

In tearful silence friends gathered as they learned the sad story, but there was none that could answer the half-uttered words of inquiry that rose to every lip—none but the Searcher of all Hearts knew how deep was the anguish, how strong, how alluring the temptation which caused her to commit the dreadful deed. Slowly, sadly they bore her to her last resting-place, gently they laid her down to repose beneath the green turf, and now but few can tell

Where blooms the clover, white and red,  
That fate kindly rears  
To guard the slumbers of the child  
Of poverty and tears.

VERY TOUCHING.—Mr. Backus, the editor of the *Canajoharie Radian*, is a deaf-mute; but how eloquently he gives voice to the language of grief in the following passage from his last paper:

We cannot this week fill our usual column—every time hitherto, before this, that we have sat in the old place, to the now regular recurring duty, we have had dear little fingers rambling along our knees, or making stray snatches at the paper. A little head, nodding, as it shook its curls, a mock “by-by, papa,” and turning back again to the sweet childish teasing. But now, alas! the little fingers are no longer here; the little eyes are dim with a dimness that shall never know the old lustrous again, and the little curls are yonder, beneath that sod that gleams so greenly beneath the trees and the glimmering white tombstones.

Value the friendship of him who stands by you in the storm; swarms of insects will surround you in the sunshine.

## NEVER TELL A LIE.

Two lads came at an early hour to a country market town, and, spreading out their little stands, they sat down to wait for customers. One sold melons and other fruits, the other dealt in oysters and fish. The market hours passed along, and each little dealer saw with pleasure his stores steadily decreasing, while the money was filling their pockets. The last melon lay out Harry's stand; when a gentleman came by, and placing his hand upon it, said, "What a fine large melon! I think I must buy it. What do you ask for it my boy?"

"The melon is the last I have, sir; and though it looks very fair, there is an unsound spot on the other side," said the boy turning it over.

"So there is," said the man; "I think I will not take it. But," he added, looking into the boy's face, "is it very business-like to point out the defects of your fruits to customers?"

"It is better than being dishonest, sir," said the boy modestly.

"You are right my boy; always remember to speak the truth, and you will find favor with God and man also. You have nothing else I wish for this morning, but I shall not forget your little stand in future. Are those oysters fresh?" he continued, turning to Ben Wilson's stand.

"Yes, sir; fresh this morning," was the reply; and a purchase being made, the gentleman went his way.

"Harry, what a fool you was to show the gentleman that spot in the melon! Now you can take it home for your pains, or throw it away. How much wiser is he about those oysters? Sold them at the same price I did the fresh ones. He would never have looked at the melon until he had gone away."

"Ben, I will not tell a lie, or act one either, for twice what I have earned this morning. Besides, I shall be better off in the end, for I have gained a customer, and you have lost one."

And so it proved; for the next day the gentleman bought quite a supply of fruit of Harry, but never spent another penny at the stand of Ben. Thus the season passed: the gentleman, finding he could always get a good article of Harry, always bought of him, and sometimes talked a few minutes with him about his future hopes and prospects. To become a tradesman was his great ambition; and when the winter came on, the gentleman, wanting a trusty boy for his shop, decided on

giving the place to Harry. Steadily and surely he advanced in the confidence of his employer, until he became at length an honored partner in the firm.

## PLEASANT TO TOBACCO CHEWERS.

Some itinerant has lately been in Virginia, inspecting the tobacco factories. From Potorsburgh he writes the following description of the manner of preparing chewing tobacco—"Commence on the upper floor which is as dirty as a cow stable. In the corners are large heaps of tobacco. At one end is a large cauldron, into which is put liquorice, rum and tongue-bean. On one side of the room is a large room like a mortar bed, into which is put the weed, to be sprinkled with the above decoction. Two or three darkies are stirring tobacco up with their feet, so that all portions may become equally saturated. After this operation it is dried upon bales overhead, until it is fit for working in the room below. On the second story the leaf is divested of its stem by numerous black women and children. It is then, in a supple state, made into rolls an inch or two in diameter and of any required length. On the ground floor, the rolls are squeezed into plugs, and carefully packed for the tobacco-loving people of the North. Some people may think this description highly colored, but it is literally a true account of what I saw more than once, and if what I hear be true, the drugs and filth are hardly half portrayed. It might be supposed these people do not chew, but this is not so; almost everybody does—but they chew the clear leaf. And it is worthy of remark that the hands engaged in these factories make no account of throwing their cuds into a heap for a second mastication."

Professor Johnson of Middletown University was one day lecturing before the students on mineralogy. He had before him quite a number of specimens of various sorts to illustrate the subject. A roguish student for sport ality slipped a piece of brick among the stones. The Professor was taking up the stones one after another, and naming them. "This," said he "is a piece of granite; this is a piece of field-spar," etc. Presently he came to the brickbat. Without betraying any kind of surprise, or even changing his tone of voice, "This," said he, holding it up, "is a piece of impudence!"

HOW YOU MAY KNOW GOOD FATHERS.—It is a good sign and true when you see amid a group of boys one dart from the rest, and, tossing his arms above his head, shout—"There's my father!" as he runs to meet him. You may be sure, no matter what business soever, that man may have, that there is a spot in his heart still fresh and green, which the cares of the world have no power to blight. "There's my father." With what a pretty pride the little fellow shouts this. He must indeed be a brute, whose fatherly heart does not swell with love, whose eyes do not glisten, who does not at such a moment feel amply repaid for that day's toil, no matter how wearisome. After all, LOVE is the only thing worth having in this world. They who stand over the new-made grave tell us so. Fame, money, and ambition dwindle into nothing, beside the white, calm brow of death, thou God knows it may be the youngling of the flock whose lips have never even learned to syllable our names.

A GOOD ILLUSTRATION.—In a time of much religious excitement and consequent discussion, an honest Dutch farmer on the Mohawk was asked his opinion as to which denomination of Christians were on the right way to Heaven. "Vell, den," said he, "ven we ride our wheat to Albany, some say this road is the best, and some say dat—but it don't make much difference which road we take, for ven we get dare dey never ask us vich way we come—and it's none of their bisness—if our wheat is good!"

MISTAKE IN EDUCATION.—One great mistake in our present school system consists in the number and variety of studies required of the children. A few things thoroughly learned and fixed for life, are much more useful than a mass of facts hastily committed to memory, never properly digested, and soon so far forgotten as to leave only indistinct impressions.

SO THEY SAY.—"They" will say anything. "They" has said everything mean and despicable. "They" say things that break up families, crush hearts, blight hopes, and smother worthy aspirations. Whenever a man circulates a slander and gives "they" as his authority, turn your back upon him. He means no good.

A writer asks if any one can inform a poor man the best way to start a little nursery?—Certainly!—Get "nursery!"



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

I agree heartily with the views of the last month's editor, upon the importance of introducing bodily exercise in the schools, and approve of all his reasons. If they could be read by every teacher, and by every school-committee man, as often as once a month through the present year, they might produce a very general action; and I know of nothing more likely to have effect. My object in writing now, is to suggest the introduction of a set of exercises which may be performed by the children standing by their seats, and which, although less valuable than the more active exercises in the open air, may be used as an excellent substitute.—They should consist of various more or less rapid movements of the hands and arms.

I will mention a few; and any person who will try them for a while will find their value, and will devise others:—1. Place the hands back to back as high over the head as possible, and bring them down rapidly as far on each side as can be done without striking any object. Repeat this six times. 2. Stretch the hands as far forward as possible, palm to palm, and swing them thence horizontally as far back as possible, and repeat. Do the same with the hands back to back. 3. Bring the right hand firmly back to the height of the ear, and strike forward with the clenched fist, but not to the full length of the arm. Do this three times with the right hand, and as many with the left. 4. Strike down three times with the clenched fist of the right hand, and as many with the left. 5. Make the right clenched fist revolve three times in as large a circle as possible. Do the same with the left. Repeat all the exercises, except the last, with both hands at once.

This will be enough for a beginning. I have tried these exercises for many years, the first thing in the morning, and similar exercises with the lower extremities, to the very manifest advantage of my health and strength.—*AUTOUS, in Mass. Teacher.*

## THE NUMBER OF LANGUAGES.

The least learned are aware that there are many languages in the world; but the actual number is probably beyond the dreams of ordinary people. The geographer, Babi, enumerated eight hundred and sixty, which are entitled to be considered as distinct languages, and five thousand which may be regarded as dia-

lects. Adelung, another modern writer on this subject, reckons up three thousand and sixty-four languages and dialects existing, and which have existed. Even after we have allowed either of these as the number of languages, we must acknowledge the existence of almost infinite minor diversities; for almost every province has a tongue more or less peculiar, and this we may well believe to be the case throughout the world at large. It is said there are little islands, lying close together in the South Sea, the inhabitants of which do not understand each other.—Of the eight hundred and sixty distinct languages enumerated by Babi, fifty-three belong to Europe, one hundred and fourteen to Africa, one hundred and twenty-three to Asia, four hundred and seventeen to America, one hundred and seventeen to Oceanica—by which term he distinguishes the vast number of islands stretching between Hindocstan and South America.

## THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG MEN.

Costly apparatus and splendid cabinets have no magical power to make scholars. In all circumstances, as man is, under God, the master of his own fortune, so is he the maker of his own mind. The Creator has so constituted the human intellect, that it can grow only by its own action, and by its own action it most certainly and necessarily grows. Every man must, therefore, in an important sense, educate himself. His books and teachers are but helps; the work is his. A man is not educated until he has the ability to summon, in case of emergency, all his mental power in vigorous exercise to effect his proposed object. It is not the man who has seen most, or who has read most, who can do this; such an one is in danger of being borne down, like a beast of burden, by an overloaded mass of other men's thoughts. Nor is it the man that can boast merely of native vigor and capacity. The greatest of all the warriors that went to the siege of Troy, had not the pre-eminence because Nature had given him strength, and he carried the largest bow, but because *self-discipline* had taught him how to bend it.—*Daniel Webster.*

ONE DROP AT A TIME.—Have you ever watched an icicle as it formed? You noticed how it froze one drop at a time until it was a foot long, or more. If the water was clean, the icicle remained clear,

and sparkled brightly in the sun; but if the water was but slightly muddy, the icicle looked foul, and its beauty was spoiled. Just so our characters are forming—one little thought, or feeling at a time adds its influence. If each thought be pure and right, the soul will be lovely, and will sparkle with happiness; but if impure and wrong, there will be final deformity and wretchedness.

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